

March 26, 2017 -

Romans 13:1-7-

"Submission to Civil Authorities"

### Introduction:

I really appreciate our law enforcement community and the sacrifices they make in these difficult times and situations that they encounter. As a young boy I looked up to my late cousin Joey Bacino, he was a PA State Trooper. On occasion he would share a story or two about his experiences on the force. His fellow officers' nick named him Pacino after the actor who immortalized the NY police officer Serpico in the film named after him. Joey took serious the law enforcement code of ethics. Honest in thought and deed in both personal and official life, he was exemplary in obeying the laws of the land and the regulations of his department. He was promoted many times and eventually made detective. I remember him coming to family dinners on Sundays at my grandpop sometimes in his uniform. We were all proud of him. The only bad memory I remember is when Vito and I got a little rowdy in the house and Pop would scold us, Joey would said, "hey Uncle Jimmy should I cuff em". I was proud of my cousin and his integrity.

So you can understand why I can get frustrated by the constant negative press hurled at the men and women who patrol the thin blue line. Most police officers work hard to keep you and yours safe... Their stories, their peculiar situations have not been accurately told. I think you can get a glimpse of law enforcement through the TV series Blood Blues... I recently read a police officer story you won't believe. I will read it as foretold by him.

On a Sunday afternoon I was dispatched to a residential area for a report of a disturbance in which someone was beating the windows out of a vehicle. As I arrived I saw what looked like Ronald McDonald slinging a Louisville slugger on a vehicle in this driveway. I mean red hair, blue nose, makeup and size 42 shoes. When "Ronald" saw my unit he dropped the bat and began to run. I got out of my unit and looked around like it was a joke, thinking I was being punked. I soon realized by the looks from the neighbors that it wasn't a joke and advised dispatch that the suspect was running south as I reluctantly started jogging. I repeatedly ignored the dispatcher who wanted a description of the suspect.

As I turned the corner I observed a Ford Fiesta parked in a driveway with red and yellow size 42 shoes hanging out of the side. After several requests for him to come out, I finally had to drag him out by his shoes and hook him up. As I walked back to my unit with "Ronald in cuffs" I saw several children on bicycles on the sidewalk. As I walked passed the kids all of them gave me a thumbs down and began to Boo! You see even doing the job you can't get a break.

So as Christians we are to be model citizens and give the men and women of Law enforcement a break, give them your respect. It is not only our civic duty it is our Christian duty. Government was ordained of God to subdue evil. The men and women of Law enforcement are the ministers of God to thee for good. Our Christianity must find its way into every aspect of living. One of the crucial life areas where Christianity is lived out is in relation to civil government, Law enforcement in relation to those in authority over us.

The Apostle Paul on many occasions instructed believers to submit to the authorities, to honor the ruler, to obey the governor, to respond to those who are in authority over us. Paul turns to civil relationships and Christian citizenship in chapter 13, beginning with...

### I The Powers that be are ordained of God (13:1-2)

1. Paul opens this chapter with the command, Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers (13:1 a). The higher powers refer to those who have civil authority over us. Being a Christian should affect every area of our lives our attitudes, words, actions, and citizenship.

**For there is no power but of Gods the powers that be are ordained of God (13: 1 b).** God established three institutions: the home, the church, and human government. All are divine institutions created for the care and protection of the human race. This does not mean that God approves of all forms of government, but it does mean that He is behind all governmental authority that is designed for the collective good of its citizens.

The cruel and unjust abuses in government are no reflection of God's nature. When we say that government is ordained by God, it means as a principle. That is not to say that every government is as God desires or would want or even is reflective of God's nature. Think of it this way. God ordained marriage, but certainly not every marriage is reflective of the character of God.

2. According to I Peter 2:13-17, it is the will of God that we submit to civil law and honor governmental leaders because, **“that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:**

3. Since God has established all power, whosoever therefore resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God (Romans 13:2a). The Greek word translated ordinance refers to administration. When we resist the government we are resisting the administration of God's system of law and order, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation (13:2b). The Greek word translated damnation (KRIMA) means “judgment” and probably refers to punishment that God allows through civil authorities.

### II Government is sanctioned to restrain evil (13:3-4)

1. The only people who should live in fear of civil authorities are those who break the law, for rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil (13:3a). Even the governments with little or no civil liberties restrain evil Paul continues, **Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good and thou shalt have praise of the same (13:3b).** God designed government to bring praise to those who do good.

Romans 13:4 gives us the chief purpose of human government, which is to be the minister of God to thee for good. Not only is government to praise those who are good, but also if **thou do that which is evil be afraid for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil (13:4).**

3. Now I am a minister of the Word of God Police officers are also ministers of God according to the bible and just as we adhere to a Christian code of ethic so does every law enforcement officer. Code of Ethics for law enforcement officers reads in part my fundamental duty is to serve mankind; to safeguard lives and property; to protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation, and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to respect the Constitutional rights of all men to liberty, equality and justice. I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all; maintain courageous calm in the face of danger, scorn, or ridicule; develop self-restraint; and be constantly mindful of the welfare of others. ..

### III Christians are to pay their Tribute (13:6-7)

1. Because government is a part of God's plan for human well-being. Paul says, "For this cause pay ye tribute (taxes) also: for they are God's minister attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom (Romans 13:6-7b). The word translated tribute (PHOROUS) refers to taxes paid to a foreign ruler and dues (OPHEILAS) refers to "all that is owed." The word custom refers to tolls and revenue from the sales of goods.

2. We are also (Romans 13:7 c) **to give fear to whom fear- honour to whom honour**. This means that we are to show respect and honor to all who hold public office. .. We are not to pay our taxes in a spirit of contempt, such as telling officials, "Here's the money, now beat it!" Christians are to be model citizens and pray for government officials. – I Tim. 2:1-2

### Conclusion:

According to the Bible, God designed us to be men and women of exemplary character. Therefore, we are to submit to authority - those that are ordained by God. We too are to follow a code of ethics according to scripture that unbelievers do not. Gospel

(John 15:13) "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. Police officers on occasion have done just that. God loves you and He loved you long before you were ever born. God loves you! He has done more for you than anyone else" --- gospel