



## AUTHORITIES

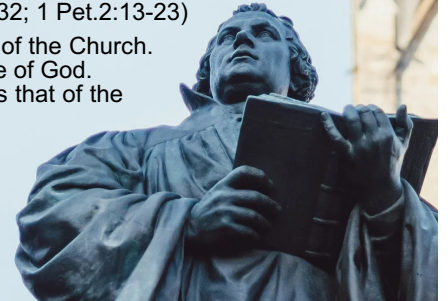
### Study 18a: BY WHOSE AUTHORITY? (13:1-7)

#### 13:1-4 *Is all "persecution" a token of God's approval?* (John 19:10,11; Dan. 2:21; 4:17,32; 1 Pet.2:13-23)

In preceding chapter the Apostle taught that Christians must not throw into disorder the institution of the Church. Here he teaches that they must not violate the temporal government; for both these institutions are of God. The former serves the guidance and peace of the inner ... man and his concerns; the latter serves that of the outward ... man and his concerns. ... In this life the inward man cannot be without the outward.

-- Martin Luther, *Romans*, p. 164

Civil government has its source in God, and all constituted power is appointed and ordained by him. The cruel abuses in governments are no necessary part of them and do not invalidate their divine charter any more than the abuses of marriage rob it of its sacredness. Any government is preferable to anarchy, just as poorly enforced marriage laws are better than none. Man abuses all God's gifts. ... That a Gentile prince could have divine authority was a doctrine hard for a Jew to accept, especially when that authority was exercised over him. If Paul was hated for this teaching, as he must have been, by the Jewish nation, Titus gave him a thorough vindication twelve years later. The disregard of this verse was the Jews' national ruin. ... Therefore, to caricature them in public prints is grossly irreverent and promotive of lawlessness, and to fail to pray for them "first of all," a failure all too general, is an express violation of God's Word (1 Tim. ii. 1-3). -- J.M. Stifler, *Romans*, p. 230-232



**CHURCH and GOVERNMENT are both ordained by God, said Luther**

**Both Church and State bear the sword – both gifts of God for the impeding of lawlessness**

#### 13:5-7 *Besides acting as God's sword, impeding the spread of lawlessness, how else does human government serve and minister?* (Isa. 10:5,6,15)

... civil authority, even with a Nero at its head, was still in principle a thing divine. H.C.G. Moule, *Expositor's Bible: Romans*, p. 349

## LOVE -- the LAW of LIBERTY

... the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit ... Rom. 5:5

We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren.

He who does not love abides in death. -- 1 John 3:14

### Study 19a: HOW DOES a CHRISTIAN DRESS? (LICENCE IS NOT LIBERTY) (13:8-14)

#### 13:8-10 *How will the Christian view his liberty?* (Gal. 5:13)

It follows that Paul's ethics is not an *equalitarian ethics*. It recognizes no uniformity or sameness. Any such idea is excluded by the fact that the Christian is a member in the body of Christ; and members do not all have the same function. It is precisely in the difference and manifoldness of endowment and function that the organic relationship finds expression. ... His is not an ethics of *deserving*, but of *serving*.

-- A. Nygren, *op.cit.*, p. 439

#### 13:11-14 *By what dress will we identify sleeping (or drowsy) Christians?* (Job 29:11-16; Gal. 3:27)

The Apostle desires that they should advance ... by serious effort, ... -- M. Luther, *op.cit.*, p. 171

In the summer of AD 386 Aurelius Augustinus, native of Tagaste in

North Africa, and now for two years Professor of Rhetoric at Milan, sat weeping in the garden of his friend Alypius, almost persuaded to begin a new life, yet lacking the final resolution to break with the old. As he sat, he heard a child singing in a neighbouring house, *Tolle, lege! tolle, lege!* ("Take up and read! take up and read!"). Taking up the scroll which lay at his friends side, he let his eyes rest on the words: "not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. xiii. 13b-14). "No further would I read," he tells us, "nor had I any need; instantly, at the end of this sentence, a clear light flooded my heart and all the darkness of doubt vanished away." What the Church and the world owe to this influx of light which illuminated Augustine's mind as he read these words of Paul is something beyond our power to compute. -- F.F. Bruce, *op.cit.*, p. 58

**14:1-9 Over what issues have Christians often (even denominationally) divided?** (1 John 2:9-11,19)

Many people have the idea that the Christians who follow strict rules are the most mature, but this is not necessarily the case. ... St Augustine put the matter best: "In essentials, unity; in nonessentials liberty; in all things, charity." ... It is encouraging to know that our success in the Christian life does not depend on the opinions or attitudes of other Christians. God is the Judge, and He is able to make us stand. The word "servant" here suggests that Christians ought to be busy working for the Lord; then they will not have the time or inclination to judge or condemn other Christians. ... Some of us can remember when dedicated Christians opposed Christian radio "because Satan was the prince of the power of the air!" Fashions change from year to year. Christians no longer need to fight about Hollywood movies because television brings them right into the home. Some people even make Bible translations a test of orthodoxy. The church is divided and weakened because Christians will not allow Jesus Christ to be Lord. -- **W.W. Wiersbe**, *op.cit.*, pp. 152-154

And inevitably such scruples do not terminate in themselves. They infect the man's whole tone of thinking and action. He questions and discusses everything, with himself, if not with others. He is on the way to let his view of acceptance in Christ grow fainter and more confused. He walks, he lives; but he moves like a man chained, and in a prison. -- **H.C.G. Moule**, *op.cit.*, pp. 376,377

... this weak believer, weak in his faith, but correspondingly strong in his scruples, is to be received into Christian fellowship, but not to be disputed with about his thoughts. This seems to be the meaning of the phrase "not to doubtful disputations." He cannot be argued out of his views; argument would only confirm him in them. He must grow out of them, and meanwhile he is not to be criticized and judged, but loved. This verse is addressed to the stronger brethren, and may imply both that they are right and are in the majority. -- **J.M. Stifler**, *op.cit.*, p. 239

**14:10-15 How are those guilty who -- even when in the right -- stumble or judge other Christians?** (1 Cor. 8:1-13)

Should we abolish all churches, all ornaments, liturgical acts of service, all sacred places, all fast days, and holy days? Should we discard all differences between priest, bishops and monks regarding their ranks, garments and ecclesiastical acts, observed for many centuries to this very day? Should we declare all the convents and religious establishments, all benefices and benefactions as things that must be abrogated? By no means! In contrast to this ... stands that which the Apostle himself taught and did; for he circumcised Timothy, offered sacrifices and purified himself in the temple (Acts

13:3; 21:26). So, then, all things are free (in the New Testament), ... -- **M. Luther**, *op.cit.*, p. 179

Paul enjoyed his Christian liberty to the full. Never was there a Christian more thoroughly emancipated from un-Christian inhibitions and taboos. So completely emancipated was he from spiritual bondage that he was not even in bondage to his emancipation. He conformed to the Jewish way of life when he was in Jewish society as

cheerfully as he accommodated himself to Gentile ways when he was living with Gentiles. The interests of the gospel and the highest well-being of men and women were paramount considerations with him, and to these he subordinated everything else. ... There is no sin to which Christians -- especially "keen" Christians -- are more prone than that of criticizing others. -- **F.F. Bruce**, *op.cit.*, pp. 243,246

So far, then, Paul has neither approved nor condemned any kind of food; he has neither given nor withheld his sanction of sacred days. What a man may do in reference to both food or days is in itself nothing, but what he may think about his own or his brother's doing in these cases is all-important. -- **J.M. Stifler**, *op.cit.*, p.243

The Christian is related to his brother-Christian through Christ, not to Christ through his brother, or through the common Organism in which the brethren are "each other's limbs." "*To the Lord*," with absolute directness, with a perfect and wonderful immediateness, each individual Christian is first related. His life and his death are "to others," but through Him. The MASTER'S claim is eternally first; for it is based direct upon the redeeming work in which He bought us for Himself. ... **So the each of us, about himself**, not about the faults or errors of his brother, **shall give account to God**. -- **H.C.G. Moule**, *op.cit.*, pp. 381,386

**14:16-18 When tempted to use our Christian liberty, what should we not lose sight of?** (vv. 7-9; 6:16-18)

It would be easy to think that the strong should welcome the weak, that they might persuade them of the inferiority of their view, and make them like "the strong." But Paul will not agree to that. Fellowship among Christians is not to be based on questions and disputing, toward the result that the one adopts the other's view and accepts it as the norm of action. Such a sameness is not a Christian ideal. Acceptance ought not to rest on such secondary considerations. Christians are not all alike, nor should they be. ... God has given faith to one in larger measure than to another. The one is "strong in faith," the other "weak in faith." But "the weak" also has the place which God has assigned to him in the church, and it is not the intention that he is to copy "the strong." -- **A. Nygren**, *op.cit.*, p.443

