

Respect; Not Worship

Description

Romans 13:1-7.

Earlier in this week's devotionals, Jesus was approached by a group of Pharisees and Herodians who were trying to trap Him with a question about paying taxes. Jesus's response was to give to Caesar what is Caesar's and give to God what is God's. Our allegiance is first and foremost to God, no matter who is in power on earth.

Paul seems to make following this allegiance challenging when he writes, "There is no authority except that which God has established" (v. 1). Sometimes, the authorities do not reflect the values of God. So, what do we do when authorities on earth are in direct conflict with the values of the kingdom of God? I think we remember, reflect on, and act according to the character of God, which Paul wrote about just a chapter earlier:

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone (12:14-18).

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