

The background features a photograph of ancient stone ruins. A large, circular opening is visible in the upper left. A semi-transparent cross shape is overlaid on the right side of the image. The overall color palette is warm, with golden and brown tones.

ROMANS

Transition/Hingepoint ... (Romans 12-15)

1. Romans 1-3: **God's glory.**
 - doctrine of *Total Depravity*.
2. Romans 4-8: **God's love.**
 - doctrines of *Justification & Sanctification*.
3. Romans 9-11: **God's sovereignty and my responsibility.**
 - doctrines of *Election & Free will*.

4. Romans 12-15: **Transformed Relationships.**
 - what happens when I give God ALL of me.

God's Mercies

Rom. 12:1

My New Life

12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers & sisters, in view of God's mercy, ...

Romans 12

12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy,

- ***Offer your bodies as a living sacrifice to God*** – this is your spiritual act of worship.
- ² ***Do not conform*** to the pattern of this world, ***but be transformed*** by the renewing of your mind.

Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

1st Week: My Transformed Relationship With God. (Rom. 12:1-2)

... I live in His *mercy*, not in my *fear*.

Because I live in God's mercy,

1. I am no longer afraid of Him.

- I live in His mercy, demonstrated for me in Jesus

2. I offer myself entirely to Him.

- because it's the only response that makes any sense!

3. I reject *conforming* for *transforming*.

- the forming of my life is now shaped by God's mercy & grace!

2nd Week: My Transformed Relationship With The Church. (Rom. 12:3-8)

... I see the Church through God's eyes.

1. an Organism, *not* an organization.

2. A Body, not a business.

... through His Body, Jesus wants to express Himself to the world. (T.H. Epp)

*⁴ For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so **in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.***

Romans 12

3rd Week: How The Church Cares For *Itself*. (Rom. 12:9-13)

... What happens inside a healthy Congregation.

- 1. We learn how much we need each other ... and that God has intentionally made it so. Health happens in relationship.**
- 2. Together, we become a healthy, strong & beautiful Body – the Bride of Christ.**
- 3. The surrounding culture is exposed for what it is ... empty & broken.**
- 4. Our Valley sees *all* of Jesus ... not just parts of Him.**

Last Week: How The Body Cares For *Others*. (Rom. 12:14-21)

... How the Church expresses Jesus to a broken world.

A simple, powerful message repeated four times:

- *14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse ...*
- *17 Never pay back evil with more evil ...*
- *19 Never take revenge ...*
- ***21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good ...***

The world will see that the Christian is a different person because he cares for those who do not care for him.

T.H.Epp

This Week: The Church & the State. (Rom. 13:1-7)

... two of three Living Entities established by God.

Truth #1: God has established three Living Entities for humanity:

1. **Marriage.** the most basic unit of social life.

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground."

*²⁷ So God created human beings in his own image.
In the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.*

... ²⁴ For a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.

Genesis 1-2

This Week: The Church & the State. (Rom. 13:1-7)

... two of three Living Entities established by God.

Truth #1: God has created three Living Entities for humanity:

1. Marriage. the most basic unit of social life.

2. **People of God**. God's covenant people, through whom He demonstrates His love for His world.
 - Old Testament – Abraham & the Jewish people.
 - New Testament – the Church of Jesus.

²² God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. ²³ And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.

Ephesians 1

This Week: The Church & the State. (Rom. 13:1-7)

... two of three Living Entities established by God.

Truth #1: God has created three Living Entities for humanity:

1. Marriage. the most basic unit of social life.
2. People of God. God's covenant people (N.T. – The Church of Jesus).
3. **Government**. the innate desire within people to live in peace through creating & maintaining social order.

13 Everyone must submit to governing authorities. **For all authority comes from God**, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. ² So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished ...

⁴ **The authorities are God's servants, sent for your good ...**

Romans 13:1-7

¹ Everyone must submit to governing authorities.

- *Because all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God.*
- *² So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. ³ For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you.*
- *⁴ The authorities are God's servants, sent for your good. If you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God's servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong. ⁵ So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience.*
- *⁶ Pay your taxes, too, for these same reasons. For government workers need to be paid. They are serving God in what they do. ⁷ Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes & government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority.*

Note: The *principle of government* is what God has established, just as He established the *principle of marriage*, and the *principle of the Church*.

a. **This is not to say** that every *government* reflects God's will or His nature ... just as every *marriage* does not reflect His will or nature, nor every *congregation*.

b. **This is not to say** that God favours only one form of government.

Democracy... Monarchy... Dictatorship...

Theocracy... Aristocracy... Plutocracy...

all can function well when God's principles are followed.

The point: human abuses do not negate what God has wisely established to prevent *anarchy, chaos & evil*.

This Week: The Church & the State. (Rom. 13:1-7)

... two of three Living Entities established by God.

Truth #2: God established the *principle of government* to maintain social order through:

1. **Protecting** life & property.
2. **Punishing** crime & evil.
3. **Rewarding** virtue & goodwill.
4. **Encouraging** freedom to know God & worship Him.

*³ The authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. **Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you.***

*⁴ The authorities are **God's servants**, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are **God's servants**, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong. ⁵ So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience.*

Romans 13

Key Question: How do these two entities, each established by God, co-exist effectively together?

Four possibilities: (John Stott).

1. The state controls the church.
2. The church controls the state.
3. The state favours the church, and the church accommodates.
4. The state & church co-operate together.
 - recognizing that each have been established by God.
 - recognizing that each have been given unique responsibilities.
 - the state: maintaining godly social order.
 - the church: expressing Jesus to the world.

Note: When the Church and the State each live out their God-established responsibilities, a natural separation of Church & State is maintained.

- **the State** does not interfere with the Church's responsibility to express Jesus to the world.
- **the Church** does not interfere with the State's responsibility to prevent anarchy & chaos by maintaining peace & social order,

... Baptists hold firmly to the full separation of Church & State.

Truth #3: The reality is that rarely do Church & State fulfill God's purposes for them, and often they invade one another's responsibilities.

- **the State**:

- often fails to provide godly peace & social order.
- occasionally interferes with the Church expressing Jesus to the world.

- **the Church**:

- often fails to express Jesus to the world.
- occasionally interferes with the State providing godly peace and social order.

... so, what do Christians do in these instances?

- this is what Paul addresses in Romans 13.

How do Christians act towards their Rulers?

1. **We submit to our rulers whenever we can, and honour the office of our rulers whenever we are able.**

... this is the default position of every Christian to any state.

13 Everyone must submit to governing authorities.

- *they have been placed there by God.*
- ⁴ *they are God's servants, sent for your good.*
- ⁵ *submit to them ... keeping a clear conscience.*
- ⁶ *pay your taxes ...and give respect and honor to those who are in authority.*

Romans 13

How do Christians act towards their Rulers?

1. We submit to our rulers whenever we can, and honour the office of our rulers whenever we are able.
2. **We pray for those in authority over us, and support them as good citizens ... the best citizens in our land.**

¹ Pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. ² Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity. ³ This is good and pleases God our Savior, ⁴ who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth.

1 Timothy 2

How do Christians act towards their Rulers?

1. We submit to our rulers whenever we can and honour the office of our rulers whenever we are able.
2. We pray for those in authority over us, and support them as good citizens ... the best in the land.
3. **We recognize God does command civil disobedience from His people:**
 - a. when the state commands us to do something that God forbids.
 - b. when God commands us to do something that the state forbids.

... and we are prepared to do so respectfully & accepting the consequences with godly humility.

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego replied to King Nebuchadnezzar, “O King, we do not need to defend ourselves before you in this matter. ¹⁷ If we are thrown into the blazing furnace, the God we serve is able to deliver us from it, and he will deliver us from Your Majesty’s hand. ¹⁸ But even if he does not, we want you to know, Your Majesty, that we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up.”

Daniel 3