

1. Separation from Worldly Warfare

Jesus clearly taught that His kingdom is **not of this world**:

John 18:36 – “My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight.”

He also commanded His followers to **love their enemies**:

Matthew 5:44 – “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you.”

To engage in war would contradict the very spirit of Christ’s teachings. The disciple’s call is to peace, forgiveness, and self-sacrifice—not retaliation.

2. The Sword in Government vs. Individual Discipleship

Romans 13 acknowledges that **governments bear the sword** to maintain order, but this does not authorize disciples to take up the sword themselves.

Romans 13:1–7 is **Descriptive, not Prescriptive** — it describes how God uses rulers to keep civil order. It does **not command** believers to become part of that system.

Key Point: God may use governments to restrain evil, but He calls His followers to a higher standard: to overcome evil with good.

Romans 12 Provides the Context

Romans 12 comes immediately before chapter 13 and sets the moral tone:

“Recompense to no man evil for evil... If thine enemy hunger, feed him... Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”

The contrast is clear:

- **Romans 12:** The disciple’s duty – mercy, love, and peace.
- **Romans 13:** The state’s duty – maintaining civil order.

The two roles are distinct and never interchangeable.

3. God Uses Governments Without Endorsing Them

Throughout Scripture, God has used worldly powers to accomplish His will:

- **Egypt** to preserve His people in famine.
- **Babylon** to punish Judah.
- **Rome** to execute judgment and spread the gospel contextually.

Yet, these nations were often **condemned** for their pride and violence. Being used by God does **not** mean being righteous or worthy of imitation.

Isaiah 10:5–7 – “O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger... but he meaneth not so.”

The disciple’s calling is different — to follow Christ’s way of peace.

4. Jesus and the Apostles Were Nonviolent

When Peter drew his sword in the garden, Jesus immediately rebuked him:

Matthew 26:52 – “Put up again thy sword... for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.”

Christ and the apostles lived lives of **non-resistance** and **peaceful endurance** under unjust rulers. They never called believers to take up arms or fight for kingdoms of this world.

2 Corinthians 10:4 – “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God.”

5. Protecting the Weak Must Follow Christ’s Teaching

Protecting others is noble—but disciples must do so **in harmony with Christ’s commands**. Our Lord showed that true strength is expressed through:

- **Service** – not dominance.
- **Sacrifice** – not retaliation.
- **Love** – not violence.

John 15:13 – “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

6. The Christadelphian Perspective

As Christadelphians, we understand that believers are called to remain **separate from worldly governments and conflicts**. We take a **conscientious objection** stance based on the teachings of Christ and the apostles.

We recognize the state's authority as permitted by God but maintain our allegiance to the **Kingdom of God**, which is yet to be established on earth.

7. God's Providence in Government

Daniel 4:17 – “The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will.”

Romans 9:17 – “For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up.”

God raises and removes rulers to fulfill His purpose, yet believers are called to live peaceably under these powers **so far as their laws do not conflict with God's commandments**.

Acts 5:29 – “We ought to obey God rather than men.”

8. Submission, Not Participation

Paul's instruction in Romans 13:1 is about **submission**, not **participation**:

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers...”

We obey lawful authority, pay taxes, and live peaceably, but do not join in its wars or politics.

Romans 13:6–7 – “For this cause pay ye tribute also... Render therefore to all their dues.”

This shows respect for order—not endorsement of violence or corruption.

9. No Political Involvement

Christadelphians refrain from political participation such as voting, protesting, or holding public office because:

“We are strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”

Hebrews 11:13, 1 Peter 2:11

Our citizenship is in heaven, and we await the coming of Christ's righteous rule.

Philippians 3:20 – “For our citizenship is in heaven; from which also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.”

10. Conclusion

Romans 13 affirms God's control over human governments but **does not command Christians to take part in warfare**. The disciple's calling is clear:

- **Submit to authority**, but do not wield its sword.
- **Pay taxes**, but do not share in its violence.
- **Live peaceably**, trusting in God's providence.

The believers loyalty belongs to the Kingdom of God, not to the kingdoms of men. As Paul and the apostles taught, we obey rulers **until obedience to them would mean disobedience to God**.