

SOUTH EAST ASIA GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

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Christian Faith and Political Activism from the Perspective of Romans 13:1-7

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ABSTRACT

Paul as a faithful servant of Jesus Christ had shown his faithfulness to the Gospel of God by bravely unmasking the real purpose of the Roman governing authorities amidst the threat to his own life. Paul's subversive submission approach had challenged the Roman governing authorities to reassess the purpose of their having been called to be the servants of God. His paradigm can be a source of inspiration to those who want to express their faith in non-violent ways. Paul's letter to the Romans shows how he articulated his faith in a subversive way by inculcating in the minds of both the Romans and the Christians in Rome that the Roman authority was ordained by God and that it was meant to serve the people. Submission to the governing authorities is therefore conditioned by the government's attitude toward the people. Any governing authority that faithfully does its task is worthy to be obeyed and its demands are respected by the people who in turn are encouraged to submit to the governing authority. However, when the governing authority denies its call and acts like a God to the extent of oppressing its people, then the church is challenged to stand firm to defend the lives of the oppressed and its political will is made alive. Like Paul, the church at any time and place, is and will always be endangered when she fully lives out her faith in a way similar to Paul's paradigm.

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