### Romans

## Chapter 13

1Everyone should submit to the authorities that are over them. Indeed, there are no offices of authority that don’t come from God, or any that weren’t instituted by God.  
  
2So those who resist the authorities, whose laws have come from God, are really opposing and condemning themselves!  
  
3For there’s no reason to fear the rulers when we’re behaving… Only when we’re misbehaving!  
  
Do you wish that you didn’t have to fear the authorities?  
  
Then do good things, and they’ll praise you, 4because they’re God’s servants for your own good!  
  
But if you’re doing something that’s wrong, you’ve got good reason to fear them. For that’s why they bear the sword of God… They’re God’s servants and His avengers to show His rage upon those who are doing what’s wrong!  
  
5So it’s important for us to obey them… And not just for [fear of] angering them, but because of [our] consciences!  
  
6This is why we pay our taxes; because, as public servants, they’re serving God’s purposes!  
  
7Therefore, pay everyone whatever they’re owed…  
  
To the tax collector [pay] the property tax; to the toll collectors, [pay] the tolls; respect [those who should be] respected; show honor to those [who should be] honored.  
  
8Don’t owe anything to anyone, except your love for each other, because those who love others have fulfilled [the] Law.  
  
9For [the Laws]...  
  
 ‘You must not murder,  
 You must not commit adultery,  
 You must not steal,  
 You must not envy,’  
 [Exodus 20:13-15, 17]  
  
...and any other Commandment, are all summed up in the phrase:  
  
 ‘You must love your neighbor as yourself.’ [Leviticus 19:18]  
  
10Yes, those who love won’t do anything bad to their neighbors, since the Law is fulfilled through love.  
  
11As for those of you who aren’t aware of the season, it’s time for you to wake up! Because our salvation is now closer than it was when we first became believers!  
  
12Yes, since the night is almost over, and that Day is near, we should be getting rid of the things that belong to darkness and start putting on the weapons of light.  
  
13Then we should all behave as we would in the daytime… Not in wild partying and drunkenness; not in immoral sex and the lacking of principles; not in arguing and jealousy.  
  
14Instead, we should be putting on the Lord Jesus the Anointed One – and no longer planning [to satisfy] the cravings of the flesh.