The Powers That Be

Romans 13:1-5

A leader believes that most people want to accept responsibility; a "boss" believes most people want to shirk responsibility.

Chapter 12 was full of practical instructions for the Christians of Rome (and everywhere else for that matter). ***{19} Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. {20} Therefore “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; If he is thirsty, give him a drink; For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.”***

***(Romans 12:14-19) Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.... {17} Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. {18} If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. {19} Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.***

***(Romans 12:21) Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.***

Romans 13 picks up on the theme of justice administered through the proper channels

**the “powers that be” *(Romans 13:1-5) Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. {2} Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. {3} For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. {4} For he is God’s minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. {5} Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience’ sake.***

When was the last time you got pulled over by the police for complying with the traffic laws? --- When was the last time you were hauled off to court or to prison for paying your taxes on time? --- When was the last time you were arrested for visiting the sick or ministering those who are shut-in?

**an unpopular subject** ***(Romans 13:6-7) For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God’s ministers attending continually to this very thing. {7} Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.***

**we owe much more than money. *(Romans 13:8-10) Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. {9} For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not bear false witness,” “You shall not covet,” and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” {10} Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.***

***(Romans 13:11-14) And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. {12} The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. {13} Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. {14} But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.***

***(Ephesians 4:26-29) "Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, {27} nor give place to the devil. {28} Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. {29} Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.***