



God Said What? Seriously? “Submit? Disobey?” Romans 13:1; Acts 5:29

Kent Vincent November 8, 2020

Christians should be model citizens, but expect trials! John 16:33; Romans 5:1-5

Key Question: Is disobedience ever a scriptural response to authority?

Key Basic Biblical Principle: *Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's. Mt 22:21. This requires discernment, a decision, an act of the will.*

Key Basic American Principle of Governance: *We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.*

Where the Two Principles Overlap: “Liberty” or Free Will is vital to both worship and a free nation. This is both the nature of God and the necessary foundation of freedom.

Freedom of Expression (Speech) is a vital part of our religious liberty.

Threats to Liberty:

Intentional ambiguity and shifting word usage;

Misapplication of principle;

Law, implicit threat and intimidation; and,

Government provision, dependence and subtle control.

Resolving the Apparent Conflict for Christians

Romans 13- we are all to be subject to (*Gr upotasso*) *the governing authorities.*

Upotasso’ means “to line up under” or “to be subordinate to”.

Hupakoe’ rendered ‘obedience’ in I Pet 1:2 and II Cor 10:5 means ‘submission to what is heard’. ‘Do what you are told.’ to bend one’s will and actions to the desires of another.

We have a duty to disobey certain commands and laws. *We must obey God rather than men. Acts 5 “An unjust law is no law at all.”* Augustine. One may disobey and still be subordinate.

Biblical examples of civil disobedience.

- Mordecai- refused to bow to Haman as commanded- Esther 3:6
- The Hebrew midwives refuse to kill the baby boys. Exodus 1:15-17.
- The soldiers of Israel refuse to kill Jonathan after he unknowingly violates Saul’s command not to eat. I Samuel 14
- Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refuse to bow to state ordered religion. Daniel 3:
- Daniel also refuses to bow to state ordered religion. Daniel 6

Principles of civil disobedience.

- Our highest authority is God in Christ.
- Government is capable of great evil.
- Submission to governing authorities does not mean uncritical obedience.
- Laws that are contrary to God's revealed will are to be disobeyed.

How do Christians make that decision to not comply with edict or law?

- The command or law opposed must be clearly in conflict with the higher command of God; Read and know your Bible, so you can be confident of your decisions.
- One must not be personally acting inconsistently with the conviction or scriptural command; God will not honor a hypocritical show.
- Every reasonable alternative to disobedience should be first exhausted;
- If possible, a respectful appeal to the authority should be utilized; ALWAYS ACT OUT OF A SPIRIT OF LOVE AND RESPECT. But, if declined,
- One must be ready to accept the consequences, whether to the coliseum, jail or a fine.

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners. Isaiah 61:1

Resources:

<https://www.npr.org/2020/09/29/917943045/amy-coney-barretts-catholicism-is-controversial-but-may-not-be-confirmation-issu>

http://adfwebadmin.com/userfiles/file/Pulpit_Initiative_executive_summary_candidates%203_11_10.pdf

<https://www.newadvent.org/summa/2093.htm>