




Day 1

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

 NOTE: As we study these verses that comprise chapter 13, our study should reveal to each of us how God wants us to behave in the public/political arena and how we are to treat our governmental authorities – and those with whom we disagree. This particular Study is not a promotion of one political agenda over another and, if it seems to be, please pray for God’s guidance as we discuss these Biblical Truths. This Study promotes a Biblical perspective of government. If this Study challenges your opinion, your perspective, then, perhaps, you should reconsider your Christianity: are you a follower of the loving Christ Jesus, or a follower of the world?

The Holy Bible is Truth; all else are shades of truth dimmed by this world. In fact, this StudySheet was created in this world; while I have done my absolute best to listen to God’s whisperings and the promptings of the Holy Spirit as these StudySheets are developed, you are cautioned to take my comments and those of the published commentators that I have referenced and compare them against Scripture in accordance to Acts 17:11!

 Democracy:

Government by the people: *The United States is a democracy.*

Not to be confused with:


Anarchy – the absence of laws or government: *The fall of the empire was followed by chaos and anarchy.*

Aristocracy – rule by elite or privileged upper class: *The governing body was composed of the country’s most powerful aristocracy.*

Oligarchy – government by the few: *The citizens have no voice in an oligarchy.*

Plutocracy – government in which the wealthy class rules: *In a plutocracy, there is little regard for the poor.*

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 Definition: De·moc·ra·cy

1. Government by the people, exercised either directly or through elected representatives.


2. A political or social unit that has such a government.

3. The common people, considered as the primary source of political power.

4. Majority rule.

5. The principles of social equality and respect for the individual within a community.

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 Definition: Dic·ta·tor·ship


1. a country, government, or the form of government in which absolute power is exercised by a dictator.

2. absolute, imperious, or overbearing power or control.

3. the office or position held by a dictator.

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Submission to the Authorities

 A commentary in the *Life Application Study Bible* states that Believers in Jesus (i.e., Christians) generally fall within one of three categories insofar as interacting with government:

“(1) The state is so corrupt that Christians should have as little to do with it as possible; although they should be good citizens as long as they can do so without compromising their beliefs, they should not work for the government, vote in elections, or serve in the military.

“(2) God has given the state authority in certain areas and the church authority in others. Christians can be loyal to both and can work for either. They should not, however, confuse the two. In this view, church and state are concerned with two totally different spheres – the spiritual and the physical – and thus complement each other but do not work together.

“(3) [Believers] have a responsibility to make the state better. They can do this politically, by electing Christian

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or other high-principled leaders. They can also do this morally, by serving as an influence for good in society. In this view, church and state ideally work together for the good of all.” [Source: Life Application Study Bible ©1991 by Tyndale House Publishers, page 2052]

Q1. Are these three general viewpoints/categories all-inclusive? Are there other categories that should be considered?

Q2. Which one of these viewpoints/categories (including the ones listed in the first question) do you believe is generally true for your life? Why?

Q3. What does “sovereign” mean?



Sov·er·eign (svr-n, svrn), n.

1. One that exercises supreme, permanent authority, especially in a nation or other governmental unit, as:
 - a. A king, queen, or other noble person who serves as chief of state; a ruler or monarch.
 - b. A national governing council or committee.


[Source: <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/sovereign>]

Q4. [Personal] Do you believe in your heart that God is sovereign? Why?

Yes? } Why?
No? }

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Day 2

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1^a Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.

Q5. How would Paul define “submit”?

.....

.....

Q6. What does this phrase mean: “there is no authority except that which God has established”?
Do you believe it? Why or why not?

Phrase meaning?

.....

Yes? } Why?
No? }

.....

Q7. Did Israel of the Old Testament always have a king?

Yes? } Why?
No? }

.....

.....

Q8. If it hasn't been answered already, who wanted to remain King of Israel?

.....

1 Samuel 8:1-22 [NIV-1984]

¹ When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as judges for Israel. ² The name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second was Abijah, and they served at Beersheba. ³ But his sons did not walk in his ways. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice.

⁴ So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. ⁵ They said to him, "You are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have."

⁶ But when they said, "Give us a king to lead us," this displeased Samuel; so, he prayed to the LORD.

⁷ And the LORD told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king. ⁸ As they have done from the day I brought them up out of Egypt until this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are doing to you. ⁹ Now listen to them; but warn them solemnly and let them know what the king who will reign over them will do."

¹⁰ Samuel told all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king. ¹¹ He said, "This is what the king who will reign over you will do: He will take your sons and make them serve with

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his chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots. ¹² Some he will assign to be commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties, and others to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and still others to make weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. ¹³ He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. ¹⁴ He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his attendants. ¹⁵ He will take a tenth of your grain and of your vintage and give it to his officials and attendants. ¹⁶ Your menservants and maidservants and the best of your cattle and donkeys he will take for his own use. ¹⁷ He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves. ¹⁸ When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, and the LORD will not answer you in that day."

¹⁹ But the people refused to listen to Samuel. "No!" they said. "We want a king over us. ²⁰ Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles."

²¹ When Samuel heard all that the people said, he repeated it before the LORD. ²² The LORD answered, "Listen to them and give them a king."

Then Samuel said to the men of Israel, "Everyone, go back to his town."

Q9. Did God's prophecy in 1 Samuel 8:11-18 come true?

1^b The authorities that exist have been established by God.


Q10. Was Hitler "established by God"?

Yes? } Why?
No? }

Q11. Thinking back to your history classes, during Hitler's rise to power, what did the majority of the European churches do?


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Day 3

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²Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

Q12. How would you define “rebels against”?

 Re·bel (r-bl)
intr.v. re·belled, re·bel·ling, re·bels
1. To refuse allegiance to and oppose by force an established government or ruling authority.
2. To resist or defy an authority or a generally accepted convention.
3. To feel or express strong unwillingness or repugnance

[Source: <http://www.thefreedictionary.com/rebel>]

Q13. Do you believe this hierarchy to be true? God → governing authorities → the people? Why?

Q14. If we as Believers in Jesus Christ are asked/commanded by “governing authorities to do something that is contrary to Biblical principles, are we to follow Romans 13:2 (↑)?

Q15. Were Jesus and His contemporaries under two sets of law? (Hint: Government? Religious?)

Q16. Did Jesus rebel against authority? When? Why?

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Mark 2:1-12 [NIV-1984]

¹ A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home.

² So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. ³ Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. ⁴ Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on.

⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

⁶ Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, ⁷ "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

⁸ Immediately, Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? ⁹ Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? ¹⁰ But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." He said to the paralytic, ¹¹ "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home."

¹² He got up, took his mat, and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

Q17. What transgression did the religious leaders ("teachers of the law") accuse Jesus of committing?

Q18. How was a "blasphemer" to be treated?

Leviticus 24:13-15 [NIV-1984] [In Leviticus, Moses describes many of the God-given rules to which the Jews were to follow as members of God's chosen people.]

¹³ Then the LORD said to Moses: ¹⁴ "Take the blasphemer outside the camp. All those who heard him are to lay their hands on his head, and the entire assembly is to stone him. ¹⁵ Say to the Israelites: 'If anyone curses his God, he will be held responsible;

Q19. Why didn't the religious leaders attempt to carry out their judgment against Jesus?

Luke 4:20-30 [NIV-1984]

¹⁶ [Jesus] went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. ¹⁷ The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prison-

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ers and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, ¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."


²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, ²¹ and he began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."


²² All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.

²³ Jesus said to them, "Surely you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician, heal yourself! Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.' "

²⁴ "I tell you the truth," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown. ²⁵ I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. ²⁶ Yet, Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. ²⁷ And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed — only Naaman the Syrian."

²⁸ All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. ²⁹ They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him down the cliff. ³⁰ But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

 It wasn't His time. He had much work left to do. He had to continue teaching His disciples; continue to lay the foundation of His Gospel of mercy, agapé love, servanthood, and sacrifice; and continue to confront the erroneous, unbiblical dogma of the religious leadership.

 Matthew 21 (↓) retells another narrative in which Jesus confronted the sacrilege of the Temple by the Jewish religious leaders. The Priests, in their arrogant, we-can-do-no-wrong self-righteousness, had established a monopolistic marketplace within the Temple to rake-in added profits. Jesus called them out in their hypocrisy, desecration of God's Holy Temple, and exploitation of the Jewish masses. The priests, after all, from Aaron's time when he and his sons were named as priests (Exodus 28:1), had been given the responsibility to maintain the Temple for the devout worship of the Lord God Almighty. Over the intervening centuries the relationship switched: the worship of God became a lip-service and the Temple served to enrich and empower the religious leadership, the priests.

Matthew 21:10-17 [NIV-1984]

¹⁰ When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, "Who is this?"

¹¹ The crowds answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

¹² Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves.

¹³ "It is written," he said to them, " 'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a 'den of robbers.' "

¹⁴ The blind and the lame came to him at the temple, and he healed them.

¹⁵ But when the chief priests and the teachers of the law saw the wonderful things he did and the children shouting in the temple area, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they were indignant.


¹⁶ "Do you hear what these children are saying?" they asked him.

"Yes," replied Jesus, "have you never read, " 'From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise' ?"

¹⁷ And he left them and went out of the city to Bethany, where he spent the night.

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Day 4

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today's study.

³ For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you.

Q20. Is Paul writing about just or unjust rulers (or both) in this verse?

Q21. If you want to be “free from fear”, what should you do?

⁴ For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

Q22. If, as I hold the actions/decisions of my government leader up against the light of Biblical Truth and I discern that my leader's actions/decisions are immoral, how should I act toward my government leader?

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Q23. In the United States of America, the government is a ‘representative democracy’ (per the French political scientist Alexis de Tocqueville, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/democracy/Democracy-or-republic>). Every person is believed to have ‘certain unalienable rights’ (Declaration of Independence). (1) Do you vote? (2) Do you participate in electoral discourse (election discussions)? (3) If you do not like the direction of the majority of voters, do you discuss your concerns? (4) If you do not like the direction of the majority of voters, do you promote/accept the undermining of the will of the majority? (5) How does your behavior (how do you) attract non-believers to the Savior Christ Jesus?

(1) Vote? Yes? No? Why?


.....
(2) Electoral discourse? Yes? No? Why?

.....
(3) Discuss concerns? Yes? No? Why?

.....
(4) Undermine the majority? Yes? No? Why?

.....
(5) Attract non-believers?
.....

Day 5

 Please pray for holy guidance and insight before you begin today’s study.

⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.

Q24. What does our “conscience” have to do with Paul’s teachings?

.....
.....


Romans 2:14-15 [The Message (MSG); a paraphrase]

When outsiders who have never heard of God’s law follow it more or less by instinct, they confirm its truth by their obedience. They show that God’s law is not something alien, imposed on us from without, but woven into the very fabric of our creation. There is something deep within them that echoes God’s yes and no, right and wrong. Their response to God’s yes and no will become public knowledge on the day God makes his final decision about every man and woman.

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⁶This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. ⁷Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

Q25. What did Jesus teach concerning taxes?

 Caesar was the title used by emperors of the Roman Empire. The Romans had subjugated the Middle East, including Israel. While the emperor was in Rome, the Roman government used a hierarchy of positions that included governors to rule local areas. Jesus was the Messiah. He came as the sacrificial Lamb of God, not as a conquering warrior to overthrow the Roman Empire and free the Jewish nation from Roman rule. See the Matthew 22:15-22 passage (↓).

Matthew 22:15-22 [International Children's Bible (ICB)]


¹⁵ Then the Pharisees left the place where Jesus was teaching. They made plans to trap Jesus with a question. ¹⁶ They sent some of their own followers and some men from the group called Herodians [a political group that followed Herod and his family]. These men said, "Teacher, we know that you are an honest man. We know that you teach the truth about God's way. You are not afraid of what other people think about you. All men are the same to you. ¹⁷ So tell us what you think. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

¹⁸ But Jesus knew that these men were trying to trick him. So, he said, "You hypocrites! Why are you trying to trap me? ¹⁹ Show me a coin used for paying the tax." The men showed him a silver coin [a Roman denarius]. ²⁰ Then Jesus asked, "Whose picture is on the coin? And whose name is written on the coin?"

²¹ The men answered, "Caesar's."

Then Jesus said to them, "Give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. And give to God the things that are God's."

²² The men heard what Jesus said, and they were amazed. They left him and went away.

 Even the religious leaders taxed their parishioners and Jesus obeyed. See the Matthew 17:24-27 passage (↓).

Matthew 17:24-27 [NIV-1984]

²⁴ After Jesus and his disciples arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax came to Peter and asked, "Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?"

²⁵ "Yes, he does," he replied.

When Peter came into the house, Jesus was the first to speak. "What do you think, Simon?" he asked. "From whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes — from their own sons or from others?"

²⁶ "From others," Peter answered.

"Then the sons are exempt," Jesus said to him. ²⁷ "But so that we may not offend them, go to the lake and throw out your line. Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for my tax and yours."

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Q26. I think the taxes I pay are exorbitant. Can I hide some of my income to lessen my taxes?

Yes? } Why?
No? }

Love, for the Day is Near

⁸ Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law.

Q27. Regarding “debt”, what does the Bible teach us about debt? What does society teach us about “debt”?

Debt: Bible:

Debt: society:

Proverbs 22:7 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is the slave of the lender.

Hebrews 13:5-6 [English Standard Version (ESV)]

⁵ Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you [Deuteronomy 31:6].” ⁶ So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me? [Psalm 118:6-7]”.

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Matthew 22:35-40 [(NIV-1984)]

³⁵ One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ³⁶ "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

³⁷ Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

⁹ The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁰ Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law.

Q28. What is the greatest law (of two) that Jesus taught?

Q29. What is the second greatest law?

Q30. What are examples of Christian "love" to a neighbor?

Luke 10:25-28 [NIV-1984]

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

²⁶ "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

²⁷ He answered: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind' ; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' "

²⁸ "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

Q31. In 2024 the State of Louisiana required that the Ten Commandments be posted in every public-school classroom. Is this requirement an effective way to promote the Gospel of Christ Jesus?


Yes? } Why?
No? }

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2 Corinthians 3:14-16 [NIV-1984]

¹⁴But their [the Jews] minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant [Old Testament] is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. ¹⁵Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. ¹⁶But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.

Day 6

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¹¹And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

Q32. What “slumber” (or sleep) is Paul referring?

Q33. How do you interpret “our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed”?

¹²The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Q34. To what might the “night” or “darkness” refer?

Q35. How would you define “deeds of darkness”?

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Q36. To what might the “day” or “light” refer?

John 1:1-5 [(NIV-1984)]

¹ In the beginning was the Word [Jesus], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

John 12:44-50 [(NIV-1984)]

⁴⁴ Then Jesus cried out, "When a man believes in me, he does not believe in me only, but in the one who sent me. ⁴⁵ When he looks at me, he sees the one who sent me. ⁴⁶ I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.

⁴⁷ "As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. ⁴⁸ There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. ⁴⁹ For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. ⁵⁰ I know that his command leads to eternal life. So, whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say."

Q37. How would you explain “put on the armor of light”?

Ephesians 6:10-18 [(NIV-1984)]

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹² For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

¹³ Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵ and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸ And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

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¹³ Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy.

Q38. Why does Paul consider “dissension and jealousy” equal to “orgies and drunkenness... sexual immorality and debauchery”? (“Dissension and jealousy” seem pretty tame compared to the others.)

Q39. Do Christians today behave as indecently as evidently the Romans of Paul’s time did, since Paul felt it necessary to warn the Romans to “behave decently”?

Yes? } Why?
No? }

¹⁴ Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

Q40. How do we “clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ”?

Q41. How do we fight-off the thoughts to “gratify the desires of the sinful nature”?

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