

Group Study Guide

First Baptist Church Merritt Island

Serving God by Honoring Government

I Peter 2:13-17

May 6th, 2018

Main Point

As representatives of God among the people of this earth, we are called to show proper respect to everyone, including the leaders of our government.

Getting Started

Peter exhorted his readers to be subordinate and respectful to every human authority because of the Lord. God has placed governing authorities over us and expects us to obey them. Peter commanded his readers to submit to governmental and civil authority, acting as free people. This was difficult considering that many in authority during Peter's day wanted to persecute and even murder believers.

Observation

Have a volunteer read 1 Peter 2:13-17.

What did Peter command his readers to do in verse 13? Who does he say that we should submit to? He names several authorities in the lives of ancient believers.

What did Peter say was the function of those in authority over us in the government? In other words, what two things did God design authority to accomplish?

What will our obedience to government and civil authorities do for our witness? How does Peter describe those who would criticize believers?

How does Peter describe believers in verse 16? How can he say this about people who should be subject to governing authorities?

Application

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

How should we as believers today honor those in authority over us in the government? What does it mean to honor those in authority? What does that look like in your everyday life?

Does the command to honor authority apply to our attitudes toward those in authority? Or does the command only call for rote obedience? What about what I say about those in authority?

Are we required to honor government officials who do not belong to our political party or who do not share our viewpoints on hot button issues?

What authorities do you have in your life at this time? Name as many as possible. Which authorities are the most challenging to obey? Ask your group to pray that God would help you obey every human institution in your life.

How can we live as people who are free (verse 16) while honoring those God places in authority over us?

Ask God to help you see governing authorities as an extension of God's authority. Ask Him to open your eyes to see them as God sees them.

Read Acts 5:27-32. How do you reconcile Peter's statement in verse 29 with what he's teaching his readers in this passage?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, show me what it looks like in my life to be subject to every human institution for your glory. Grant me repentance when I disobey your God-given authority. Give me wisdom to see how you have ordained the governing authorities in my life so I see them as an extension of your authority. Lord Jesus.

Commentary

2:13-14 Believers are to be subject to every civil authority which includes not just deterring evil but carrying out retribution against those who do evil. By contrast, governments are to praise or reward those who do good.

2:15 The godly lives of believers will put to silence any false charges raised against them.

2:16 Freedom in Scripture is not a license to sin but expresses itself in devotion to what is good.

2:17 All people deserve the same honor and respect as the emperor. Only God is to be feared. Believers should have a tender love for each other as members of the same family.