

Romans 13:5-6

Romans 13:5-The Christian Must Not Only Subject Himself To Governmental Authority Because Of Their Punitive Function But Also Because Its God's Will

In Romans 13:5, Paul infers from verses 1-4 and concludes that the Christian must not only voluntarily subject himself to the governmental authorities because they exercise God's righteous indignation towards evil conduct through capital punishment but also for the sake of conscience meaning they were to do so because its God's will.

Romans 13:5, "Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake."

"Therefore" is the inferential conjunction *dio* (διό) (dee-o), which is the strongest inferential conjunction and is used to coordinate what follows with what precedes. The word is used to pass from one statement considered as true to another whose truth is believed to follow the former, denoting that the inference or conclusion is self-evident.

In Romans 13:5, *dio* enables Paul to transition from the truths he presented in Romans 13:1-4 to the truth he presents in this verse. Therefore, in Romans 13:5, Paul employs the inferential use of the conjunction *dio* in order to coordinate his statement to follow in this verse with his preceding statements in Romans 13:1-4.

The word *dio* denotes that the inference or conclusion Paul will present in Romans 13:5 from the spiritual truths that he presented in Romans 13:1-4 is self-evident. Also, this word not only denotes that the inference from Romans 13:1-4 is self-evident but also it denotes a conclusion or presents a summarization of his statements in Romans 13:1-4.

The apostle Paul in Romans 13:1 issues a command for his Christian readers in Rome to continue making it their habit of voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities in Rome. Then, he presents the reason as to why the Roman believers should continue doing this, namely because there is, as an eternal spiritual truth, absolutely no authority that exists on the earth except by God. Lastly, he defines specifically this reason by teaching that those governmental authorities, which do at any time in history exist on the earth have been ordained from eternity past by God the Father under the divine decree.

Romans 13:1, "Each and every person must continue making it their habit of voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities because there is, as an eternal spiritual truth, absolutely no authority except by God. Specifically, those which at any time do exist are, as an eternal spiritual truth, ordained by God."

In Romans 13:2, Paul presents an inference from his instruction in verse 1 by teaching that the Christian who at any time does set himself or herself in opposition against any governmental authority is in a state of opposition against this institution, which originates from God the Father. He advances upon this statement teaching also that those Christians who are in a state of opposition against any governmental authority will, as a certainty, undergo judgment at the hands of these authorities for the detriment of themselves.

Romans 13:2, “Therefore, the one who, at any time does set himself or herself in opposition against this authority is in a state of opposition against this institution originating with God the Father. In fact, those who are in a state of opposition will, as a certainty, undergo judgment for the detriment of themselves.”

Then, Paul in Romans 13:3 resumes the discussion from verse 1 as to why the Romans believers are to obey the command in verse 1 to continue to voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities.

The statement presents an additional reason why they should obey his command in verse 1. This would indicate that the Roman believers also must continue to voluntarily subject themselves to the governmental authorities because governmental rulers are a cause of fear for those whose conduct is evil.

Then, he poses a rhetorical question that follows as a logical consequence of this previous statement. Thus, Paul is saying that since governmental rulers are a cause of fear for law breakers consequently or as a logical consequence to this if you do not want to live in fear of the authorities, then obey the laws of the land. The command that presents the logical consequence of the rhetorical question requires that Paul’s Christian readers in Rome must continue practicing that which is good, i.e. obedience to the laws of the Roman government.

Lastly, this command is followed by a result clause indicating that if Paul’s readers continue making it their habit of practicing that which is good in character, i.e. obedience to the governing authorities, the result will be that they will receive praise from the governing authorities. The implication of this result is that Paul wants his readers to be outstanding citizens since only those who were outstanding citizens received commendation from the Roman government.

Romans 13:3, “Furthermore, rulers are, as an eternal spiritual truth, never a cause of fear with respect to conduct which is good in character but rather with respect to that which is evil in character. Consequently, do you desire not to live in a state of fear of this authority? Continue making it your habit of practicing that which is good in character so that you will, as a certainty, experience recognition from the same.”

Then, in Romans 13:4, Paul makes two assertions that explain or elaborate on Paul's previous statements in verse 3 with regards to the positive and negative function of governmental authority.

Romans 13:4, "For you see, it is, as an eternal spiritual truth God's servant for your benefit for the purpose of encouraging that which is good in character. However, if you, at any time practice that which is evil in character, then begin and continue to live in a state of fear because it, as an eternal spiritual truth by no means exists in the state of bearing the sword without justification because it is, as an eternal spiritual truth God's servant, an avenger for the purpose of exercising God's righteous indignation against those who exist in a state of committing that which is evil in character."

Romans 13:4 can be divided grammatically into five sections. First of all, the passage begins with an explanatory statement that is divided into two sections:

(1) A declarative statement: **"It is, as an eternal spiritual truth God's servant for your benefit for the purpose of encouraging that which is good in character."**

This assertion elaborates on the positive function of governmental authority, which he addresses in the command at the end of verse 3.

Romans 13:3, "Furthermore, rulers are, as an eternal spiritual truth, never a cause of fear with respect to conduct which is good in character but rather with respect to that which is evil in character. Consequently, do you desire not to live in a state of fear of this authority? Continue making it your habit of practicing that which is good in character so that you will, as a certainty, experience recognition from the same."

(2) Adversative clause containing a fifth class condition: **"However, if you, at any time practice that which is evil in character, then begin and continue to live in a state of fear."**

This assertion elaborates on the negative function of governmental authority, which Paul mentions in the causal clause at the beginning of verse 3.

Romans 13:3, "Furthermore, rulers are, as an eternal spiritual truth, never a cause of fear with respect to conduct which is good in character but rather with respect to that which is evil in character. Consequently, do you desire not to live in a state of fear of this authority? Continue making it your habit of practicing that which is good in character so that you will, as a certainty, experience recognition from the same."

Then, on the heels of the adversative clause, which contains a fifth class condition, we have a causal clause that elaborates on this negative function: **"Because it, as an eternal spiritual truth by no means exists in the state of bearing the sword without justification."** This causal clause presents the reason why Paul's readers should live in a state of fear for practicing evil, namely, that

God has delegated authority to the government to inflict capital punishment for those who practice evil such as murder. This causal clause is followed by another one: **“Because it is, as an eternal spiritual truth God’s servant.”** This clause teaches that governmental authority is justified for inflicting capital punishment upon those who commit evil because they serve God by doing so.

Lastly, this second causal clause is followed by an exegetical clause: **“An avenger for the purpose of exercising God’s righteous indignation against those who exist in a state of committing that which is evil in character.”** This clause is clarifying for the reader exactly the responsibility of the governmental authorities in relation to God the Father’s purpose for them. It teaches that when the governmental authority uses capital punishment against criminals it is expressing God’s righteous indignation.

Therefore, in Romans 13:4, Paul is teaching his readers that governmental rulers are God’s servants, which is demonstrated by these two functions. For the Christian, the positive function of governmental authority is that it encourages conduct that is in obedience to the Father’s will in relation to one’s fellow human being, which can be summarized by the command to love one’s neighbor as oneself. The negative function discourages conduct that is evil or in other words, it discourages conduct that is in disobedience to the will of God. Governmental authority serves God by fulfilling these two functions.

So in Romans 13:5, Paul employs inferential conjunction *dio* (διό) (dee-o), which in order to coordinate his statement to follow in this verse with his preceding statements in Romans 13:1-4. The word *dio* denotes that the inference or conclusion Paul will present in Romans 13:5 from the spiritual truths that he presented in Romans 13:1-4 is self-evident. Also, this word not only denotes that the inference from Romans 13:1-4 is self-evident but also it denotes a conclusion or presents a summarization of his teaching in these verses. We will translate *dio*, **“Therefore.”**

Romans 13:5, “Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience’ sake.”

“It is” does not translate a word in the original text. However, it is properly added by the translators since they correctly interpret that Paul is using the figure of ellipsis meaning that he deliberately omits the third person singular present active indicative form of the verb *eimi* (εἶμι) (i-mee), though it is implied.

The verb *eimi* means, “to exist in a particular state or condition.” It serves as a copula uniting the subject, which is the subject infinitive form of the verb *hupotasso*, “to be in subjection” and the predicate nominative *ananke*, “necessary.” Therefore, the word denotes that Christian subjection to the governmental authorities “exists in the state of being” necessary.

The present tense of the verb is “customary” present used to signal an ongoing state indicating that Christian subjection to the governmental authority is “always” necessary. It also can be interpreted as a “gnomic present,” which is used for a general timeless fact or spiritual axiom, or an eternal spiritual truth and says something “does” happen. This indicates that Christian subjection to the governmental authority is “as an eternal spiritual truth” necessary.

The active voice is “stative” indicating that the subject exists in the state indicated by the verb *eimi*. The subject is Christian subjection to governmental authority. Therefore, the “stative” active voice indicates that Christian obedience to governmental authority “exists in the state of being” necessary.

The indicative mood is “declarative” presenting this assertion as an unqualified statement of Bible doctrine.

We will translate *eimi*, “**is, as an eternal spiritual truth, always.**”

Romans 13:5, “Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.”

“**Necessary**” is the nominative feminine singular form of the noun *ananke* (ἀνάγκη) (an-ang-kay), which means “absolutely imperative” since the word denotes an obligation or a fact that demands action on the part of Paul’s Christian readers in Rome.

This word denotes that based upon Paul’s teaching in Romans 13:1-4, it was “imperative” that the Christians in Rome voluntarily subject themselves to the governmental authorities.

Therefore, *ananke* denotes that it is absolutely imperative for Paul’s Christian readers in Rome to subject themselves to the governmental authorities in Rome for the following reasons: (1) Governmental authority is established by God (verse 1). (2) Failure to obey governmental authority is to oppose God since it originates with Him (verse 2). (3) Governmental authority is a cause of fear for evil conduct (verse 3). (4) Obedience to governmental authority results in commendation from the authority (verse 3). (5) Governmental authority is God’s servant for the purpose of encouraging good conduct (verse 4). (6) Governmental authority by no means inflicts capital punishment without justification (verse 4). (7) Governmental authority is an avenger for the purpose of exercising God’s righteous indignation against those who commit evil (verse 4).

The word functions as a predicate nominative meaning that it is making an assertion about the Christian’s obedience to the governmental authority, namely that is absolutely imperative. We will translate *ananke*, “**absolutely imperative.**”

Romans 13:5, “Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.”

“**To be in subjection**” is the third person singular present passive infinitive form of the verb *hupotasso* (ὑποτάσσω) (hoop-ot-as-so), which is used with the

Roman believers as its subject and the Roman governmental authorities as its object.

The verb means “to voluntarily subject oneself to” human government. *Hupotasso* refers to subjection, submission and obedience to legitimate authority. This is how the word was used in Romans 13:1 where it was used in a command.

Romans 13:1, “Each and every person must continue making it their habit of voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities because there is, as an eternal spiritual truth, absolutely no authority except by God. Specifically, those which at any time do exist are, as an eternal spiritual truth, ordained by God.”

In Romans 13:5, the verb denotes that each and every one of the believers in Rome is to subject themselves, be obedient to the governing, civil authorities in Rome. It is used this way in several other places in the New Testament.

Titus 3:1, “Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed.”

1 Peter 2:13-14, “Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.”

In Romans 13:5, the verb *hupotasso* is in the infinitive form and is functioning as the subject of the finite verb *eimi*, which is deliberately omitted by Paul due to his use of the figure of ellipsis.

The passive voice of the verb is a “permissive” passive, which means that the subject is being acted upon by either an expressed or unexpressed agency. The agency unexpressed but clearly implied by the context as being the Roman governmental authorities. The fact that this is a “permissive” passive implies consent on the part of the subject. It emphasizes the volitional responsibility of the Roman believers in submitting to the governing authorities in Rome. Therefore, the permissive passive voice of the verb *hupotasso* indicates that Roman believers are to “voluntarily” subject themselves to” the governing authorities in Rome.

The present tense of the verb *hupotasso* is a customary present signally an ongoing state indicating that Paul is teaching his readers that based upon his teaching in Romans 13:1-4, to continue voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities is absolutely imperative. The customary present and Paul’s statement in Romans 15:15 indicate that Paul’s readers were already subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities, thus he is simply reminding them here to continue doing so. We will translate *hupotasso*, “**to continue voluntarily subjecting yourselves to.**”

Corrected translation thus far of Romans 13:5: “**Therefore, to continue voluntarily subjecting yourselves is, as an eternal spiritual truth, always absolutely imperative...**”

Romans 13:5, “Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.”

“**Not only...but also**” is composed of the emphatic objective negative particle *ou* (οὐ), “**not**” and the accusative neuter singular adverb *monon* (μόνον), “**only**” and the adversative use of the conjunction *alla* (ἀλλὰ), “**but**” and the adjunctive use of the conjunction *kai* (καὶ), “**also.**”

These four words emphatically state that “not only” (*ou monon*) is it absolutely imperative for the Roman believers to continue voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities because it exercises God’s righteous indignation against those who commit evil “but also” (*alla kai*), because of conscience.

The adverb *monon* is employed with emphatic negative objective particle *ou* in order to state in emphatic terms that voluntary subjection to the governmental authorities is “not limited to” the reason that the governmental authorities exercise God’s righteous indignation towards those who commit evil.

The emphatic negative adverb *ou* (οὐ) (oo) emphatically negates the idea that subjection to the governmental authorities because they exercise God’s righteous indignation against those who commit evil is the only reason for this subjection.

The expression *alla kai*, “**but...also**” is used “ascensively” meaning they introduce an “additional” reason for the Christian obeying the Roman governmental authorities. Therefore, these two words indicate that in addition to the Roman Christians subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities because they exercise God’s righteous indignation against those whose conduct is evil, they should also do so because of conscience. In other words, because they know God’s purpose for these authorities and that their establishment originated with Him, they were to be obedient to the authorities.

With these words, Paul is saying that not only is it imperative that the Roman believers continue to voluntarily subject themselves to the governmental authorities because they exercise God’s righteous indignation but also because of conscience in that they know God established them and they know God’s purpose for them. Therefore, we will translate these four particles *ou monon...alla kai*, “**not only...but also.**”

Corrected translation thus far of Romans 13:5: “**Therefore, to continue voluntarily subjecting yourselves is, as an eternal spiritual truth, always absolutely imperative, not only...but also...**”

Romans 13:5, “Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.”

“**Because of wrath**” is composed of the preposition *dia* (διὰ) (dee-ah), “**because of**” and the articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *orge* (ὀργή) (or-gay), “**wrath.**”

The noun *orge* refers to God's attitude of "righteous indignation" in response to any thought, word, or action of mankind and angels, that is opposed to His holiness and manifests itself in actions that judge and punish the guilty. Specifically, it refers to the expression of God's righteous indignation by the governmental authorities in administering justice against those who commit evil such as murder as restitution and retribution for the crime committed. This is how it was used in Romans 13:4.

Romans 13:4, "For you see, it is, as an eternal spiritual truth God's servant for your benefit for the purpose of encouraging that which is good in character. However, if you, at any time practice that which is evil in character, then begin and continue to live in a state of fear because it, as an eternal spiritual truth by no means exists in the state of bearing the sword without justification because it is, as an eternal spiritual truth God's servant, an avenger for the purpose of exercising God's righteous indignation against those who exist in a state of committing that which is evil in character."

Paul is teaching that God expresses His righteous indignation towards sin and evil when the governmental authority executes justice and punishes those who commit evil such as murder as restitution and retribution for the evil committed.

The word contains the figure of metonymy meaning that righteous indignation is put for the exercise of God's righteous indignation.

The article preceding the word is anaphoric indicating that the word was used in Romans 13:4 and retains its same meaning here.

The noun *orge* functions as the object of the preposition *dia*, which functions as a marker of cause or reason, with focus upon instrumentality. This indicates that Paul's readers are to continue voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authority because it is an instrumentality that God uses to exercise His righteous indignation against those whose conduct is evil. We will translate the prepositional phrase *dia ten orgen*, "**because of this exercise of righteous indignation.**"

Corrected translation thus far of Romans 13:5: "**Therefore, to continue voluntarily subjecting yourselves is, as an eternal spiritual truth, always absolutely imperative, not only because of this exercise of righteous indignation but also...**"

Romans 13:5, "Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake."

"**For conscience's sake**" is composed of the preposition *dia* (διὰ) (dee-ah), "**because of**" and the articular accusative feminine singular form of the noun *suneidesis* (συνείδησις) (soon-ay-dee-sees), "**conscience.**"

The noun *suneidesis* is composed of the preposition *sun*, "with" and the noun *eidesis*, "knowledge," thus the word literally means, "a knowing with." It is the

exact counterpart of the Latin *con-science*, “a knowing with,” a shared or joint knowledge.

The word in classical Greek occurs in legal contexts of witnesses who share testimony. It is used in a reflexive sense signifying “consciousness” and from this it means “inner consciousness,” or in other words “conscience.”

Conscience carries moral implications in that it is a knowledge of right and wrong. It has a negative nuance in that self-examination often results in condemnation.

Suneidesis appears only once in the canonical portion of the Septuagint (Ecclesiastes 10:20). Even though this word does not explicitly develop the concept of the conscience in the Septuagint, this concept was not unknown to the Old Testament writers who used the term “heart” as the site of confrontation, confession and repentance.

The word appears thirty times in the Greek New Testament.

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains lists the following definitions for the noun: (1) to be aware of information about something – ‘to know, to be conscious of, to be aware of’ (volume 2, page 335). (2) the psychological faculty which can distinguish between right and wrong – ‘moral sensitivity, conscience’ (volume 2, page 324).

The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised, “consciousness; a present idea, persisting notion, impression of reality; conscience, as an inward moral impression of one’s actions and principles; conscience, as the inward faculty of moral judgment; conscience, as the inward moral and spiritual frame” (Pages 391).

The New Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon: (1) the conscience of anything (2) the soul as distinguishing between what is morally good and bad, prompting to do the former and shun the latter, commending the one, condemning the other; conscience (Pages 602-603).

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third edition lists the following: (1) awareness of information about something, consciousness (2) the inward faculty of distinguishing right and wrong, moral consciousness, conscience (3) attentiveness to obligation, conscientiousness (Pages 967-968).

Vine makes the following comment regarding the word, “*Suneidesis*, lit., ‘a knowing with’ (*sun*, ‘with,’ *oida*, ‘to know’), i. e., ‘a co-knowledge (with oneself), the witness borne to one’s conduct by conscience, that faculty by which we apprehend the will of God, as that which is designed to govern our lives’; hence (a) the sense of guiltiness before God; Heb 10:2; (b) that process of thought which distinguishes what it considers morally good or bad, commending the good, condemning the bad, and so prompting to do the former, and avoid the latter; Rom 2:15 (bearing witness with God’s law); 9:1; 1:12; acting in a certain way because

'conscience' requires it, Rom 13:5; so as not to cause scruples of 'conscience' in another, 1 Cor 10:28-29; not calling a thing in question unnecessarily, as if conscience demanded it, 1 Cor 10:25,27; 'commending oneself to every man's conscience,' 2 Cor 4:2; cf. 5:11. There may be a 'conscience' not strong enough to distinguish clearly between the lawful and the unlawful, 1 Cor 8:7, 10, 12 (some regard consciousness as the meaning here). The phrase 'conscience toward God,' in 1 Peter 2:19, signifies a 'conscience' (or perhaps here, a consciousness) so controlled by the apprehension of God's presence, that the person realizes that griefs are to be borne in accordance with His will. Heb 9:9 teaches that sacrifices under the Law could not so perfect a person that he could regard himself as free from guilt. (Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (c) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

Conscience is our awareness of ourselves in all the relationships of life, especially ethical relationships. We have ideas of right and wrong; and when we perceive their truth and claims on us, and do not obey, then our souls are at war with itself and with the law of God.

Suneidesis is that process of thought which distinguishes what it considers morally good or bad, commending the good, condemning the bad, and so prompting to do the former and avoid the latter.

Proverbs 20:27, "The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD, searching all the innermost parts of his being."

Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary defines conscience, "A person's inner awareness of conforming to the will of God or departing from it, resulting in either a sense of approval or condemnation."

The Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains defines *suneidesis*, "the psychological faculty, which can distinguish between right from wrong." (Volume 1, page 324).

Franklin P. Jones wrote that "Conscience is a small, still voice that makes minority reports."

Someone once said, "Conscience is also what makes a boy tell his mother before his sister does."

The conscience is that aspect of the soul that evaluates one's actions and distinguishes between right from wrong.

Warren Wiersbe writes, "Wherever you go, you find people with an inner sense of right and wrong; and this inner judge, the Bible calls 'conscience.' You find among all cultures a sense of sin, a fear of judgment, and an attempt to atone for sins and appease whatever gods are feared." (The Bible Exposition Commentary, page 520).

A. W. Tozer writes, "Conscience singles you out as though nobody else existed. God has given us a faithful witness inside of our own being...It is able to single a

man out and reveal his loneliness, the loneliness of a single soul in the universe going on to meet an angry God. That's the terror of the conscience. Conscience never deals with theories. Conscience always deals with right and wrong and the relation of the individual to that which is right or wrong. Remember the conscience is always on God's side! It judges conduct in the light of the moral law, and as the Scripture says, excuses or accuses."

Barclay commenting on the conscience, writes, "The instinctive knowledge of right and wrong. The Stoics said that in the universe there were certain laws operative which a man broke at his peril—the laws of health, the moral laws which govern life and living. The Stoics called these laws *phusis*, which means nature, and urged men to live *kata phusin*, 'according to nature.' It is Paul's argument that in the very nature of man there is an instinctive knowledge of what he ought to do. The Greeks would have agreed with that. Aristotle said, 'The cultivated and free-minded man will so behave as being a law to himself.' Plutarch asks, 'Who shall govern the governor?' And he answers, 'Law, the king of all mortals and immortals...which is not written on papyrus rolls or wooden tablets, but is his own reason within the soul, which perpetually dwells with him and guards him and never leaves his soul bereft of leadership.'"

John A. Witmer writes, "Conscience is an important part of human nature, but it is not an absolutely trustworthy indicator of what is right. One's conscience can be 'good' (Acts 23:1; 1 Timothy 1:5, 19) and 'clear' (Acts 24:16; 1 Timothy 3:9; 2 Timothy 1:3; Hebrews 13:18), but it can also be 'guilty' (Hebrews 10:22), 'corrupted' (Titus 1:15), 'weak' (1 Corinthians 8:7, 10, 12) and 'seared' (1 Timothy 4:2). All people need to trust the Lord Jesus Christ so that the 'blood of Christ' might 'cleans[e] [their] consciences' (Hebrews 9:14)." (Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament Edition, page 446).

Immanuel Kant wrote, "Two things fill the mind with ever-increasing wonder and awe...: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me."

Warren Wiersbe writes, "Conscience is that inner faculty that indicates to us whether our actions are right or wrong, according to the standards within our hearts...Conscience is not the law; conscience bears witness to the law. Conscience is not the standard; conscience bears witness to the standard. In different parts of the world there are different standards. Let me illustrate this. When the British took over India as part of their empire, they found some practices that simply had to be abolished. One of these practices was to burn the widow of a deceased man on the funeral pyre. The British issued a law abolishing this practice. One of the religious leaders among the Indian people came to a British leader and said, 'Our conscience tells us that the widow must be burned.' And he responded, 'And our conscience tells us that if you do it, we'll hang you!' That gives the

difference, doesn't it? Conscience can guide us aright if we have the right standard." (Real Peace, pages 92-93).

The conscience is that aspect of the soul and psychological faculty that approves when we do right and accuses when we do wrong.

On the subject of conscience Martin Luther declared before the court of the Roman Empire at Worms in 1521, "My conscience is captive to the Word of God. ... I am more afraid of my own heart than of the pope and all his cardinals. I have within me the great pope, Self."

Billy Graham wrote concerning the importance of a clear conscience, "To have a guilty conscience is a feeling. Psychologists may define it as a guilt complex, and may seek to rationalize away the sense of guilt, but once it has been awakened through the application of the law of God, no explanation will quiet the insistent voice of conscience."

Webster defines "conscience" as the sense or consciousness of the moral goodness or blameworthiness of one's own conduct, intentions, or character together with a feeling of obligation to do right or be good.

Oswald Chambers wrote, "The conscience is that innate faculty in a man's spirit that attaches itself to the highest that the man knows."

Suneidesis is used thirty times in the Greek New Testament. Paul uses the word about twenty times, which is more than any other New Testament writer. In addition to an innate awareness of God's law, men have a warning system that activates when they choose to ignore or disobey that law and it is this instinctive, built-in sense of right and wrong that activates guilt. All mankind has an innate inner sense of right and wrong, which Scripture refers to as "conscience."

Sociologists have encountered in all cultures a sense of sin and fear of judgment which leads that culture to make some attempt to appease whatever gods are feared and this built in discernment of right and wrong is what Paul alludes to in Romans 2:15.

Romans 2:13-15, "For you see, the hearers of the Law are, as an eternal spiritual truth, absolutely never righteous before God but rather the doers of the Law will, as an eternal spiritual truth, be justified. Since, whenever Gentiles, who, as a fact of history, do not possess the Law, obey, at any time, instinctively the principles belonging to the Law, although, these, as a fact of history, do not possess the Law, they, as an eternal spiritual truth, manifest that they possess inherently, a law, which belongs to them who, indeed by virtue of their obedient character, demonstrate, as an eternal spiritual truth and fact of history, the conduct produced by obedience to the Law as written on their hearts. During which time their conscience does confirm the testimony, namely, their thoughts alternately, at any time, making an accusation or else, at any time, making a defense."

Conscience is like an inner judge that accuses and condemns us when we have done wrong and approves and commends us when we have done right. The conscience varies in sensitivity, depending on the degree of one's knowledge of and feeling about right and wrong. The person who has considerable knowledge of God's Word will have a more sensitive conscience than someone who has never had opportunity to know Scripture.

Furthermore, repeated sinning hardens the conscience so that it becomes "seared" like scar tissue (1 Timothy 4:2). To continually reject God's truth causes the conscience to become progressively calloused, hardened and less sensitive to sin, as if covered with layers of unspiritual scar tissue.

To have a "clear conscience" does not mean that we have never sinned or do not commit acts of sin but rather it means that the underlying direction and motive of life is to obey and please God, so that acts of sin are habitually recognized as such and confessed to God the Father (1 John 1:9).

1 John 1:9, "If any of us does at any time confess our sins, then, He (God the Father) is faithful and just with the result that He forgives us our sins and purifies us from each and every wrongdoing."

The first manifestation in history of the function of the conscience was in the Garden of Eden when Adam and the Woman disobeyed the Lord's command and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 3:1-17). The function of the conscience is further illustrated with Joseph's brothers who were convicted by their collective conscience for selling him into slavery when he was seventeen years of age (Genesis 42).

Therefore, in Romans 13:5, the noun *suneidesis* means "conscience" and speaks of that aspect of the human soul where the Christian's norms and standards reside, which are to be based upon the teaching of the Spirit in the Word of God. The word refers to knowledge of the fact that God established human government as His servant to encourage good conduct by commending such conduct and to discourage evil conduct by inflicting capital punishment upon evil doers. Paul's statements in Romans 1:8 and 15:14-15 clearly indicate that Paul's teaching in Romans 13:1-4 was a reminder to his readers to continue doing what he taught in Romans 13:1-4. Therefore, *suneidesis* in Romans 13:5 is used by Paul to denote his readers knowledge of God's purpose for establishing human government and their knowledge of His will for them in relation to this institution.

This knowledge serves as his readers' norms and standards and their conscience bears witness to that standard. It also serves as a guide to their conscience.

The word functions as the object of the preposition *dia*, which functions as a marker of cause or reason. This indicates that Paul's readers were to continue voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authority "because" of their conscience. In other words, they were to obey the governmental authorities

because in their conscience, which is based upon the Word of God, they possessed knowledge of God's purpose for human government and their responsibility to this institution.

The definite article before the word functions as a possessive personal pronoun indicating whose conscience the context implies.

We will translate the prepositional phrase *dia ten suneidesin*, “**because of your conscience.**”

This prepositional phrase indicates clearly that in Romans 13:1-7 Paul is addressing only believers and not unbelievers since the latter are not compelled to obey civil government because they know it is God's will for them to do so but rather they obey because they know they will be punished if they don't. So in this passage, Paul is addressing the Christian's “conscientious subjection” to the governmental authorities. The believer is held to a higher standard than the unbeliever in that the unbeliever obeys the authorities because of fear of punishment if he does not whereas the Christian obeys because it is the will of the Father for him or her to do so.

Completed corrected translation of Romans 13:5: “**Therefore, to continue voluntarily subjecting yourselves is, as an eternal spiritual truth, always absolutely imperative, not only because of this exercise of righteous indignation but also because of your conscience.**”

To summarize, Paul's statement in Romans 13:5 is a summarization and a self-evident inference or conclusion based upon his teaching in Romans 13:1-4. Therefore, based upon this teaching, to continue to voluntarily subject themselves to the governmental authorities in Rome was always absolutely imperative for Paul's Christian readers in Rome.

First of all, it was imperative because the Roman governmental authorities exercised God's righteous indignation against those who conduct was evil. Secondly, and most importantly for Paul's readers they were to obey the authorities because they already received revelation from the Spirit that human government was established by God and that it was the will of the Father that they obey the authorities. This revelation was received through their teachers as implied in Romans 15:15, and which revelation Paul reiterates in Romans 13:1-4.

Romans 13:6-The Christian Pays Taxes To Governmental Authorities Because They Are God’s Public Servants, Dedicated To This Very Thing

By way of review, the apostle Paul in Romans 13:1 issues a command for his Christian readers in Rome to continue making it their habit of voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities in Rome. Then, he presents the reason as to why the Roman believers should continue doing this, namely because there is, as an eternal spiritual truth, absolutely no authority that exists on the earth except by God. Lastly, he defines specifically this reason by teaching that those governmental authorities, which do at any time in history exist on the earth have been ordained from eternity past by God the Father under the divine decree.

Romans 13:1, “Each and every person must continue making it their habit of voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities because there is, as an eternal spiritual truth, absolutely no authority except by God. Specifically, those which at any time do exist are, as an eternal spiritual truth, ordained by God.”

In Romans 13:2, Paul presents an inference from his instruction in verse 1 by teaching that the Christian who at any time does set himself or herself in opposition against any governmental authority is in a state of opposition against this institution, which originates from God the Father. He advances upon this statement teaching also that those Christians who are in a state of opposition against any governmental authority will, as a certainty, undergo judgment at the hands of these authorities for the detriment of themselves.

Romans 13:2, “Therefore, the one who, at any time does set himself or herself in opposition against this authority is in a state of opposition against this institution originating with God the Father. In fact, those who are in a state of opposition will, as a certainty, undergo judgment for the detriment of themselves.”

Then, Paul in Romans 13:3 resumes the discussion from verse 1 as to why the Romans believers are to obey the command in verse 1 to continue to voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities. The statement presents an additional reason why they should obey his command in verse 1. This would indicate that the Roman believers also must continue to voluntarily subject themselves to the governmental authorities because governmental rulers are a cause of fear for those whose conduct is evil.

Then, he poses a rhetorical question that follows as a logical consequence of this previous statement. Thus, Paul is saying that since governmental rulers are a cause of fear for law breakers consequently or as a logical consequence to this if you do not want to live in fear of the authorities, then obey the laws of the land. The command that presents the logical consequence of the rhetorical question

requires that Paul's Christian readers in Rome must continue practicing that which is good, i.e. obedience to the laws of the Roman government.

Lastly, this command is followed by a result clause indicating that if Paul's readers continue making it their habit of practicing that which is good in character, i.e. obedience to the governing authorities, the result will be that they will receive praise from the governing authorities. The implication of this result is that Paul wants his readers to be outstanding citizens since only those who were outstanding citizens received commendation from the Roman government.

Romans 13:3, "Furthermore, rulers are, as an eternal spiritual truth, never a cause of fear with respect to conduct which is good in character but rather with respect to that which is evil in character. Consequently, do you desire not to live in a state of fear of this authority? Continue making it your habit of practicing that which is good in character so that you will, as a certainty, experience recognition from the same."

Then, in Romans 13:4, Paul makes two assertions that explain or elaborate on Paul's previous statements in verse 3 with regards to the positive and negative function of governmental authority.

Romans 13:4, "For you see, it is, as an eternal spiritual truth God's servant for your benefit for the purpose of encouraging that which is good in character. However, if you, at any time practice that which is evil in character, then begin and continue to live in a state of fear because it, as an eternal spiritual truth by no means exists in the state of bearing the sword without justification because it is, as an eternal spiritual truth God's servant, an avenger for the purpose of exercising God's righteous indignation against those who exist in a state of committing that which is evil in character."

Romans 13:4 can be divided grammatically into five sections. First of all, the passage begins with an explanatory statement that is divided into two sections:

(1) A declarative statement: **"It is, as an eternal spiritual truth God's servant for your benefit for the purpose of encouraging that which is good in character."**

This assertion elaborates on the positive function of governmental authority, which he addresses in the command at the end of verse 3.

Romans 13:3, "Furthermore, rulers are, as an eternal spiritual truth, never a cause of fear with respect to conduct which is good in character but rather with respect to that which is evil in character. Consequently, do you desire not to live in a state of fear of this authority? Continue making it your habit of practicing that which is good in character so that you will, as a certainty, experience recognition from the same."

(2) Adversative clause containing a fifth class condition: **“However, if you, at any time practice that which is evil in character, then begin and continue to live in a state of fear.”**

This assertion elaborates on the negative function of governmental authority, which Paul mentions in the causal clause at the beginning of verse 3.

Romans 13:3, “Furthermore, rulers are, as an eternal spiritual truth, never a cause of fear with respect to conduct which is good in character but rather with respect to that which is evil in character. Consequently, do you desire not to live in a state of fear of this authority? Continue making it your habit of practicing that which is good in character so that you will, as a certainty, experience recognition from the same.”

Then, on the heels of the adversative clause, which contains a fifth class condition, we have a causal clause that elaborates on this negative function: **“Because it, as an eternal spiritual truth by no means exists in the state of bearing the sword without justification.”**

This causal clause presents the reason why Paul’s readers should live in a state of fear for practicing evil, namely, that God has delegated authority to the government to inflict capital punishment for those who practice evil such as murder. This causal clause is followed by another one: **“Because it is, as an eternal spiritual truth God’s servant.”** It teaches that governmental authority is justified for inflicting capital punishment upon those who commit evil because they serve God by doing so.

Lastly, this second causal clause is followed by an epexegetical clause: **“An avenger for the purpose of exercising God’s righteous indignation against those who exist in a state of committing that which is evil in character.”**

This clause is clarifying for the reader exactly the responsibility of the governmental authorities in relation to God the Father’s purpose for them. It teaches that when the governmental authority uses capital punishment against criminals it is expressing God’s righteous indignation. Therefore, in Romans 13:4, Paul is teaching his readers that governmental rulers are God’s servants, which is demonstrated by these two functions.

For the Christian, the positive function of governmental authority is that it encourages conduct that is in obedience to the Father’s will in relation to one’s fellow human being, which can be summarized by the command to love one’s neighbor as oneself. The negative function discourages conduct that it is evil or in other words, it discourages conduct that is in disobedience to the will of God. Governmental authority serves God by fulfilling these two functions.

Romans 13:5 is a summarization and a self-evident inference or conclusion based upon his teaching in Romans 13:1-4.

Romans 13:5, “Therefore, to continue voluntarily subjecting yourselves is, as an eternal spiritual truth, always absolutely imperative, not only because of this exercise of righteous indignation but also because of your conscience.”

Therefore, based upon this teaching, to continue to voluntarily subject themselves to the governmental authorities in Rome was always absolutely imperative for Paul’s Christian readers in Rome.

Next, we will study Romans 13:6, which advances upon the statement in verse 5 and intensifies it emphasizing with Paul’s readers in Rome that they pay taxes to the governmental authorities because they are God’s public servants who are dedicated to this very thing.

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

“For” is the “emphatic” or “intensifying” use of the post-positive conjunction *gar* (γάρ), which introduces a statement that advances upon his statement in verse 5 and intensifies it.

Romans 13:5, “Therefore, to continue voluntarily subjecting yourselves is, as an eternal spiritual truth, always absolutely imperative, not only because of this exercise of righteous indignation but also because of your conscience.”

Romans 13:5 is a summarization and a self-evident inference or conclusion based upon his teaching in Romans 13:1-4. Therefore, based upon this teaching, to continue to voluntarily subject themselves to the governmental authorities in Rome was always absolutely imperative for Paul’s Christian readers in Rome.

First of all, it was imperative because the Roman governmental authorities exercised God’s righteous indignation against those who conduct was evil. Secondly, and most importantly for Paul’s readers they were to obey the authorities because they already received revelation from the Spirit that human government was established by God and that it was the will of the Father that they obey the authorities. This revelation was received through their teachers as implied in Romans 15:15, and which revelation Paul reiterates in Romans 13:1-4.

The noun *suneidesis*, “**conscience**” speaks of that aspect of the human soul where the Christian’s norms and standards reside, which are to be based upon the teaching of the Spirit in the Word of God. The word refers to knowledge of the fact that God established human government as His servant to encourage good conduct by commending such conduct and to discourage evil conduct by inflicting capital punishment upon evil doers. Paul’s statements in Romans 1:8 and 15:14-15 clearly indicate that Paul’s teaching in Romans 13:1-4 was a reminder to his readers to continue doing what he taught in Romans 13:1-4. Therefore, *suneidesis* in Romans 13:5 is used by Paul to denote his readers knowledge of God’s purpose for establishing human government and their knowledge of His will for them in relation to this institution. This knowledge serves as his readers’ norms and

standards and their conscience bears witness to that standard. It also serves as a guide to their conscience.

The word functions as the object of the preposition *dia*, which functions as a marker of cause or reason. This indicates that Paul's readers were to continue voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authority "because" of their conscience. The norms and standards residing in their conscience were based upon the Word of God and thus they possessed knowledge of God's purpose for human government and their responsibility to this institution to subject themselves to it.

Therefore, in Romans 13:6, Paul teaches that the Roman believers pay taxes because of conscience in the sense that they pay taxes because they knew that all authority originates from God and is His servant and that it is the will of the Father that the Roman believers subject themselves to these authorities. So in Romans 13:6, Paul is relating the Roman believers' conscientious subjection to the governmental authorities in Rome mentioned in verse 5 with their paying taxes to these authorities. Consequently, Paul is teaching the Roman believers that they pay taxes to the Roman governmental authorities because of their knowledge that they, like all human government, were established by God and are His servants to encourage good conduct and discourage evil conduct. They also pay taxes because of their knowledge that it is God's will that they subject themselves to the governmental authorities. Paul's statement in verse 6 is teaching the Roman believers that their paying taxes to the government is an implicit recognition of the authority and power over them that was delegated to them by God. We will translate *gar*, "in fact."

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

"**Because of this**" is composed of the preposition *dia* (διὰ) (dee-ah), which is followed by the accusative neuter singular form of the immediate demonstrative pronoun *houtos* (οὗτος), "**this**."

This expression introduces a comparison that is drawn from a conclusion from the statement in verse 5. The preposition *dia*, "**because of**" with the accusative form of *houtos*, "**this**" functions as a marker of cause denoting the basis or reason for the Roman believers paying taxes to the Roman governmental authorities because of their conscience. The immediate demonstrative pronoun *houtos* "**this**" is "anaphoric" referring to the immediate preceding statement in verse 5. Therefore, in Romans 13:6, Paul teaches that the Roman believers pay taxes because of conscience in the sense that they pay taxes because they knew that all authority originates from God and is His servant and that it is the will of the Father that the Roman believers subject themselves to these authorities.

So in Romans 13:6, Paul is relating the Roman believers' conscientious subjection to the governmental authorities in Rome mentioned in verse 5 with their

paying taxes to these authorities. Consequently, Paul is teaching the Roman believers that they pay taxes to the Roman governmental authorities because of their knowledge that they, like all human government, were established by God and are His servants to encourage good conduct and discourage evil conduct. They also pay taxes because of their knowledge that it is God's will that they subject themselves to the governmental authorities. Therefore, we will translate *dia touto*, "because of this."

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

"You pay taxes" is composed the second person plural present active indicative form of the verb *teleo* (τελέω) (te-lay-o), "you pay" and the accusative masculine plural form of the noun *phoros* (φόρος) (foe-roce), "taxes."

The noun *phoros* is related to the verb *phero*, "to bear, carry" and means literally "that which is brought in by way of payment (Liddell-Scott, page 1951). It has a broad sense of "payment" which is owed for whatever reason. This sense is found in the papyri, which have examples of bill for the "payment" of rent on property (Moulton-Milligan, page 674).

In the first century *phoros* denoted the "tax" or "tribute" exacted by the Roman government from all subject peoples. This tax was to support the Roman government as it is served the purposes of God that were clearly delineated by Paul in Romans 13:1-5.

The word appears five times in the Greek New Testament (Luke 20:22; 23:2; Romans 13:6, 7 twice).

Luke 20:19-26, "The scribes and the chief priests tried to lay hands on Him that very hour, and they feared the people; for they understood that He spoke this parable against them. So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, in order that they might catch Him in some statement, so that they could deliver Him to the rule and the authority of the governor. They questioned Him, saying, 'Teacher, we know that You speak and teach correctly, and You are not partial to any, but teach the way of God in truth. Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?' But He detected their trickery and said to them, 'Show Me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?' They said, 'Caesar's.' And He said to them, 'Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.' And they were unable to catch Him in a saying in the presence of the people; and being amazed at His answer, they became silent."

Luke 23:1-2, "Then the whole body of them got up and brought Him before Pilate. And they began to accuse Him, saying, 'We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that He Himself is Christ, a King.'"

Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament writes, “*Phoros* is the direct tribute (property or head tax) of a subjected people to the foreign ruler” (volume 3, page 436).

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition defines *phoros*, “that which is brought in as payment to a state, with the implication of dependent status, tribute, tax” (Page 1064).

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains, “payment made by the people of one nation to another, with the implication that this is a symbol of submission and dependence – ‘tribute tax’ (volume 2, page 578).

The New Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon lists the following meanings, “tribute, especially the annual tax levied upon houses, lands and persons” (Page 657).

The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised, “tribute, tax, strictly such as is laid on dependent and subject people” (Page 424).

In Romans 13:6, the noun *phoros* is in the plural and means “taxes” referring to that which is received by the Roman government from its citizens and those nations that were subjected to it for services rendered.

This word referred to a direct tax and obligation of the inhabitants of those lands which Rome had absorbed into its empire, either voluntarily or by force. It was in the form of a land tax (*tributum soli*) and a poll tax (*tributum capitis*), which was levied on those living in the provinces whether they were Roman citizens or not. The Roman government did not make an exception for citizens in the provinces since according to P. A. Brunt the Roman government “neglected no source of provincial revenue which might have relieved the purses of Italians” (Roman Imperial Themes; page 327; Oxford: Clarendon, 1990). For those citizens living in the provinces to be exempt from taxation was the greatest privilege given by the Emperor. Those who lived in Roman colonies and had been awarded *ius Italicum* were free of taxation.

Not only was *phoros* a direct tax but indicated a tribute by subject peoples. The secular writings of those during the New Testament period indicate that this (Josephus, BJ, 2.402-406; Philo, Spec. I.142-143; 1 Macc. (LXX) 10.29; Diodorus Siculus, Hist. 1.18.5-6, 10.25.4, 11.47.1; Strabo, Geog. 4.5.3).

The *phoros* tax was aimed at subject peoples and thus was resented by the Jews in Judea. So not only did *phoros* refer to a direct tax but much more in that it was a tax placed upon those nations which were in subjection to the Roman government.

Telos, “**custom**” is found only in Matthew 17:25 and Romans 13:7 and usually refers to the taxes that were levied at ports of entry such as bridges, crossroads and places of commerce on the transport and sale of goods.

The Latin term for the *phoros* tax was called the *vectigalia*. The Greek term for a tax collector was *telones* and the Latin term *publicanus*.

The Roman government in New Testament times collected a variety of indirect taxes and tolls from the provinces through members of the local populations. One became a tax collector by bidding against others to guarantee the highest amount of money to the tax farmers (the true *publicani*) who were directly responsible to the Roman government. Under this arrangement, there was the opportunity for corruption at several levels where individuals inflated taxes and tolls for personal profit.

The verb *teleo* is from the verb *teleioo* and is common in both classical and Biblical Greek and means, “to complete, perform, fulfill.” In classical Greek it was frequently used from Homer on and often carried the sense of completing one’s will.

Plato uses this word to describe the universe as being completed according to a plan. It is also used of “carrying out” a promise and to “carry out” or “execute” the orders given to soldiers. Plato used it of “executing” God’s will.

In classical Greek, the verb *teleo* at times could mean, “to complete, perform” obligations to pay taxes or tribute. It was used to signify the “execution” of a dangerous action.

The verb *teleo* refers to the carrying out of religious duties and the performing of prayers. The word is often translated “to pay debts.” It can be used of bringing something to an end.

Aristotle employed the word to denote the bringing to an end the years of a person’s life. Josephus used *teleo* in terms of fulfilling a promise and also to denote the concept of paying tribute to masters.

In the Septuagint the verb *teleo* appears with the meaning of “to complete” or “to fulfill.” The classical sense of “to render” and “to pay” do not appear in the Septuagint. Also, the use fulfilling a religious obligation is rare and when it does it is used with reference to keeping vows to heathen gods (Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, volume 8, page 58) (Numbers 25:3; Psalm 106:28 [LXX 105:28]).

The verb *teleo* appears 28 times in the Greek New Testament.

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition: (1) to complete an activity or process, bring to an end, finish, complete (2) to carry out an obligation or demand, carry out, accomplish, perform, fulfill, keep (3) to pay what is due, pay (Pages 997-998).

The New Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon lists the following meanings of the word in the Greek New Testament: (1) To bring to a close, to finish, to end (2) To perform, execute, complete, fulfill (so that the thing done corresponds to what has been said, the order, command, etc), with special reference to the subject-matter, to

carry out the contents of a command; with reference also to the form, to do just as commanded and generally involving a notion of time, to perform the last act, which completes a process, to accomplish, fulfill (3) To pay (page 619).

The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised lists the following: (1) To finish, complete, conclude, an operation (2) To finish a circuit (3) To fulfill, to carry out into full operation (4) To pay dues (5) Passively, to be fulfilled, realized (6) Of time, to be ended, elapse.

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains: (1) To bring an activity to a successful finish – ‘to complete, to finish, to end, to accomplish’ (volume 1, page 658) (2) To occur or happen at the end of a duration – ‘to end, to come to an end’ (volume 1, page 638) (3) To cause to happen for some end result – ‘to make happen, to fulfill, to bring to fruition, to accomplish, fulfillment’ (volume 1, page 163) (4) To obey as a means of fulfilling the purpose of a rule or standard – ‘to obey, to keep’ (volume 1, page 468) (5) To pay tax or tribute – ‘to pay taxes, to pay customs duty’ (volume 1, page 578).

The verb *teleo* appeared for the first time in the Roman epistle in Romans 2:27 where it meant, “to fulfill perfectly.”

Romans 2:27, “In fact, the physically uncircumcised by fulfilling perfectly the Law will condemn you who are by means of Scripture and circumcision a transgressor of the Law.”

In Romans 13:6, the verb *teleo* means “to pay what is due” and the noun *phoros* means “taxes.” Therefore, these two words refer to the Roman believers fulfilling their obligation of paying taxes to the Roman governmental authorities who are servants of God. Paul is echoing the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ that is recorded in Luke 20:19-26.

The second person plural form of the verb *teleo* refers to all of Paul’s Christian readers in Rome without exception as a corporate unit.

The present tense of the verb is a customary present used to signal an action that regularly occurs or repeated action indicating that the Roman believers “make it a habit of” paying taxes to the Roman government because they know that is the will of God that they should do so.

The active voice of the verb denotes the Roman believers as the subject performing the action of customarily or habitually paying taxes to the Roman government because they know that it is the will of God that they should do so.

The indicative mood is “declarative” presenting this assertion as an unqualified statement of fact and Bible doctrine.

The noun *phoros* functions as an accusative direct object meaning that it is receiving the action of the verb *teleo*.

We will translate the verb *teleo*, “**all of you make it a habit of paying**” and the noun *phoros*, “**direct tribute tax.**”

Tertullian writes “that which the Romans lost by the Christians refusing to bestow gifts on their temples, they gained by their conscientious payment of taxes” (Cited by Wuest, Word Studies in the Greek New Testament, volume 1, page 226).

It is important for Christians to understand that they are still to pay their taxes to the government even if they think their money is not being used wisely by the government. Governmental leaders are accountable to God and will have to give an account as to how they used their citizen’s tax money. They have a stewardship for which they are accountable to God just as parents have one as well as pastors and employers. In Paul’s day, the Roman Empire did not always use tax money for godly purposes, yet he commanded believers to obey the government and pay their taxes.

Archaeological Study Bible makes the following comment regarding Roman taxation as it relates to Romans 13:1-7, they write, “In the Roman Republic the regular tax was called the *vectigalia*, although an extra levy called the *tributum* could also be raised. The Senate annually set the amount of revenue to be collected. With the expansion of Roman power, however, an enormous amount of wealth poured into Rome from the provinces and the empire was less dependent upon taxes raised from its own citizens. Governors raised taxes for Rome from the provinces, enriching themselves in the process. Provincials suffered grievously under this arrangement but a governor who showed restraint and fairness could earn the admiration of the local people (as did Cicero when governing Cilicia in Asia Minor). With the establishment of the empire, Augustus Caesar created a regular bureaucracy for conducting the census and collecting taxes (See Lk. 2:1). The provinces were subjected to both a poll tax and a land tax. The revenue supported the army, the imperial household, government salaries, road maintenance and public works, as well as the dole of grain for the Roman masses. The actual task of gathering revenues in the provinces was farmed out to private companies of tax collectors called *publicani* or *conductores*. These tax collectors accumulated enough money to meet the demands of the state and also to retain a profit for themselves. As the New Testament reflects, *publicani* were hated by the people (Mt. 18:17; Lk. 18:11). Taxation could be heavy and unfair, and the *publicani* were regarded as greedy traitors serving foreign overlords. Issues involving taxation appear repeatedly in the New Testament. Jesus Himself paid taxes, although His means of raising the money to do so was unusual (See Mt. 17:24-27; this tax was levied upon the Jews for the upkeep of the Jerusalem temple). The very image of Caesar on Roman coinage caused something of a religious dilemma for the Jews, although Jesus considered scruples concerning the matter to be more contrived than sincere (Mt. 22:15-22). Paul, in Romans 13:6-7, was clear that the collection of taxes by a government is legitimate and the payment of taxes by Christians imperative. Set against the backdrop of the Roman

taxation of the times, this was clearly a stand based upon principle and not upon popular satisfaction with the system.” (NIV Archaeological Study Bible; page 1855; Zondervan)

Corrected translation thus far of Romans 13:6: **“In fact, because of this, all of you make it a habit of paying direct tribute taxes.”**

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

“Also” is the “ascensive” use of the conjunction *kai* (καὶ), which introduces a statement that emphatically expounds upon the statement in Romans 13:5. It also introduces an accessory idea. The ascensive use of the conjunction *kai* denotes that what is to follow, as an addition to the previous statement, is out of the ordinary or unexpected and should be translated, “even.”

Paul is teaching that not only is the Roman believers’ continued voluntary subjection of themselves to the Roman governmental authorities absolutely imperative because of their conscience but it manifests itself “even” through their paying taxes to these authorities. This was out of the ordinary from the perspective of Paul’s Christian readers in Rome since paying taxes under the Roman system was very unpopular since taxation in the Roman Empire in Paul’s day was in most instances heavy, severe and unjust and filled with corruption.

Corrected translation thus far of Romans 13:6: **“In fact, because of this, all of you make it a habit of even paying direct tribute taxes ...”**

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

“For” is the “causal” use of the post-positive conjunction *gar* (γάρ), which introduces a statement that presents the reason why Paul’s Christians readers in Rome pay taxes to the Roman governmental authorities. They do so because the governmental authorities are servants of God the Father since He has delegated to those in human government to protect the human race from the unrestricted function of the sin nature. We will translate the word “because.”

Corrected translation thus far of Romans 13:6: **“In fact, because of this, all of you make it a habit of even paying direct tribute taxes because...”**

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

“Rulers” does not translate a word in the original text but is added by the translators to clarify for the English reader who Paul is discussing.

“Are” is the third person plural present active indicative form of the verb *eimi* (εἶμι) (i-mee), which means, “to belong to a particular class of individuals” in the human race who are identified by the expression *leitourgoi theou*, “servants of God.”

Therefore, governmental authorities are a particular class of individuals chosen by God who has delegated power and authority to them to function as His servants in order to protect the human race from the unrestricted function of the sin nature.

The third person singular form of the verb means “they” and refers to the governmental authorities.

The present tense of the verb is “gnomic” used of a general timeless fact indicating an eternal spiritual truth or spiritual axiom. This indicates that the Roman governmental authorities as well as all rulers in human government are “an eternal spiritual truth” servants of God.

The active voice is “stative” indicating that the subject exists in the state indicated by the verb *eimi*. The subject is the governmental authorities. Therefore, the “stative” active voice indicates that governmental authorities “exist in the state of being” servants of God.

The indicative mood is “declarative” presenting this assertion as an unqualified statement of Bible doctrine.

We will translate *eimi*, **“they are, as an eternal spiritual truth.”**

Corrected translation thus far of Romans 13:6: **“In fact, because of this, all of you make it a habit of even paying direct tribute taxes because they are, as an eternal spiritual truth...”**

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

“**Servants of God**” is composed of the nominative masculine plural form of the noun *leitourgos* (λειτουργός) (lay-torg-ocē), “**servants**” and the genitive masculine singular form of the noun *theos* (θεός) (thay-ocē), “**of God.**”

The noun *leitourgos* means “servant, minister, one who performs manual labor, one commissioned for service.”

The word has the following cognates: (1) *leitourgeo* (λειτουργέω) (verb), “to perform public service at one’s own expense, to serve the public at one’s own expense, to perform specific services on behalf of the public, to serve, to administer an office, to provide a service” (2) *leitourgia* (λειτουργία) (noun), “service for the people, any work or service done on behalf of the public, a public service, a public duty, any type of service rendered” (3) *leitourgikos* (λειτουργικός) (adjective), “serving, concerning the service, subservient.”

These words are a compound of *leitos*, “of or for the people,” and the root *erg*, “to do work,” thus they connote public service.

Leitourgos rarely appears in classical literature. It is used in classical Greek literature for governmental and public servants, to priests in pagan religions, and to angels as spiritual ministers of God.

The demons are called *leitourgios* who are servants of the signs of the zodiac. It is often used a noun for one who ministers or serves usually in the form of manual labor, hence a worker, carpenter. The word is used of attendants at public sacrifices. It was in the military for those who work on entrenchments (pioneers).

We find it in Polybius 3.93.5 and 7; 5.2.5; 10.29.4. The word is used of the Roman lictors (Plutarch Romulus 26).

The noun *leitourgios* occurs 14 times in the Septuagint. The word is normally used for the servant (not slave) of another, a superior such as of: (1) Moses (Josh. 1:1 A of Joshua) (2) Amnon (2 Bas. 13:18). (3) Solomon (2 Bas. 10:5; 2 Ch. 9:4) (4) Elisha (4 Bas. 4:43; 6:15) (5) Ptolemy (3 Macc. 5:5).

In the Septuagint, *leitourgios* refers both to the servants who were attending to King Solomon when the Queen of Sheba visited (1 Kgs. 10:5 [LXX 3 Kgs. 10:5]) and to the priest as servants of God (Neh. 10:39).

Isaiah prophesies when the Gentiles will refer to regenerate Jews in the Millennium as servants of the Lord Jesus Christ (Isa. 61:6; cf. Ps. 103:21 [LXX 102:21]).

The noun *leitourgios* is used to translate the following Hebrew terms in the LXX: (1) *lits* (לִיט), “mock; hiphil: officer (Sir. 10:2). (2) *pelach* (פֶּלַח), “servant” (Ezr. 7:24-Aramaic). (3) *sharath* (שָׂרָח), “piel: servant, minister” (2 Kgs. 4:43; Ps. 103:21 [102:21]; Is. 61:6).

The noun *leitourgios* occurs only 5 times in the Greek New Testament (Rm. 13:6; 15:16; Phlp. 2:25; Heb. 1:7; 8:2).

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition lists the following meanings for the word: (1) one engaged in administrative or cultic service, servant, minister, the formal sense (a) of Greek-Roman officials (b) priests (2) one engaged in personal service, aide, assistant (Pages 591-592).

Vine writes that “*leitourgios* denoted among the Greeks, firstly, ‘one who discharged a public office at his own expense,’ then, in general, ‘a public servant, minister.’ In the NT it is used (a) of Christ, as a ‘Minister of the sanctuary’ (in the Heavens), Heb 8:2; (b) of angels, Heb 1:7 Ps 104:4; (c) of the apostle Paul, in his evangelical ministry, fulfilling it as a serving priest, Rom 15:16; that he used it figuratively and not in an ecclesiastical sense, is obvious from the context; (d) of Epaphroditus, as ministering to Paul's needs on behalf of the church at Philippi, Phil 2:25; here, representative service is in view; (e) of earthly rulers, who though they do not all act consciously as servants of God, yet discharge functions which are the ordinance of God, Rom 13:6. (Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (c) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

The word is used of elect angels who are servants who execute God’s judgments (Heb. 1:7). It also used of the resurrected humanity of Christ in

hypostatic union functioning in His High Priesthood interceding on behalf of believers (Heb. 8:2). The term is used of Epaphroditus here in Philippians 2:25 who functioned not only as the Philippians' spiritual commander but also as their servant to Paul's needs in Rome as he awaited the decision of his appeal before Caesar in the Praetorian Camp. Paul applies the term to himself as a servant of God (Rm. 15:16).

In Romans 13:6, *leitourgos* describes the Roman governmental authorities as servants of God (Rm. 13:6). The word denotes that the Roman governmental authorities have been commissioned by God to not only to serve Him but also those who are under their authority, which has been delegated to them by God. It describes the Roman governmental authorities and all those in human government as "public servants."

Paul does not use *diakonos* as he does in Romans 13:4 to describe the governmental authorities' relationship to God and His plan for the entire human race.

Romans 13:4, "For you see, it is, as an eternal spiritual truth God's servant for your benefit for the purpose of encouraging that which is good in character. However, if you, at any time practice that which is evil in character, then begin and continue to live in a state of fear because it, as an eternal spiritual truth by no means exists in the state of bearing the sword without justification because it is, as an eternal spiritual truth God's servant, an avenger for the purpose of exercising God's righteous indignation against those who exist in a state of committing that which is evil in character."

Rather, in Romans 13:6, Paul uses *leitourgos*, which in the ancient world described doing a service of special importance, thus it describes one who is highly respected and honored by his fellow citizens. It is a word that emphasizes service that is performed not only on behalf of God but also for one's fellow human beings. Therefore, in Romans 13:6, the word has a double sense in that it describes the Roman governmental authorities as servants of God and the public, i.e. those whom they exercise power and authority over.

The word functions as a predicate nominative meaning that it is making the assertion that the Roman governmental authorities are public servants commissioned by God for this task. We will translate *leitourgos*, "**commissioned public servants.**"

The noun *theos* refers to God the Father since the word is used of him in Romans 13:4. That the word was used of the Father in Romans 13:4 is indicated by the fact that it is used of Him in Romans 13:1-2 and 4.

Romans 13:1, "Each and every person must continue making it their habit of voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities because there is, as an eternal spiritual truth, absolutely no authority except by God.

Specifically, those which at any time do exist are, as an eternal spiritual truth, ordained by God.”

In Romans 13:1, the noun *theos* appears twice and in both instances refers to God the Father. This passage is divided into three parts. The first is a command for Paul’s Christian readers in Rome to continue making it their habit of voluntarily subjecting themselves to the governmental authorities in Rome. The second part gives the reason as to why they should continue doing this, namely because there is, as an eternal spiritual truth, absolutely no authority that exists on the earth except by God. The third part defines specifically this reason in that it teaches that those governmental authorities, which do at any time in history as exist on the earth have been ordained from eternity past by God the Father under the divine decree.

Now, the first time *theos* appears in this passage, it is in the causal clause. It is in the genitive case functioning as a genitive of agency as the object of the preposition *hupo*, which functions as a marker of ultimate personal agency indicating that God the Father is the ultimate personal agency behind human government.

The second time *theos* is used it is found in the intensifying or emphatic clause that completes the sentence. The word is used in relation to the verb *tasso*, which is a reference to the exercise of God’s sovereignty in the divine decree and the Scriptures teach that the Father is the author of the divine decree (Isaiah 46:10; Acts 2:23; 1 Peter 1:20).

The noun refers to the Father and is in the genitive case functioning as a genitive of agency and the preposition *hupo* as a marker of ultimate personal agency indicating that God the Father is the ultimate personal agency behind human government in that He ordained or decreed in eternity past their existence in time.

That *theos* refers to the Father in both instances is indicated in that the word is used in relation to the verb *tasso*, which refers to the divine decree in eternity past and the Father is the author of the divine decree. The “divine decree” is the Father’s eternal and immutable will, regarding the future existence of events, which will happen in time and regarding the precise order and manner of their occurrence and is the chosen and adopted plan of all God’s works. Therefore, the noun *theos* in both instances refers to the Father since the word is used in the second part of the verse in relation to the divine decree and the Father is the author of such decree and the third part of the sentence intensifies the causal clause that precedes.

The word appears again in Romans 13:2 and again refers to the Father as indicated by its the articular construction, which when used with this noun in the New Testament commonly signifies the first member of the Trinity.

Romans 13:2, “Therefore, the one who, at any time does set himself or herself in opposition against this authority is in a state of opposition against this institution originating with God the Father. In fact, those who are in a state of opposition will, as a certainty, undergo judgment for the detriment of themselves.”

In this passage, the noun *theos* functions as a genitive of source meaning that this institution, i.e. any human governmental authority on the earth “originates with” God, which is indicated by Romans 13:1, which taught that human governmental authorities were ordained by the Father in eternity past by His decree. Therefore, in Romans 13:4 and 5, the noun *theos* refers to the Father.

The word is a genitive of possession indicating that the Roman governmental authorities are commissioned public servants that “belong to” the Father and are His possession and thus accountable to Him. We will translate the word “**God’s**.”

Corrected translation thus far of Romans 13:6: **“In fact, because of this, all of you make it a habit of even paying direct tribute taxes because they are, as an eternal spiritual truth God’s commissioned public servants...”**

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

“**Devoting themselves**” is the nominative masculine plural present active participle form of the verb *proskartereo* (προσκαρτερῶ) (pros-kar-ta-ray-o).

The main idea behind the verb *proskartereo* in classical Greek is “persist.” When it was used of interpersonal relationship the word came to close to dedication as in the case of a slave’s faithful service. There is only one canonical appearance of this word in the Septuagint where Moses urges those who would be spying out the land of Canaan to “do their best” (Numbers 13:20 [LXX 13:21]). It appears ten times in the Greek New Testament where it denotes persistence.

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature-Third Edition lists the following meanings for the verb: (1) to stick by or be close at hand, attach oneself to, wait on, be faithful to someone (2) to persist in something (a) busy oneself with, be busily engaged in, be devoted to (b) hold fast to, continue in, persevere in something (Page 881).

Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains lists the following meanings for the verb: (1) to continue to do something with intense effort, with the possible implication of despite difficulty – ‘to devote oneself to, to keep on, to persist in’ (volume 2, page 663). (2) to associate closely and continuously with – ‘to stay close to, to associate closely with’ (volume 2, page 446). (3) to serve in a close personal relationship – ‘to serve personally’ (volume 2, page 461).

The Analytical Greek Lexicon Revised lists the following meanings for the verb, “to persist in adherence to a thing; to be intently engaged in, attend

constantly to; to remain constantly in a place; to constantly attend upon, continue near to, be at hand” (Page 35).

Vine makes the following comment regarding the verb, “*Proskartereo*, lit., ‘to be strong towards’ (*pros*, ‘towards,’ used intensively, and *kartereo*, ‘to be strong’), ‘to endure in, or persevere in, to be continually steadfast with a person or thing,’ is used of ‘continuing’ in prayer with others, Acts 1:14; Rom 12:12; Col 4:2; in the apostles’ teaching, Acts 2:42; in the Temple, 2:46 (‘continuing steadfastly,’ RV), the adverb representing the intensive preposition; in prayer and the ministry, 6:4 (RV, ‘will continue steadfastly’); of Simon Magus with Philip, 8:13. In Mark 3:9 and Acts 10:7, it signifies ‘to wait on’; in Rom 13:6, to attend ‘continually’ upon. (Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (c) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

The verb is used of persistence in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread and corporate prayer in Acts 2:42. It is used of perseverance or persistence in standing ready with respect to someone (Mark 3:9; Acts 8:13; 10:7; Romans 13:6). The word is used of persistence in prayer (Acts 1:14; 6:4; Romans 12:12; Colossians 4:2).

In Romans 13:6, the verb *proskartereo* means “to be dedicated to” being God’s commissioned public servant. Here it describes the Roman governmental authorities as being “dedicated to the function” of being God’s servants who are commissioned by Him to govern. To be dedicated to something or someone means to be set apart to God for His purpose. It means to be devoted wholly and earnestly for God’s purpose.

“**To this very thing**” is composed of the preposition *eis* (εἰς) (ice), “**to**” and the accusative neuter singular form of the intensive personal pronoun *autos* (αὐτός) (ow-tos), “**very thing**” and the accusative neuter singular form of the demonstrative pronoun *houtos* (οὗτος) (hoo-tos), “**this.**”

The preposition *eis* is a marker of purpose indicating that the purpose of the Roman governmental authorities is to serve God the Father by governing and the intensive personal pronoun *autos* emphasizes this purpose.

The demonstrative pronoun *houtos* is “anaphoric” meaning that it is pointing to the previous statement that the Roman governmental authorities are public servants commissioned by God the Father to carry out this task. Therefore, the prepositional phrase *eis auto touto* means “**to this very thing**” and refers to the previous statement that the Roman governmental authorities are public servants commissioned by God the Father.

This prepositional phrase has been variously interpreted as referring to the promotion of good conduct and the discouragement and punishment of evil conduct referred to in verses 3-4 or the collecting of taxes mentioned in verse 6 or servanthood itself. It does not refer to the collection of taxes since governmental

authorities are not continually devoted to this activity but rather their function as taught by Paul in verses 3-4 is to discourage and punish evil conduct and encourage and reward good conduct. It does not refer to the discouragement and punishment of evil conduct and the encouragement and rewarding of good conduct because the immediate demonstrative pronoun *houtos*, “**this**” is pointing to something in the immediate context. Verses 3-4 does not constitute the immediate context as compared to the previous causal clause *leitourgoi gar theou eisin*, “**because they are, as an eternal spiritual truth God’s commissioned public servants.**”

Therefore, the prepositional phrase *eis auto touto*, “**to this very purpose**” refers to this previous causal clause indicating that the Roman governmental authorities are continually dedicated and devoted to their function of being God’s commissioned public servants whether they are aware of this or not. So Paul is teaching here in Romans 13:6 that whether they are aware of it or not, those who hold positions in government are commissioned by the Father to serve Him by governing members of the human race assigned to them by the Father.

The verb *proskartereo* functions as a substantive participle as well as a nominative of simple apposition meaning that it is defining the nominative subject *leitourgos*, “**commissioned public servants.**” It is clarifying for the reader exactly God’s purpose for the governmental authorities.

The present tense and active voice of the verb is “stative” indicating that governmental rulers are “continually existing in the state of” being devoted to their function as God’s commissioned public servants. We will translate the verb “**continually dedicated to.**”

Completed corrected translation of Romans 13:6: “**In fact, because of this, all of you make it a habit of even paying direct tribute taxes because they are, as an eternal spiritual truth, God’s commissioned public servants, continually dedicated to this very thing.**”

To summarize, Paul’s statement in verse 6 advances upon his statement in verse 5 and intensifies it. In Romans 13:6, Paul teaches that the Roman believers pay taxes because of conscience in the sense that they pay taxes because they knew that all authority originates from God and is His servant and that it is the will of the Father that the Roman believers subject themselves to these authorities. So in this passage, he is relating the Roman believers’ conscientious subjection to the governmental authorities in Rome mentioned in verse 5 with their paying taxes to these authorities. Consequently, Paul is teaching the Roman believers that they pay taxes to the Roman governmental authorities because of their knowledge that they, like all human government, were established by God and are His servants to encourage good conduct and discourage evil conduct. They also pay taxes because

of their knowledge that it is God's will that they subject themselves to the governmental authorities.

Paul's statement in verse 6 is teaching the Roman believers that their paying taxes to the government is an implicit recognition of the authority and power over them that was delegated to them by God.

Then, in this passage, he teaches that the reason why Paul's Christians readers in Rome pay taxes to the Roman governmental authorities is that they are God's public servant since the Father has delegated authority to govern and protect the human race from the unrestricted function of the sin nature. Therefore, Paul is teaching that the institution of human government is a manifestation of God's sovereign rule over human beings and functions as His servant to carry out His purpose of protecting and sustaining and blessing the human race.