

1 Peter 2:13-17 The Christian and Government

13 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, 14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. 15 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—16 as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. 17 Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

You could argue that the Biblical story is an authority story.

A)It starts with a rebellion against authority in the garden of Eden

B)and it marches to a moment where every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord!

C)It's all about authority. Praise God! We KNOW The Ultimate Authority is going to win!

But that is not the world that we are living in right now.

A)We are living in a world right now of conflict - Forces of light and darkness are in conflict –

B)We live in a 3 dimensional realm. – 3 Kingdoms that are always intersecting

C)We are waiting for a Kingdom that is coming –

1)we are serving a King in our hearts –
2)Ans we are living in the Kingdom of this world –

How do we do that?

A)We began talking about this last week – where we saw that- Peter gives us 3 directives for living as Christ followers in a fallen world

B)#1 Live like a Sojourner - Don't live like this is all there is. Don't live like this is your destination.

C)Don't make it your aim in life to see how comfortable and pleasurable this life can be

1)because this is a passage; this is a journey; this isn't home.

D)Instead of living with a destination mentality, you must live with the preparation mentality

1)Everything that's happening now is preparation for 'then.

E)This Life is intended to be a passage. This life is intended to be uncomfortable and difficult.

1)This Life here is intended to make us long for home.

#1 Live like Sojourners

Second directive: fight like a soldier.

A)WE ARE IN A WAR - There is a war that's still being fought on the turf of your heart;

B)It's a war being fought for control of your soul. We need to be aware of the battle the schemes of the enemy

1)and stand strong in the power of the Lord.

C)Third directive: Behave like a representative.

1)Know that everyone who is God's child has been given a calling as an Ambassador of Jesus .

D)You are positioned, where ever you are, whatever you're doing,

1)in all the situations, and relationships, locations, circumstances of everyday life,

E)to live as a representative of Jesus Christ

And Peter says that one of the ways that we do that is by living in submission to our Governing authorities

13 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, 14 or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.

A)So the Command is to submit to our Governing authorities

B)There are 4 aspects that we want to consider about this calling

#1 The Principle of Submission – what does it mean?

#2 The Purpose of submission – why should we seek to do it

A) **#3 The Particulars of submission** who are we to submit to when do we submit.

B) Are there ever times when we don't submit?
When civil disobedience is in order

C) And then, finally **#4 the Practice of submission.**

1st the Principle – Broad general principle

A) The word submit is the Greek word *hupotassó*, **which means to arrange in orderly fashion a group of soldiers under the ranking of commanding officer**

B) So It is a military term with a military use; however,

1) it is used here and elsewhere in a nonmilitary sense.

C) It speaks of a voluntary cooperation or even helping somebody carry a load.

D) In other words, you and I, as believers are never to be known as subversive troublemakers, but as model citizens.

1) We are helping to carry the load of morality and care for others in our culture.

E) **Our city should see us as a blessings and a help to the city not a hinderance. –**

Paul the apostle also spoke on this subject in Romans

13 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.

Paul is telling us that God is the one who puts people in power –

A) Even those who we might consider to be the wrong people.

B) With God – GOVT appointment is it not Random – there is a plan –

C) It might have to do with something he is wanting to accomplish in his church –

1) it no doubt pertains to his overall plan of Bible prophecy –

D) This is why I never get emotionally concerned *or worked up when it comes to elections*–

1) I Always vote and always pray – Always have my opinion of what is best

E) But I rest in this **No matter who is in office – God is in control – HE IS STILL ON THE THRONE**

So when the person who I believe is the wrong choice gets elected

A) I step back to ponder and pray – to seek the face of God **what are you wanting to do right now in your church -**

B) That person has policy that goes against your word – **against the church –**

1) This could mean that things are going to get harder for your people

C) So what are you seeking to do in your church? **Purging – wakeup call –**

1) how does this play into your overall plan ?

D) This is the lens that I am seeking to view this from - **God –**

E) What is it going to look like for us to live in Submission to this form of Government.

Consider the 1st century culture:

A) It was an Autocracy – The Govt of Rome was **oppressive**

B) There was **no free speech** - The king, Caesar, made the rules and everybody had to abide by them.

C) Slavery was also rampant in the Roman empire.

D) **Historians have chronicled that there were 3 slaves for every free person in the Roman empire**

1) **Incredible tension**

E) The Government officials in both Rome and Israel itself were known to be corrupt –

1) and the system of taxes in the Roman empire was heavy, arbitrary and thought to be incredibly unfair.

F) Nero was a lunatic – madman – **Most oppressive in History!**

Now here is what is interesting is this is the world that Jesus was born into – this is the world that he is ministering in.

A) He comes into that world and his followers were hoping that Jesus was going to deliver everyone from the yoke of Roman oppression

B) But he didn't do that. In fact, Jesus never picketed.

1) He never told his followers to make a protracted march on Rome or Jerusalem and protest cruel government.

C) He never started an insurrection. He never tried to win any culture war at all.

Once when asked about if it was right to pay taxes to Caesar –

A) Jesus simply asked for a coin – **Who's image is on this coin – Caesar's – Give to give to God....**

B) In his answer Jesus was illustrating what he really cared about the most – Souls – People

C) God's image is on you – you have been created in the image of God –

1) so give to God what belongs to Him!

That is something that we always need to keep front and center as it relates to this debate.

A) How do we as believers respond to Authority

B) Jesus example as the perfect Representative –

1) There were three things that were always on his mind –

C) The will of the Father – that was always first / 2nd the Glory of God

1) 3rd The souls of men and women – the eternal destiny of men and women

D) Those three things were at the heart of everything that he did.

So don't miss this – Our call to submit in every situation – begins with being submitted to Jesus! –

A) He is Lord of All!

B) V.16 – We are free in Christ – but we are willing slaves of God

C) When it comes to Govt leaders – I realize - he is has put this GOVT in place for some reason – 1) It might not make any sense to me.

D) Even though I don't trust the GOVT - I trust Jesus - so I will submit.

Don't miss this –

A) I don't think it is a coincidence that Peter who wrote - **Rejoice in trials Ch.1**

B) Is also saying - **Submit to the Govt -Ch.2**

C) The Govt was a big part of their trial –

1) Under Nero Christians were facing horrific persecution- Many were killed

2) Fed to lions – made sport for the Gladiators

Peter has been instructing us, when you are in a trial, - don't try to get out of it –

A) but trust the Lord to take you through it
That is how you are going to grow.

B) But we want to run from it – we try to get out of it – fight against it – whether we are talking –

1) trials in marriage – or other relationships
Or trials in our World

C) When we try to run from our trials we actually end up hindering the work of God in our own lives as well as in the world

D) Note this: The Church has always grown in seasons of trial

So Peter – who wrote in Ch. 1, said to rejoice in the trial –because God is working

A) is saying in chapter 2 to submit to the trial – because God is still in Control

B) So that is the General principle – We are called to Submit

What about the purpose? Inward and an outward Focus

A) Start with the inward focus – there are 2 aspects

13 Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man **for the Lord's sake,**

B)The inward focus v.13 "For the Lord's sake. In other words, you do it to honor God.

1)God is honored when his earthly representatives are seen as **stabilizers in their society**

C)And isn't that the highest reason to do it?

1)Isn't this the greatest motivation to do it, because God said to do it, right?

2)Jesus said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments,"

The Second aspect of the inward focus is found in this phrase in V.15 – for this is the will of God!

A)There are very few places in the New Testament where something is called "the will of God," but this is one of them!

B)Sometimes people come to me and say – I am just struggling with knowing God's will for my life!

1)Start with following God already know will – Start with Driving the speed limit –

C)Stop texting while you are driving – the list goes on right

1)Live in Submission to the Govt

D)So the inward reason centers around this –

1)Like Jesus I am going to be first and foremost concerned about God's will and God's glory! –

E)It is his will for us to submit - He is glorified when we are doing so

There is also an outward reason: V.15 that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men—

A)It is our witness in the world -

B)People are always looking at you and I to find the dirt on us,

1)to find a reason why they shouldn't trust in the God we say we believe in.

C)So one of the best witnesses is to be a good citizen,

1)because the way people will often view God is by looking at God's representatives.

"One of the greatest, if not the greatest apologetic for the gospel of Jesus Christ is a good life, a righteous life." PT

The central issue is simply this: a good Christian should be a good citizen.

**A)It is a matter of Conscience – Romans 13:5 –
5 So you must submit to them, not only to avoid punishment, but also to keep a clear conscience. NLT**

B)And a good Christian is a good citizen because he or she wants to honor God and have a conscience.

C)It's great to have a clear conscience. One man wrote a very honest letter to the IRS, that stated: "Dear Sirs: I cannot sleep. Last year when I filed my income tax return, I deliberately misrepresented my income." So I have Enclosed is a check for \$150. If I still can't sleep, I'll send the rest."

D)The Lord wants us to live as a good Witness and have a good conscience

E)So the Purpose is – God's will – God glory and our witness to the World

3rd The Particulars: Is there ever a time when we are not to submit?

A)When Civil or orderly disobedience is in order - Answer is yes.

B)I want to Answer this personally and corporately – You as an individual and all of us as a church

C)1st Personally – if anyone is ever asking you to do something that goes against scripture –

1)You are not to Submit

Examples

**A)Daniel – don't pray – not going to stop praying
Shadrach Meshach – Bow – not bowing**

B)Midwives – Kill the babies – not going to do that

C)1st Century Christians - Caesar is Lord

Married to an unbeliever – Watch Porn – not going to that Submit in the Lord

A) Don't read the Bible – sorry not going to submit to that —

B) Stop going to church and hanging with Christians not going to do that

C) That is the first thing – We are **not called** to submit when submission goes against the Word of God

What about Corporately - as a church? – 3 areas where we are not called to submit

A) 1st Just like with the individual - Anything that goes against God's word – Not going to do that !

B) Apostles – Quit telling people about Jesus – **Sorry we have to obey God rather than men**

2nd When the Government steps over it's God giving Jurisdiction.

A) Peter describes the role of Govt in v.14 to **punish those who do evil and the praise those who do good!**

B) Paul said a similar thing in Romans 13 - **For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad.**

C) Rulers are not supposed to punish those who are doing Good but those who are doing bad

God has established three institutions within human society: the family, the state, and the church.

A) Each institution has a sphere of authority with jurisdictional limits that must be respected.

B) A father's authority is limited to his own family.

1) A Church's authority (which is delegated to them by Christ) is limited to church matters.

C) The GOVT is to serve and protect her citizens

The biblical framework limits the authority of each institution to its specific jurisdiction.

A) The church does not have the right to meddle in the affairs of individual families and ignore parental authority.

B) Parents do not have authority to manage civil matters while circumventing government officials.

1) Vigilante justice

C) And the GOVT does not have the right to interfere in the affairs of the Church in a way that undermines the Bible

1) Or the God given authority of the Church

So when the GOVT of Canada says it is against the law for a Pastor to say that Homosexuality is a sin –

A) The Church stands up and says – Sorry you can't do that – We have TO BE TRUE

B) **PREACH** that Homosexuality is a sin in the same way that premarital sex is a sin and adultery is a sin

1) You stand and hope the Govt isn't about to start through 10's of thousands of Pastors in Jail

C) What is happening in Canada is the direction the USA is probably headed as well.

1) If I end up in Jail - You will visit me –

D) So we are not called to submit to GOVT when they ask us to do things that go against God's word

E) Or when the GOVT steps over its God given Jurisdiction

E) 3rd When the Govt is asking us to do things that hinder our God given mission in the world!

The Calling of the Church – go into the world and make Disciples

A) Our mission is to reach the lost and make disciples of believers

B) When we went to Yugoslavia in 1989 –

1) We were told that it was against the law to preach about Jesus in the open Square

2) This was just after the fall of communism – but it was still very tense

C) But that was our mission – that is why we were there – we would take the risk –

1) God blessed it People got saved and several churches were planted

D) In China today – there are state run churches that don't teach the Bible –

1) So most of the Church – meets illegally – in secret – underground

E) Homes – warehouses, buildings – Fulfill their call to Disciple {Not political – it is missional

It is the same reason -Christians have been smuggling Bibles into closed countries for decades it is part of our Calling as Christ followers

A)To go into the world and make Disciples and we have a calling to care for the needy

B)The reason Christians in Germany went against GOVT and hid Jewish people during the reign of Hitler

1)Printed illegal food ration cards to get more food to care for the ones who were hiding -

2){ risk of being caught – concentration camps

C)The reason Christians smuggled slaves out of the south during the underground railroad –

D)We have God ordained mission to care for the needy – oppressed – go into the world ... disciples

This is a Principle we see in the life of Jesus

A)Human need always supersedes religious law – why he constantly healed on the sabbath

B)The Law said – no work on the sabbath – someone caught breaking the sabbath could be imprisoned and even put to death

C)But Jesus knew the way they had come to interpret the law was wrong –

1)it was ridiculous it didn't make sense

So he was constantly breaking their view of the Sabbath by healing people on the Sabbath

A)He lived by this principle human need supersedes religious law

B)We would do the same – Driving by public pool – it is closed – sign says – **no trespassing – violators will be prosecuted –**

C)But then you see a boy who has obviously hopped the fence – he in the pool – and he is drowning –

1)You are not going to say – too bad so sad – he doesn't belong there {No trespassing

D)No you are going to stop – hop the fence – trespass – to save him? Of course you are

E)Human need supersedes the law!

1)The midwives disobeyed Pharaoh – Germans hid the Jews

That became our struggle in 2020 as a Church

A)When the Pandemic first started last March – there was a lot of unknowns – what is this – how deadly?

B)Govt said – we need to lockdown the world and try and get a handle on this and protect people.

C)When the lockdown began, it was supposed to be a short-term stopgap measure,

1)with the goal to “flatten the curve”

D)Meaning they wanted to slow the rate of infection to ensure that hospitals weren't overwhelmed.

E)We as a church – gladly yielded to that – Moved our services online –

1)We want to help – not hinder – we care of people

However we did keep the church open during the week – to be here for people that were hurting. –

A)We felt we the church is essential and part of our mission is to care for the hurting.

B)We told everyone on our staff – If you are at risk – or someone in your immediate family is at Risk –

1)**You must work from home.**

C)The rest of our staff was given the choice to be here or to work from home

D)We felt – we have 30K SqFt of building space and 25 people full and part time that make up our team-

1)We can safely do this

E)We sanitized regularly – wore masks – kept our distance –

1)met with the people who came in – in open spaces

Part of our mission – We need to be here and we need to be available

A)We ministered to a lot of people

B) We embarked on a Phone calling campaign –

1) Let's call the 2500 people in our data base and check up on them – I think we did that twice.

C) Now as March, April and May progressed on – two things were becoming very apparent to us

#1 The isolation was taking a toll on people in the church and in our community

A) Meeting with Vista Sheriffs – Domestic Violence was up 75% - suicides – depression \\\

B) The 2nd thing that was alarming was People in our church community were hurting too.

1) Some falling back into drug and alcohol abuse

C) Marriages having problems

1) It was heart breaking

Now there were those in our body who were Weathering the storm with no problem at all

A) Solid in their devotional life

B) Strong enough in their emotional make up – Solid enough in their friendships

1) They could zoom and all of that just fine

C) But that was not the case with many – Many were struggling

1) New believers and those older in the Lord

This was becoming very clear to us - We cannot effectively minister to people/ disciple people online.

A) I'm sure that there are some churches who were able to do that really well

B) But that was not the case with us. – So if we were going to fulfill our mission –

1) We need to find a way to meet with people in person.

C) We need to be meeting in person to properly do what we are called to do by the Lord

D) Find a way to do what we need to do to fulfill our mission in a way that is as safe as possible

1) That is what we have attempted to do –

2) Not perfect but that has been our heart

When it comes to the Particulars – We are to submit

A) Accept when a law violates God's word – Or when the GOVT oversteps it's Jurisdiction –

B) Or when it hinders are God ordained mission given to us in Scripture

C) Now let's tie this altogether looking at the Practice V.17 Honor all *people*. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

D) Fourfold guideline.

#1 17 Honor all people. –

A) Live in a way that is respectful of everyone else – respect their convictions – **Not force mine on them**

B) Treat others as people that God loves

C) Treat people with dignity and respect – no matter their beliefs – their make up their politics -

D) Honor you as a person who has been made in the image of God

E) Honor is often the first step toward being able to share Jesus with them

1) Jesus was great at doing that – which is one reason sinful people enjoyed being around him

#2 Love the brotherhood.

A) Especially show love to bros/sisters in Christ –

B) This is a step higher than Honor – Love your bros/sis in the Lord

⁴ Love suffers long *and* is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; ⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ Love never fails. 1 Corinthians 13:1-4

C) Love gives the benefit of the doubt – love hopes for the best – Love makes sacrifices

When it comes to trying to Navigate COVID as a Church

A) Take 200 chairs out of the sanctuary – let's widen the space between the rows – safe

B) Lets do multiple services – help foster distancing

C) Here is what is interesting about our gatherings right now

1) About half the amount of people attending in person pre-covid

D) We actually could fit everyone into one service instead of doing three.

Instead we only have 400 chairs set up in here.

A) Lets do three services – 1st service lots of room

B) 2nd service is about ½ full

C) 3rd service is a little bit more than ½ full

D) For those who want to be here but not ready to come inside – Offer outside – trying to make better

E) Then lets continue to work hard to put our services online for those who are at home still

1) Constantly talking about how to improve that

Honor all people – Love our brothers -

A) #3 Fear God. -Always remembering – God is the one that we are representing

B) and he is the one that we have to answer to. God's will – God's Name – God's glory

#4 Honor the king.

A) Respect the office and give honor to the office even when you can't respect the person.

B) Honor and respect the laws of the office in so much that they don't contradict the word of God
1) or the mission he has called us to.

Our witness –

A) throughout this whole past year – our city has been aware of what we have been doing –

B) safety measures trying to practice – and supportive

C) No complaints for the community – and anyone who has taken the time to come and see what is going on – has only brought praise.

D) Key- Submission in all areas begins with submission to Jesus

1) What do you want me to do?