BE SUBJECT TO RULERS AND AUTHORITIES

Titus 1:1 Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good.

“Remind the people”. This is something the people had already been taught but needed to hear again.

“To be subject.” The word is “primarily a military term, to rank under” (Vine’s).

“To rulers and authorities” means those who have the authority to make *someone obey and here primarily means governmental authority at every* level.

Romans 13:1&2 Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

The Authorities that Exist

God is the ultimate authority. Acts 5:29; Daniel 6:10

Government: Romans 13:1-7; I Peter 2:13-15

Church Authority: Hebrews 13:17; I Corinthians 16:16

Employer (applying master-slave principles): Titus 2:9&10; Ephesians 6:5-8

Husband-Wife: Ephesians 5:22-24; Colossians 3:18

Parent-Child: Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20

There is a strong tendency for those who rebel against authority in one area to rebel against authority in other areas. Rebelling against legitimate authority is rebelling against God.

Romans 13:3 For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended.

Romans 13:4 For the one in authority is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God’s servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

Romans 13:5 Therefor, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience.

Romans 13:6 This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God’s servants, who give their full time to governing.

Romans 13:6(NASB) For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.

Romans 13:7 Give to everyone what you owe them: if you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

“To Be Obedient”

“To be obedient” is a compound Greek word indicating obedience to one in authority based on persuasion, not force. The Israelites failed to enter the Promised Land at Kadesh-Barnea because they disobeyed because they were “unpersuasible.” (Hebrews 3:19) The use of this word emphasizes that authorities are to be obeyed because we are persuaded that it is the right thing to do.

“To Be Ready to Do Whatever is Good”

The emphasis continues to be on being and doing what is good, not what is harmful, injurious, or simply wrong.

How We Are to Treat Others

Titus 3:2 to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone.

“To slander no one” is *“blasphemo”* from which comes our English word “blaspheme.” In Greek it means to speak evil of anyone, in English we use it only to speak evil of God or the things of God.

“To be peaceable” is *“amachos”* from *“mache”* which means a fight. The meaning is to not be contentious, not looking for a fight, not “macho.” *Proverbs 20:3, “It is to one’s honor to avoid a strife, but every fool is quick to* quarrel.” Romans 12:18, “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at *peace with everyone.”*

“Always to be gentle toward everyone” is literally “showing all meekness to all people.” Meekness is strength under God’s control that does not need to prove anything. The concept has practically disappeared from our culture. Jesus was meek (Matthew 11:29KJV). James 3:13(KJV) refers to the “meekness of wisdom.”

What We Were

Titus 3:3 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.

“We.” Paul is not only describing the “liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons” (Titus 1:12) of Crete, he is describing himself, a self-righteous Pharisee who was very zealous for God (Philippians 3:4-6).

“We were foolish” “signifies not understanding, not applying *nous* the mind…it signifies senseless, an unworthy lack of understanding” (Vine’s).

“We were…disobedient” is the word used to describe the circumcision group in Titus 1:16. It is the root of the word “obedient” in Titus 3:1 where it is joined with a word meaning authorities.

“Deceived.” Paul was just as deceived in his religiosity as the people of Crete were in their paganism.

“Enslaved.” John 8:34 Jesus replied, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a lave of sin.” “Passions” is simply a “strong desire of any kind” (Vine’s). Paul was just as much a slave to his desires as the Cretans were to theirs.

“Pleasures” is *“hedone.”* It“is used of the gratification of the natural desires or of sinful desires” (Vine’s). We get the English word “hedonist” from it. The Cretans were enslaved to lying and gluttony, Paul was enslaved to becoming an important Jewish leader and receiving praise from men.

“We lived in malice and envy.” The word translated malice “stands for whatever is evil in character” (Vine’s). “Envy” is “the feeling of displeasure produced by witnessing or hearing of the advantage or prosperity of others” (Vine’s). Paul is still saying we. Paul could say he was “as for righteousness based on the law, faultless” and acknowledge that he lived in malice and envy.

“Being hated and hating one another.” The “liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons” of Crete were hated and hated one another. Paul was hated by those who wanted to get the recognition he was getting for his religious deeds, and hated those who were getting the recognition he craved. Both had the same internal sin problem.

But then God’s kindness, love and grace appeared and changed everything.

Things to Remember

God has instituted the authority structures that exist. Unless they command us to disobey God, we are to be in subjection to them, not only because God uses them to punish evildoers, but because it is the right thing to do.

Rebellion against duly constituted authority is rebellion against God.

“As far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”

Although Paul was “as for righteousness based on the law, faultless,” when it came to the condition of his heart he was just as messed up as the people of Crete.

But then he was, and they were, radically transformed by the kindness, love and grace of God.