

ROMANS

CITIZENS OF TWO KINGDOMS

Citizens of Two Kingdoms

**Living Faithfully on Earth While
Belonging to Heaven**

Introduction

Living Between Two Worlds

Every believer lives with a unique identity.

While participating in the responsibilities of everyday life, Christians also belong to a greater kingdom—one that is eternal, unshakable, and ruled by Jesus Christ.

This dual citizenship often raises important questions.

How should believers respond to government?

What does it mean to honor earthly authority while remaining loyal to Christ?

Can Christians love their country without placing their hope in it?

Romans 13 provides a balanced and practical answer. It reminds believers that God established governing authorities for the good of society while also teaching that ultimate allegiance belongs to Christ alone.

Paul begins with these words:

"Let everyone submit to the governing authorities, since there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are instituted by God." Romans 13:1 (CSB)

This passage invites every believer to live as a faithful citizen of both earth and heaven.

Chapter 1

Respecting God-Ordained Authority

Authority has existed since the beginning of creation.

Families require leadership.

Churches require leadership.

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Communities require leadership.

Government is one of the institutions God established to promote order, restrain evil, and encourage justice.

For this reason, Scripture teaches respect for governing authorities—not because every leader is perfect, but because God remains sovereign over every human authority.

Paul writes:

"For it is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, because it does not carry the sword for no reason. For it is God's servant, an avenger that brings wrath on the one who does wrong." Romans 13:4 (CSB)

This does not suggest that every government acts wisely or justly. History demonstrates that many rulers have abused their authority.

Yet even imperfect governments serve a purpose by preserving order and restraining chaos.

Respect for authority ultimately reflects trust in God's sovereign rule over history.

At the same time, Scripture consistently teaches that when earthly authority directly contradicts God's commands, obedience to God must come first. Christian submission is never blind obedience—it is faithful obedience that recognizes Christ as the highest authority.

Chapter 2

Seeking the Good of the Community

Followers of Christ are called to be a blessing wherever God places them.

Whether living in times of prosperity or difficulty, believers are to contribute to the well-being of their communities through compassion, integrity, generosity, and service.

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This principle reaches back to God's instruction to His people during their exile:

"Pursue the well-being of the city I have deported you to. Pray to the LORD on its behalf, for when it thrives, you will thrive."

Jeremiah 29:7 (CSB)

Even in a culture that did not share their beliefs, God's people were called to work for the good of those around them.

The same calling remains today.

Communities flourish when neighbors care for one another.

Schools improve when families invest in children.

Cities become healthier when churches serve faithfully.

Acts of kindness, honesty, and generosity become powerful demonstrations of God's love.

Christians are not called merely to criticize society.

They are called to help transform it through faithful service.

Chapter 3

Honoring Others Reflects Honor for God

Respect is becoming increasingly rare.

Disagreements often produce hostility.

Political differences divide families and friendships.

Public conversations frequently replace civility with contempt.

The gospel calls believers to live differently.

Paul concludes his instruction by saying:

"Pay your obligations to everyone: taxes to those you owe taxes, tolls to those you owe tolls, respect to those you owe respect, and honor to those you owe honor." Romans 13:7 (CSB)

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Honor is not reserved only for those with whom there is complete agreement.

It reflects the character of Christ.

Respect can be shown without compromising conviction.

Kindness can accompany courage.

Truth can be spoken with grace.

In a divided world, Christians have the opportunity to demonstrate a better way—one marked by humility, integrity, and genuine love for others.

Chapter 4

When Loyalty to Christ Comes First

While Scripture teaches respect for governing authorities, it also establishes a clear priority.

Jesus Christ is Lord.

No government, political system, or human leader can claim the place that belongs to Him alone.

Throughout Scripture, faithful believers occasionally faced moments when obedience to God required respectfully refusing human commands.

Their loyalty to God came first, even when obedience carried personal cost.

This principle reminds believers that earthly citizenship is temporary.

Heavenly citizenship is eternal.

Paul beautifully expresses this reality:

"Our citizenship is in heaven, and we eagerly wait for a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ." Philippians 3:20 (CSB)

This perspective changes everything.

It allows Christians to participate responsibly in civic life without placing ultimate hope in politics, governments, or earthly institutions.

Hope rests in Christ alone.

Chapter 5

The Gospel Changes Nations

History demonstrates that lasting transformation begins in the human heart.

Laws can influence behavior.

Governments can establish order.

Policies can improve systems.

Only the gospel can transform people.

Changed hearts produce changed homes.

Changed homes strengthen communities.

Strong communities influence nations.

This is why the mission of the Church remains essential.

Jesus declared:

"I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it." Matthew 16:18 (CSB)

Kingdoms rise and fall.

Political movements come and go.

Economic conditions change.

Yet Christ continues building His Church throughout every generation.

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The greatest hope for any nation is not merely stronger institutions but transformed lives through the power of the gospel.

Revival has repeatedly accomplished what legislation alone never could—bringing repentance, restoring families, renewing communities, and turning hearts back to God.

Conclusion

Living as Citizens of Heaven

Believers have the privilege of living faithfully within two kingdoms.

They can honor earthly authorities while remembering that every authority ultimately answers to God.

They can seek the good of their communities while recognizing that their lasting hope is found in Christ.

They can love their country without making it their ultimate identity.

The Christian life is not defined by political allegiance but by devotion to Jesus.

Every decision, every relationship, and every act of service becomes an opportunity to reflect His kingdom.

As Paul reminds believers:

"Therefore, you must submit, not only because of wrath but also because of your conscience." Romans 13:5 (CSB)

A clear conscience before God produces faithful citizens on earth.

And faithful citizens of heaven become a powerful influence wherever God places them.

May every believer strive to honor authority, serve others with humility, pursue peace within the community, and live each day

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under the lordship of Jesus Christ—the true King whose kingdom will never end.
