

The Authority of Governments

1. Submit and honor governmental authority
 - a. Because Governments Romans 13:1-5
 - i. are ordained / appointed by God
 1. Examples: Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, and Pilate
Romans 9:16,17 Jeremiah 27:6 John 19:10,
 - ii. are a common grace of God
 - iii. execute wrath on lawbreakers
 - b. Because submission to government I Peter 2:13-17
 - i. is an act of submission to God
 - ii. limits the accusations of the godless Daniel 6:4-6
 - iii. in general, brings about blessing I Timothy 2:1-3
 - iv. demonstrates humility
2. Civil Disobedience
 - a. What's the general principle? Acts 5:29
 - b. Biblical examples of civil disobedience
 - i. Disobeying laws that command what God forbids
 1. Jewish Midwives in Egypt Exodus 1:16,17
 2. Hannaniah, Mishael, and Azariah in Babylon
Daniel 3:15-18
 - ii. Disobeying laws that forbid what God commands
 1. Daniel in prayer ** Daniel 6
 - iii. Working against laws that bring about evil
 1. Obadiah protecting the prophets I Kings 18:1-4
 2. Soldiers standing up to Saul **I Samuel 14
 3. Esther in approaching the king Esther 4:15,16

Romans 13:1-5 and I Peter 2:13-17

July 28, 2024

- c. Principles of God honoring civil disobedience
 - i. Purpose is to glorify God
 - ii. Grounded in the truth of Scripture, not emotion, self interest, or prejudice
 - iii. It's not a violation of God's commands.
 - iv. Accept the penalty for law-breaking
 - v. Be humble, peaceful, and gracious

the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience:

3. What is the origin of all authority?

- a. The Creator, God the Father
 - i. God's Word

Isaiah 45:9

II Timothy 3:15-17

One could say with the apostle Peter: Obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29). In other words, if the law commands what God forbids or forbids what God commands then you must break the law.

It is right to resist what God has appointed in order to obey what God has commanded. - John Piper

God uses government for the restraining of evil. So in some sense, even the most evil government bring some good.

Government keeps people from "only doing what is right in their own eyes."

Romans 13:1-5 and I Peter 2:13-17

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Who defines right and wrong? God not the government

So you see that there is something deeper and higher than mere obedience to authority. Authority itself is in the service of the moral law expressed in the words “good” and “bad.” Might does not make right in this text. Might enforces right. So Paul goes on in verse 3 and says, “Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is *good* [there is the moral law again], and you will receive his approval, 4 for he is God’s servant for your good. But if you do *wrong* [there it is again], be afraid.” So it is clear from this text that doing right is *not* defined by submission to the government. Doing right is another category. The moral law of God defines what government should call submission. Submission does not equal the moral law of God.

The third reason Paul writes in such absolutes (“Be subject to the governing authorities.” “Do what is good, and you will receive his approval.” “He carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer.”) is that *he is more concerned with our humility and self-denial and trust in Christ, than he is about our civil liberties*. In other words, Paul risked being misunderstood on the side of submission because he saw pride as a greater danger to Christians than government injustice. I cannot imagine Paul writing this way if Paul thought that the ultimate thing was being treated fairly by the government. But I can imagine him writing this way if faith and humility and self-denial and readiness to suffer for Christ is the main thing.

The tone and demeanor of this Christian civil disobedience will be the opposite of strident, belligerent, rock-throwing, screaming, swearing, violent demonstrations.

God Ordained Authority

Examples of Evil Rulers specifically ordained by God: (Daniel 2:21)

- Nebuchadnezzar (Jeremiah 27:6)
- Pilate (John 19:10)
- Pharaoh (Romans verses

Infallible authority:

God has absolute authority over all of His creation

Romans 13:1-5 and I Peter 2:13-17

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- Potter and clay analogies

Isaiah 29:16
Romans 9:20,21

** This is a completely trustworthy, loving, and never changing authority.

His Word is the authority for our lives

II Timothy 3:15-17

II Peter 3:15,16 lets us understand that both the Old Testament and New Testament are Scripture

Relations between humanity and

Absolute Authority

God and therefore in function His Word

Family, Church, Employment, and Government

** Humanity over creation

A. Family Structure

a. Husband and wife

Ephesians

Romans 13:1

Where do we see God's Word talk about authority?

Creator to creation

Family structure

- Husband and wife
- Parents and children

Church structure

- Overseer, elder, bishop, pastor and members of the congregation

Government structure

- Police officers and people

Teachers and student

Work situations

- Boss and worker
- Master and servant / slave

Romans 13:1-5 and I Peter 2:13-17

July 28, 2024

Authority level does not equate to value

- Genesis 1:27 (man and woman both created in the image of God)

Authorities are servants

Authority doesn't inherently mean greater value