

Gospel Transformed Citizenship
November 4, 2023

Introduction:

Text: Romans 13

Big Idea: The best earthly citizens remember their heavenly citizenship first.

1. Our _____ to government (1)

- _____
 - (*hupotasso*) – to arrange or line up under
 - **Believers are to help carry the burden of government by submitting to it**
 - Why was this teaching needed?
 - Romans was written about 58AD; which means within 6 years brutal persecution would come to the church.

2. The _____ of government (1b-2)

- The “authority” or power of a government comes from God.
 - No matter how that authority or power is used...**all power comes from God**.
- Biblical Examples:
 - Jesus
 - Moses
 - Nebuchadnezzar

3. The _____ for government (3-5)

- The government is to be God’s servant on earth.
 - **To _____ the community**
 - **To _____ the criminal**
- Governing authorities occupy a divinely appointed office and should be thanked for enforcing the laws.

4. The _____ to government (6-7)

- Government officials should be:
 - _____ by paying taxes
 - _____ by honoring position

5. Reason to _____ the government (5b)

- Principle: We submit to the government up to the point when obeying the government is disobeying God.
- ****Refer to The Gospel Coalition article *A Few Principles on Civil Disobedience* on back.**

Truth into Action:

#1-God’s truth by design is meant to guide our lives—**MAKE IT YOUR AIM TO KNOW IT AND APPLY IT ALWAYS.**

#2-A “good” Christian is a “good” citizen—**MONITOR YOUR ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR!**

#3-If a government official demands you to disobey God -- **OBEY GOD AND COURAGEOUSLY SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES!**



Please understand we want to help you know Jesus personally and journey with you in taking fresh steps of obedience daily. We would love to pray with you and for you. Join us at the end of the service for prayer or send us your request on the Connect Card and we will lift them up throughout the week.

Table Talk

Warm Up: What were your thoughts on the persecuted church Sunday video we watched in the service?

Civil disobedience isn't always right and it isn't always wrong. One of the most helpful passages in the Bible with respect to this issue is found in Acts 5. Read the passage and answer the questions.

- In Acts 5:20 the Apostles are given a direct charge from God via who?
- This direction by God's messenger contradicted a direct command from their civil authorities. Read Acts 5:27-29 and answer how Peter and the Apostles responded?
- The response of Peter and the Apostles forced the authorities to come up with a plan to handle these determined preachers. What was their response according to Acts 5:40.
- Read Acts 5:41-42, how did the Apostles respond?

A few principles on civil disobedience from this passage*

1. You need to have a clear command of God if you are going to disobey because there is a clear command from God, as a general rule, to be in subjection to civil authorities in Romans 13:1-7.
2. If you engage in civil disobedience on the basis of a clear command in Scripture, that does not entitle you to revile or dishonor civil authorities. The Apostles addressed their leaders with respect. Notice Peter's direction in 1 Peter 2:17.
3. Civil disobedience does not entitle you to resist arrest. The disciples went with the guards when summoned. They did not break out of jail – they were released by an angel. Violence against police or prison officials is never permitted.
4. Punishments must be accepted in a good spirit. The Apostles took their lashes and rejoiced. The Apostle Paul converted several of his guards through Christian kindness. Abuse of prison officials or civil authorities is never permitted.
5. If civil disobedience is legitimate, then the forbidden action (preaching in this case) should not cease after initial censure and punishment. If that should happen, it calls into question the legitimacy of the protest. Think long and hard before embarking on a course of civil disobedience lest you be forced to back down after the first fine, lash or imprisonment.

12 examples of biblical civil disobedience: The Hebrew midwives – Exodus 1:15-22; The parents of Moses – Exodus 2:1-2; Elijah – 1 Kings 18; Mordecai – Esther 3:1-6; Esther – Esther 4; Jeremiah – Jeremiah 38:1-6; Daniel's friends – Daniel 3; Daniel – Daniel 6; The wise men – Matthew 2:1-12; Jesus and the disciples – Mark 2:23-28; Peter and John – Acts 4:1-22; The apostles – Acts 5:17-42; Paul and Silas – Acts 16:16-40

CLOSING PRAYER: Jesus, you came into our world to make a way for peace. I love you and I want to grow in my ability to become a peace maker. Help me to apply the truth I learned from this sermon. For the glory of God and my own good. Amen!

Works consulted:

Romans for You, Tim Keller

Romans – Galatians, Yarbrough

Romans, Kent

Romans, RC Sproul

*The Gospel Coalition, A Few Principles on Civil Disobedience by Paul Carter

<https://www.gotquestions.org/civil-disobedience.html>

The Essential Church - <https://essentialchurchmovie.com>