

## 1 Peter 2:13-17

**13** Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, **14** or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. **15** For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. **16** Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God. **17** Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.

THEME: **Godly Citizens Submit to God's Governing Authorities**

I. **Godly Citizens "SUBMIT" - (vs.13)**

- A. **"Submit"** - "to arrange in formation under the commander"
- B. **"the Lord's sake"** - our holy reason for submitting to authority
- C. **"every human institution"** - means "foundation" ... as in "creating" or "creation"
  1. **"a king"** - Nero was the Roman emperor
  2. **"governors"** - refers to other "ranks" under the head authority
- D. **"the will of God"** - the primary purpose for what God wants out of it.

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**ROMANS 13:1-7** (also c.f. Titus 3:1-2; 1 Timothy 3:2, 7)

*1 "Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. 3 For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; 4 for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. 5 Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. 7 Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor."*

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II. **Godly Citizens "ACT" - (vs.16)**

- A. **"Act"** - refers to lifestyle; words, thoughts, and deeds
- B. **"as free men"** - to submit ourselves is an act of spiritual freedom
- C. **"bondslaves of God"** - submission is an act of service to God. (1 Corinthians 7:22)

QUESTION: Is it ever appropriate to be disobedient to the governing authorities?

- What if the governing leader is a non-Christian, or even a Muslim?
- What if the governing leader is rude, mean, unethical, or a tyrant?
- What if the government will use my money (taxes) to support sinful things, like abortion?
- What if the governing leader is physically persecuting Christians?

**1. We are to ALWAYS submit to the governing authorities, even when it is uncomfortable, inconvenient, painful, or even costs us our lives (crucified). (c.f. Acts 5:18, 26, 34, 40-41)**

- **18** "They laid hands on the apostles and put them in a public jail." - (no arguing)

- **26** "Then the captain went along with the officers and proceeded to bring them back without violence (for they were afraid of the people, that they might be stoned)." - (they went without complaint)

- **34** "But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the Law, respected by all the people, stood up in the Council and gave orders to put the men outside for a short time." - (They did not object)

- **40** "They took his advice; and after calling the apostles in, they flogged them and ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and then released them. **41** So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name." - (never once did they complain)

**2. We can be disobedient to governing authorities ONLY when it (they) tells us to do something God forbids or to not do something that God commands. (Acts 5:27-32, 42)**

**27** "When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them, **28** saying, "We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us." **29** But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men." **30** The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom you had put to death by hanging Him on a cross. **31** He is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. **32** And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey Him."

**42** "And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ."

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**III. Godly Citizens "HONOR" - (vs.17)**

- A. "Honor" - means to show respectful preference
- B. "all people" - not some, but all
- C. "the king" - The one in authority making the rules; Nero

**IV. Godly Citizens "LOVE" - (vs.17)**

- A. "love" - 'agapate': means covenant love; the kind of love God has
- B. "the brotherhood" - refers to the professing church (c.f. John 13:34-35)

**V. Godly Citizens "FEAR" - (vs. 17)**

- A. "fear" - from the word: phobia
- B. "God" - your Maker, Creator, Designer, Judge, and Redeemer  
(c.f. Proverbs 1:7, 28-29; 10:27; 22:4; Psalm 19:9; 34:11; Ephesians 5:15-21)

**CONCLUSION:** 2 Kings 6:8-17 - (fearing man vs. trusting God)

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**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Discuss a time when you struggled to submit to a governing authority (or a decision of an authority).
2. How was God honored when Christians honored some of the worst dictators throughout history?
3. Discuss a time either in your life or history when Christians were being told to disobey God and they chose to obey God rather than men.
4. Discuss a time in your (or someone you know) life when you were able to share the gospel with someone and they were open to listening to you because you'd been honoring to them previously.
5. ACTION ITEM: Be praying for the First Responders (sheriff, police, fire fighters, doctors, and nurses) and reach out to one of them, telling them you're praying for them and ask if they need anything.