



26/27 January 2019
Vol. 41, No. 4

Clear the Air: The Christian and Political Concerns

Romans 13:1-7

English Services

(8 & 10:30 a.m., & 5:30 p.m.)

Prelude
Call to Worship
Worship through Praise
Anthem
Worship through Fellowship
Testimony
Scripture Reading
Pastoral Prayer
Worship in the Word
Pastor Larry Pabiona
Worship through Giving
Response Song
Benediction

Filipino Service

(3 n.h.)

Paghahanda
Tawag sa Pagsamba
Pagsamba sa Pag-awit
Pagkilala sa mga Bisita
Patotoo
Pagbasa ng Salita ng Diyos
Panalanging Pastoral
Pakikinig sa Salita ng Diyos
Pastor Dags Miguel
Pagsamba sa Pagbibigay
Tugon na Awit
Bendisyon



Clear the Air: The Christian and Political Concerns

Today's Message (26/27 January 2019) /
Romans 13:1-7

Look at our political realities: midterm elections (senators, congressmen, local government officials, etc.) just around the corner; recurrent statements against God and Jesus by governing authorities; extrajudicial killings, etc. These beg the question: "What does a Christian do in view of all these?" Corollary to this, "Can God really defend Himself so that Christians just keep silent while He is maligned?" And so on.

Some people use Romans 13:1–7 to beat on the head of those who take a less than fully subservient view to governing authorities. But we must avoid the common mistake of taking this passage out of its historical context, and its whole-Scripture context (i.e., in view of the entirety of the Bible). We will examine our passage and its practical implications in the form of these pressing questions:

I. WHAT IS THE CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS GOVERNING AUTHORITIES?

"Be subject" (*vv. 1*) is *hupotasso*, the same word used to describe a Christian wife's responsibility to her husband. The Greek word means to "put yourself under" a designated order or structure. To be subject to governing authorities means Christians must recognize their place "under" these authorities in the divinely appointed "order" that exists in the world.

- Why? (*vv. 4–5*) To avoid God's wrath implemented by the governing authorities *and* for the sake of conscience
- How? (*vv. 6–7*) By paying taxes *and* by respect and honor to whom it is "owed"

II. WHAT IS THE THE GOVERNING AUTHORITIES' RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS THE BELIEVER?

- To be God's servant for good (*v. 4*) explicitly, and to restrain evil (*v. 5*, implicitly).
- Paul took advantage of his government's role in promoting what is good when he exercised his rights as a Roman citizen to obtain justice (*Acts 16:37, 22:25,29, 25:11*).

III. WHEN IS THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY NO LONGER A SERVANT FOR GOOD OR RESTRAINS EVIL?

1. **When it violates the Word of God.** When government laws or actions are clearly contrary to God's Word, God must be obeyed (*Exodus 1:15–17; Daniel 3:16–18, 6:4–10; Acts 4:19–20, 5:28–29*). Examples:
 - Murder: *Exodus 1:15–17*. The right to life transcends the right of people to rule and govern (*Genesis 9:6*).
 - Freedom to worship and witness: *Acts 4:19–20* and *Acts 5:28–29*. The command to worship God transcends the authority of all human rulers.
2. **When its existence no longer produces good but evil.** Two very basic differences between the time of Paul and our time (each related to the other):
 - a. **Democracy.** Four key elements:
 - 1) A system for choosing and replacing the government through free and fair elections;



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- 2) Active participation of the citizens in politics and civic life;
- 3) Protection of the human rights of all citizens;
- 4) A rule of law, in which the laws and procedures apply equally to all citizens.

b. A codified Constitution:

A written set of rules and principles that define the nature and extent of government. The Constitution is the most basic law of a country from which all other laws and rules are hierarchically derived.

Taking both in consideration: a democratic Constitution places the government's power in the hands of the citizens. The Constitution defines and delimits the power of all elected officials. In a democracy, citizens are not just *allowed* to defend the constitution, they *must* defend the constitution regardless of whoever sits in power. They are not just *allowed* to defend their rights, they *must* promote and defend the Bill of Rights (Article III of the Philippine Constitution).

IV. WHAT CAN CHRISTIANS DO IF THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY IS NO LONGER A SERVANT FOR GOOD?

1. Pray fervently: 1 Timothy 2:1-2.
2. Vote wisely. This is a privilege our biblical authors never had; one of the blessings of democracy.
3. Speak up in your circles of influence (*Proverbs 31:8-9*):
 - Proactively. You will speak to whoever is willing to listen. Some Christians are not comfortable with this. It becomes then a matter of personal conviction.
 - Defensively. The very least Christians can do as a response. You wait to be asked, and you tell the truth as it is.
4. Write the pertinent authorities or lawmakers, proactively or defensively.
5. Participate in helping victims (*Psalms 82:3-4, Jeremiah 22:3*).
6. Peaceful assembly: EDSA 1 and 2.
7. Passive disobedience, e.g. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This is a very last resort, not because it is always wrong, but because it is hard to explain to some people and is often misinterpreted.

FINAL THOUGHTS

We must recognize government's rightful place within the hierarchy of relationships established by God, a hierarchy at whose pinnacle is God. When government usurps God's place, and commands us to do something contrary to God's Word, we are free—indeed obliged—to disobey.

Decisions on these matters require much wisdom. That is where the church comes in. It should have divinely appointed men of the Word who can help point out Biblical principles and examples to guide us in our decisions (*Proverbs 28:5*). There is indeed a way of exercising our basic rights and freedoms in a democracy without sinning against God or disobeying His Word ■



We praise the Lord for the 72 church people who participated in the Growth Group Express (GGEX) Extreme (pictured above) dubbed *How to Make Choices You Won't Regret* (A six-week Bible Study on the Lives of David, Josiah, Eve, and Jesus). It was conducted simultaneously by ten facilitators last November 18, 2018 at the Fellowship Hall. Several group members enjoyed the Bible Study and six groups committed to continue meeting this year every Sunday, 9:30-10:30 a.m. at the same venue.

As the Disciple-Making Groups (DMG) aim for 20 new small group leaders and 12 new small groups this 2019, we again bring you GGEX Extreme with a new topic: *Discovering*

What the Future Holds (Based on the Book of Daniel) starting on March 31 (Sun), 9:30-10:30 a.m. at the Fellowship Hall. This is offered to all adults without a Growth Group, but limited only to the first 200 registrants. In connection to this, all GG leaders who would like to lead a new small group are invited to join the Facilitators' Training with Elder Ave Gaspar at the DMG Leaders' Assembly on March 23, 1:00-6:00 p.m. at the Fellowship Hall. You may register on Sundays at the Growth Group booth for your free material and snack. For more information, text or call the DMG Office at **0917 532 1921**. See you there! ■

GROWTH GROUP EXPRESS **EXTREME**

(FOR ADULTS WITHOUT A GROWTH GROUP)

MARCH 31, 2019 (SUN), 9:30-10:30 A.M.
FELLOWSHIP HALL
REGISTER NOW AT THE BOOTH!



Ministry Opportunities + Announcements



HONORING GOD IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Joy Women Anniversary and Love Month Celebration

Speakers: Pastor BJ and Dra. Bebet Sebastian
February 9 (Sat), 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
Couples are invited to join!
Please text **0916 243 1901** to register.



JOURNEYING WITH GRACE

Naomi Women 4th Anniversary Celebration
February 23 (Sat), 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon
Please register at the Naomi booth for a token (that also serves as your invitation). Contact **0998 569 4095** for more details.



THE FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES SEMINAR

Learn to express to and receive love from your partner thru the Five Love Languages Forum
February 23 (Sat), 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Fee: PhP 100 (materials and snack included)
Contact **0917 532 7713** to register.



GCF 41ST ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

February 9 (Sat), 6:00 p.m.
February 10 (Sun), 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
(two services only)
Come with family and friends!



CHURCH PLANTING IN CDO

GCF is intensifying our prayer as we ask God to direct our next steps toward starting a church in Cagayan de Oro. If you have a burden to pray for this disciple-making initiative, please text us the following YES <space> PRAY4CDO <space> your name, and send to **0917 532 7672**.

The flowers this week are given with praise and thanksgiving to God for His mercy and grace by Rubelyn Enriquez and the Valera family. Please call 632 1354 to 56 for inquiries on how to participate in this ministry.

Join a DISCIPLE-MAKING GROUP

Growth Group Express

How to Make Decisions You Won't Regret (Lessons on David's Life)
Adults without GGs are invited!
Sundays, 9:30-10:30 a.m.
Fellowship Hall

Best Together in Christ

Group for Couples
Sundays, 9:30-11:00 a.m.
Rm. B508

Life in Technicolor

support group for cancer patients and survivors
Every 3rd Sunday of the month
12:00-3:00 p.m., Seniors' Rm.

Overcomers

support group for those under any kind of addiction
Thursdays, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

*If you are interested in joining any of the small groups above, fill out the tear-off form of this bulletin, drop it in the offering bag, or submit it at the Growth Group booth at the lobby. For more information, you can text or call us at **0917 532 1921**.*

DMG Leaders' Assembly

Agenda: *Oikos Workshop*
February 17 (Sun), 12:00-3:00 p.m. at the Fellowship hall

STEWARDSHIP REPORT / January 2019

	General Funds	Mission Support Fund	Others (Designated, facilities, etc.)	Total
January Projected	9,610,406	1,317,698	698,549	11,626,653
Received (Jan. 1-22)	6,799,837	1,027,950	160,923	7,988,710

“Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires; God will satisfy them fully!...Those who are persecuted because they do what God requires; the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!

—Matthew 5:6,10 (GNT)

With all the drama and conflict, whether at home or in the workplace, it seems to be too much a task to involve ourselves in the lives of others. How much more to involve ourselves in public affairs and current events? Of governance and politics? The many events of life so easily pull us in all directions, and the common human response is either to withdraw or to complain.

As people of the Gospel, where do we find our place in all this? Yes, we hold on to the sure hope of eternal life, that our deliverance from all these troubles is guaranteed. We are receiving God’s kingdom, why care for the affairs of this world? What does Jesus have to do with it? But the present is also real, it affects us and these times bids us to ask: How should we follow Jesus now? What does God require of us? Shall we resort to fateful resignation or take matters in our own hands?

We have to understand: the Gospel is political; politics simply refers to ‘the affairs of this world’; it is ‘influencing other people on a civic or individual level’. The politics of Jesus and His

kingdom, however, does not concern the affairs of this world but the affairs of God. It is about life, love, peace, justice and kindness. It affects other people’s lives and relationships. Jesus’ politics is about the present reality of God’s kingdom, God’s rule over all creation. He is king after all, of both heaven and earth, and we are called to be His people and witnesses.

As we grow closer to Jesus, we see that the kingdom He preached is not an event nor a place merely found in a distant future. Experiencing and witnessing the work of God lets us see what His kingdom looks like in action— healing lives, bringing wholeness and harmony to all. It is a kingdom of love and justice that is stronger than any forces of evil that seems to rule the land. We are being transformed into

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His likeness. We are called out from our private view of spirituality into a community of faith that follows Him and lives out His life.

Let us make every effort then to desire God’s righteousness as we show it in our little acts of service, knowing that our blessedness and happiness is anchored on the person and life of the Righteous One—Jesus Christ ■

GCF PRAYER GATHERINGS *at the Chapel*

The GCF Hour of Prayer
Tuesdays, 6-7 a.m.

Midweek Prayer Service
Wednesdays, 7-8:30 p.m.

ON THE COVER: “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” was Jesus’ response to one of the most explosive political issues of His time—paying taxes to the Romans. *The Tribute Money* (1543) by Italian painter Titian (public domain, [Wikimedia](#)).



Greenhills Christian Fellowship

Know Christ and Make Him Known

Ruby cor. Garnet Roads, Ortigas Center, Pasig City 1605
Tel. Nos. 632 1354 to 56, 635 0078 to 80, 635 0082 to 83 | Fax No. 632 1357
Mobile No. 0920 961 2964, Mon.-Fri., 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
E-mail: email@gcf.org.ph • Website: www.gcf.org.ph

How may we SERVE YOU BETTER?

Fill-out this tear off form and drop it in an offering bag/box or at the Ministry Information Booth. Please check all that is applicable:

- I am a first-time guest.
- I prayed to receive Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord today.
- I would like to know how to become a Christian.
- I am interested in becoming a member of this church.
- I want to join a Growth Group.**
(Specify age group: _____)
(Specify group composition: _____)
- I want to start a Growth Group.
- I want to host a Growth Group.

Please share with us some information about yourself:

Name: _____

Age: ____ Landline no.: _____

Mobile no.: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Year of membership: _____

Name of Growth Group (if you already have one): _____

*Today is **26/27 January 2019**, and I attended the 8 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 3:00 p.m., 5:30 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. (Sat) (encircle the time).*

Write below *any* inquiry or prayer item that you want to ask or share.

THE GOSPEL

“Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.”
(1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD

God is holy and righteous: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty, the whole earth is full of his glory” *(Isaiah 6:3)*. **He requires holiness of us as well:** “Be holy, for I am holy” *(1 Peter 1:16)*.

THE TRUTH ABOUT MAN

Man is sinful: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” *(Romans 3:23)*.
Sin demands a penalty: “For the wages of sin is death” *(Romans 6:23)*.

THE TRUTH ABOUT CHRIST

Christ is the expression of God's love for us: “God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” *(Romans 5:8)*. **Christ paid the penalty of our sins and died for sinners:** “For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God” *(1 Peter 3:18)*. **Through Christ, God offers man reconciliation:** “God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them” *(2 Corinthians 5:18)*.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

Believe and receive Jesus as Lord and Savior: “If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” *(Romans 10:9)*.

PRAYER: *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner. I believe that you died on the cross in my place, to save me from my sins, and I accept you as my Savior, and the Master of my life forever. Amen.*

Need someone to talk to?

Visit the Emmaus Road Counseling Center at the GCF Mezzanine floor or contact 632 1354 to 56, 635 0078 to 80 or 0917 532 7794 for inquiries.

For hospital or house visitation, dedication service, or funeral service requests, please call or text 0917 532 7794.