



# THE PROBLEM OF UNWORTHY AUTHORITIES

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





# The Problem of Unworthy Authorities

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# The Problem of Unworthy Authorities

**SERMON REFERENCE:** 1 Peter 2:11 – 3:4

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #1958

One of the chief weapons that God has given us is the principle of submission; it is the thing that closes the mouths of those who oppose us and allows us to exercise our kingdom authority. However, what if we experience the problem of unworthy authorities? 1 Peter 2-3 reveals how to submit to godless authority figures.

Submission is simply getting under the authority that God has established, not for that authority's sake, but for God's sake. Being submissive does not demean us, it exalts us; it makes us like Jesus Christ.

This passage recognizes three places in which our submission is needed: the government, the job, and the home.

“Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake...” (1 Peter 2:13).

We are called to demonstrate a spirit of submission in our social lives, in our churches and in our politics, for 1 Peter 2:17 confirms, “Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.”

We are also instructed to submit in the workforce. Anyone can gripe and rebel against a bad boss, but Christians are held to a higher standard.

Adrian Rogers says, “There is no better place for you to demonstrate the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ if you have an unfair or an ungodly boss.”

Third, we're to submit in the home: “Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands...” (1 Peter 3:1). Women are not inferior to men; however, when a wife voluntarily places herself under her husband, who is her equal, God is glorified.

But we must understand that submission doesn't always mean obedience. All human authority is limited because our ultimate loyalty belongs to God. If there comes a time when someone commands us to do something antithetical to the Word of God, we must obey God rather than men.

Adrian Roger says, “Submission does not embolden tyranny, it destroys it. It was the spirit of these early Christians that brought the Roman Empire crashing down. They turned that world upside down because they learned the strength of submission.”

## LIFE APPLICATION

Do you have the spirit of submission? Remember: We will never be over those things that God has put under us, until we get under those things that God has put over us. Submit to the Lordship of Christ, the Word of God, and the institutions that God has put in place.



# The Problem of Unworthy Authorities

**SERMON REFERENCE:** 1 Peter 2:11 – 3:4

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## 1) INTRODUCTION

- a) The passage of Scripture for today's message was written to Christians who were being accused and slandered by the enemy.
  - i) They were being accused of incest because they called their spouses "brother" or "sister."
  - ii) They were accused of cannibalism because they said that they were partaking of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus when they took the Lord's Supper.
  - iii) They were accused of insurrection because they said that Jesus is Lord, not Caesar.
  - iv) These Christians were hunted, hounded and killed because they were like the Lord Jesus.
    - (1) The servant is not better than the master.
      - (a) Matthew 10:24
      - (2) John 15:18
      - (3) Jesus was slandered.
        - (a) He was called a winebibber and a glutton.
- b) Anyone who lives for the Lord Jesus Christ will find himself going against the tide.
  - i) We're twice-born people in a world of once-born people.
  - ii) What we practice and what we believe begins at a different source, it follows a different course, and it arrives at a different conclusion.
- c) The chief weapon that God has given us in these days, other than our faith in Him, is the principle of submission.
  - i) This principle will close the mouths of those who oppose us.
- d) 1 Peter 2:11-12
  - i) The word "conversation" in this passage means "behavior."
  - ii) The "day of visitation" is not talking about when Jesus comes again, but it literally means "the day of inspection" or "the day of observation."
- e) 1 Peter 2:13
  - i) We are to submit ourselves.
- f) 1 Peter 2:18
- g) 1 Peter 3:1
- h) 1 Peter 2:15
  - i) Those who oppose God's people are ignorant and foolish.
    - (1) We silence them by submission.
  - ii) The word "silence" here literally means in the Greek language "to muzzle," like you would muzzle a barking dog.
- i) We exercise kingdom authority in this world by submission.
- j) Luke 7:1-10
  - i) This centurion who was under the emperor was also over his soldiers.
    - (1) We will never be over those things that God has set under us until we remain under



those things that God has set over us.

- k) Kingdom authority is not for rebels.
    - i) God cannot trust us nor give us the release of the Spirit until we know the restraint of the Spirit.
    - ii) Therefore, we're to submit.
      - (1) We're to submit to civil magistrates.
      - (2) We're to submit to those we work for on the job.
      - (3) We're to submit domestically in the home.
  - l) Today's message will deal with this principle of submission and the problem of unworthy authorities.
    - i) How do we submit to an ungodly government?
    - ii) How do we submit to a bad boss?
    - iii) How do we submit to a mean mate?
    - iv) How can we live this principle of submission in a wicked, lascivious age?
- 2) THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBMISSION (1 Peter 2:13)
- a) 1 Peter 2:13
    - i) We are to submit ourselves.
  - b) 1 Peter 2:18
    - i) Servants are to be subject.
  - c) 1 Peter 3:1
    - i) Wives are to be in subjection to their husbands.
  - d) Submission is one equal voluntarily placing himself under another equal that God may therefore be glorified.
    - i) Submission is simply getting under the authority that God has established, not for that authority's sake, but for God's sake.
      - (1) 1 Peter 2:13
  - e) God established authority everywhere.
    - i) God is behind all authority.
    - ii) When we submit, we're not submitting to some human being; we're submitting to Almighty God.
      - (1) When we do that, God begins to invest in us kingdom authority.
  - f) When we have a spirit of rebellion, we are like Satan.
    - i) He was the original rebel.
  - g) When we submit to authority, we are like the Lord Jesus.
    - i) Philippians 2:6-8
  - h) Satan sought to exalt himself, and he fell.
    - i) Jesus humbled Himself, and God gave Him a name that is above every name.
      - i) Philippians 2:9
  - j) 1 Samuel 15:23
    - i) Samuel told King Saul that rebellion is as witchcraft.
      - (1) When we have a rebellious spirit, we're practicing the same spirit that made the devil



the devil.

- k) As Christians, we want to live victoriously and have power over the world, the flesh and the devil.
  - i) Authority flows out of submission.
- l) Being submissive does not demean us; it exalts us.
  - i) It makes us like the Lord Jesus Christ.

### 3) PLACES OF SUBMISSION

- a) Peter mentioned three very hard places where we are to be submissive.
- b) We are to submit to a godless government.
  - i) 1 Peter 2:13-17
  - ii) At the time when Peter wrote this, Nero was the king.
    - (1) While still young, Nero committed his first murder, killing a teenage boy who stood in his way.
    - (2) He married at fifteen but soon had his wife killed.
    - (3) Nero married again but killed his second wife, also.
    - (4) In order to marry a third time, Nero murdered the husband of the woman he wanted.
    - (5) His mother annoyed him, so he arranged her murder.
      - (a) When that was unsuccessful, he murdered her without pretense.
    - (6) At age 31, he was sentenced to death by flogging.
      - (a) He fled and survived a suicide attempt.
    - (7) He persecuted the early church, becoming the first of the persecuting Caesars of Rome.
    - (8) Nero was in authority when Peter said, "Honor the king."
  - iii) Why did Peter write that we are to be submissive to governmental authority?
    - (1) Because verse 14 teaches that authority is necessary.
    - (2) There can be no civilization without government.
  - iv) An attitude of rebellion is as bad as the rebellion itself.
  - v) 1 Peter 2:16-17
    - (1) We are to honor everyone:
      - (a) In our social life
        - (i) The word "honor" is the Greek word from which we get our word "preciousness."
        - (ii) All people are intrinsically precious to God.
      - (b) In our church life
        - (i) 1 Peter 2:17
          - 1. We're to "love the brotherhood."
        - (ii) There is a special love that we're to have for our brothers and sisters in Christ.
      - (c) In our spiritual life
        - (i) 1 Peter 2:17
          - 1. "Fear God."
        - (ii) We need to bring back the fear of Almighty God.



- (iii) Proverbs 1:7
    - (iv) America has lost the fear of God.
  - (d) In our political life
    - (i) We are to honor the king.
      - 1. Whether our governmental authority is a king or president, the principle is the same.
    - (ii) 1 Timothy 2:1-2
- c) We are to submit to a bad boss.
  - i) 1 Peter 2:18-19
    - (1) The word “servant” in this passage literally means “household slave.”
      - (a) It is not speaking about a domestic servant who is paid, but about a person who is a slave.
    - (2) At the time when this was written, a man would have a doctor slave to take care of him, a teacher slave to educate his children, etc.
    - (3) Slaves were not treated as people but as things.
      - (a) Yet, Peter said that slaves should be in submission to their masters as unto the Lord.
    - (4) We are to be very much against slavery, and what Peter taught here brought slavery crashing down.
  - ii) There is no better place for us to demonstrate the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ than in the work place if we have an unfair or an ungodly boss.
    - (1) Any pagan can gripe and rebel when things are wrong.
    - (2) 1 Peter 2:19
- d) How do we react to mean mates?
  - i) 1 Peter 3:1-4
    - (1) “That if any obey not the word” is referring to an ungodly husband who will not obey the Word of God.
    - (2) This passage does not say that it’s wrong for ladies to fix their hair or to wear jewelry, but just that the outward appearance is not their adornment.
    - (3) This is contrary to the wisdom of this world that a wife is to be submissive, even to an ungodly husband, but the Bible teaches that a home cannot function without a head.
  - ii) 1 Corinthians 11:3
    - (1) God the Son and God the Father are coequal and coeternal.
    - (2) Men and women are coequal.
      - (a) She is not inferior to him.
      - (b) Remember that submission is one equal placing himself or herself voluntarily under another equal that God thereby may be glorified.
  - iii) Galatians 3:28
  - iv) If a wife has an ungodly, unworthy husband, she is not to lecture him (according to this Scripture in 1 Peter).
    - (1) She is to love him.



## 4) THE PROBLEMS OF SUBMISSION

- a) Submission is not always the same as obedience.
  - i) Our ultimate loyalty belongs to God.
- b) We're to render unto Caesar the things that belong to Caesar and unto God the things that belong to God, but never give to Caesar the things that belong to God.
  - i) An illustration of this is when the apostles were preaching the Lord Jesus Christ and the magistrates told them to stop preaching.
    - (1) Acts 5:28-29
    - (2) They submitted as far as they could.
    - (3) As far as we know, the apostle did not resist when they were arrested and thrown into jail, but they did not stop preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
      - (a) All human authority is limited.
- c) There are some commands that are qualified and some that are not qualified.
  - i) Here is an example of a command that is qualified:
    - (1) The Bible says that we're to live in peace.
      - (a) Romans 12:18
    - (2) The reason that it's sometimes impossible to live peaceably with all men is because we can't control other people.
      - (a) So, we must be submissive, if possible, as much as it lies with us.
    - (3) But there comes a time when someone will command us to do something that is antithetical to the Word of God.
      - (a) Then, we obey God rather than men.
    - (4) The greatest principle is that of obedience to God.
      - (a) It always takes priority over the lesser principle of obedience to men.
      - (b) We see examples of this throughout the Bible.
        - (i) In Moses' day, Pharaoh commanded all the little boy babies to be killed.
          - 1. But the midwives disobeyed and refused to do so.
        - (ii) Daniel was told not to pray.
          - 1. Submission is not always obedience.
  - d) In today's political situation, we as believers in Christ need not identify the church with any political party but always with the kingdom of God.
    - i) We need to tell both parties to repent and get right with God.
    - ii) The church is not the servant of the state or the master of the state.
      - (1) The church is the conscience of the state.
    - iii) We will be civil, but we will not be silent.
      - (1) Nathan warned David.
      - (2) Elijah preached to Ahab.
      - (3) Daniel remonstrated Nebuchadnezzar.
      - (4) Eleazar confronted Jehoshaphat.
      - (5) Moses was a prophet of God to Pharaoh.
      - (6) As long as little babies are being aborted today, we should not be silent.
      - (7) As long as we have a government trying to normalize perversion, we cannot be quiet.



(8) As long as a freeborn American is told that he cannot pray vocally anywhere at any time, then we cannot be silent.

iv) Nothing is politically right that is morally wrong.

v) Government is here to restrain evil.

vi) God's plan is a free church in a free state.

(1) When the government does what it can do (which is to restrain evil), then the church is free to do what it alone can do (which is to preach the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ).

e) If a wife is being physically abused by her husband, the principle of submission does not mean that she stay in that situation.

i) Romans 12:18

ii) There is a time when there is a higher law that takes precedent.

f) Our ultimate allegiance is to Almighty God.

## 5) THE PRICE OF SUBMISSION

a) Submission can be the hardest thing we are asked to do.

b) 1 Peter 2:19-23

i) The Lord Jesus handed Himself over to God.

ii) He had undeserved suffering and counted on God to even the score.

c) 1 Peter 2:24

i) The Lord Jesus bore our sins; He took our sins.

(1) As an example, think of a doctor who makes himself sick in order to make the patient well and then turns around and pays the hospital bill.

(a) That's what King Jesus did for us.

(b) It wasn't fair, but we're thankful He did it.

(2) He left us an example, and we should follow in His steps.

(a) Philippians 2:9

(i) God has highly exalted Him and given Him a name above every name.

1. God will do the same for us when we obey Him.

d) The early Christians turned the world upside down because they learned the strength of submission.

i) They did not give in to evil; they overcame evil.

ii) Submission does not embolden tyranny; it destroys it.

## 6) CONCLUSION

a) God gives authority to those who understand submission.

b) We will never be over those things that God has put under us until we get under those things that God has put over us.

i) Have you surrendered to the Lordship of Christ?

ii) Are you under the authority of the Word of God?

c) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.

d) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you



of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.

- i) Romans 3:23
- ii) Romans 10:9-10
- iii) Romans 10:13
- iv) Acts 16:31
- v) John 3:16



# The Problem of Unworthy Authorities

SERMON REFERENCE: 1 Peter 2:11 – 3:4

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Would you take God's Word and be finding First Peter chapter 2, as we continue our series on discovering kingdom authority. And if there's ever a day and an age in which we need to discover and to deploy kingdom authority, this is the day and this is the age.

Now before I read the Scripture, and we're going to be reading from First Peter chapter 2 beginning in verse 11, before I read the Scripture let me just tell you something about the Christians to whom this Scripture was written. They were going through tough times. It was open season on Christians. They were being accused and they were being slandered by the enemy. Let me tell you some of the things they accused them of. They accused them of incest because they called their wives or their husbands brother or sister. They were accused of cannibalism because when they took the Lord's Supper, they said, "We are partaking of the body and the blood of the Lord Jesus." They were accused of insurrection because they said, "Caesar is not Lord; Jesus is Lord."

And so they were hunted and hounded and killed. And do you know why they were? Because they were like the Lord Jesus, and the servant is not better than his master. Jesus said in John 15 verse 18, "If they've hated Me, they will hate you." And Jesus was slandered; they called Him a wine bibber and a glutton. And I'm going to tell you this, that anybody who lives for the Lord Jesus Christ in this day and this age, or in that day and that age, or any age, is going to find himself going against the tide. We're twice-born people in a world of once-born people and what we practice and what we believe begins at a different source, it follows a different course, it arrives at a different conclusion, and we're going to be going against the tide.

Now, the chief weapon that God has given us in these days other than our faith in Him, is a principal that many of us don't like to practice. It is the principal of, listen, submission. You say, "Now wait a minute! It would seem like if we're going to be overcomers, it ought to be the principal of rebellion." No. It's the principal of submission. And this principal is such that it will close the mouths of those who oppose us.

Look in First Peter chapter 2 verses 11 through 13, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against your soul; having your conversation," that means your behavior, "honest among the Gentiles," that's the pagans, "whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works," and we're going to show you what those good works are in just a moment, "which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." Now the day of visitation is not talking about when Jesus comes again, it literally means the day of inspection or the day of observation. And then notice what he says in verse 13, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." Did you see that? Submit yourselves.

Now skip on down to First Peter 2 verse 18, "Servants be subject to your masters in all fear." Turn over to First Peter chapter 3 in verse 1, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands." That's an interesting thing. He speaks of evildoers, and he says we're to do something that will cause



them to recognize in us a quality that is absolutely astounding and amazing. And look down if you will in, in First Peter 2 verse 15, “For so is the will of God that with well-doing ye may silence the ignorance of foolish men.” People who oppose God’s people are ignorant and they’re foolish. And how do you silence them? Submission, submission, submission. And this word silence literally means in the Greek language to muzzle like you would muzzle a yapping dog.

How are we going to make a statement in this world, how are we going to exercise kingdom authority? By submission. You say, “Now wait a minute, submission doesn’t sound like authority.” You see, that’s the secret of the whole thing. Remember again, in Luke chapter 7 verses 1 through 10, that centurion who said to Jesus, “Jesus, I know how You operate. I know why You have authority over this disease, ‘Because I also am a man set under authority. And I say to this man, ‘Go’ and he goes, and to this man, ‘Come’ and he comes.’ And Jesus, all You need to do is to speak the word and my servant will be healed, for I know how You work.” And Jesus said, “I’ve not seen faith like this in all the land of Israel.” This man who was under the emperor, was over his soldiers. You can never be over those things that God has put under you until you get under those things that God has put over you.

Now that’s what we’re talking about this whole series, Kingdom Authority. Let me say it again, you will never be over those things that God has set under you, until you remain under those things that God has set over you. Kingdom authority is not for rebels. And God cannot trust us and give us the release of the Spirit until we know the restraint of the Spirit. So he says here that we’re to submit. We’re to submit to civil magistrates. We’re to submit to those who work us on the job. We are to submit domestically in the home. This is what God says that we’re to do.

Now, let me mention several things about this principle this morning. And by the way, what we’re talking about, because I failed to tell you when we began, we’re talking about, “The Problem of Unworthy Authorities.”

How do you submit to an ungodly government? Godless government. How do you submit to a bad boss? How do you submit to a mean mate? What if they ask us to do something wrong, ungodly? What do we do? How can we live this principal of submission in a wicked, lascivious age? Good question.

All right, now let’s look at it. Let’s just take the Word of God and look at it. Look at the very principal of submission. Again I remind you, verse 13 says, “Submit yourselves;” verse 18 says, “Servants, be subject;” chapter 3 verse 1 says, “Wives, be in subjection.”

What is submission? We’re talking about the principal of it. What is submission? Submission is one equal voluntarily placing himself under another equal that God may therefore be glorified. Submission is simply getting under the authority that God has established, not for that authority’s sake, but for God Himself’s sake, who established the authority. Look in First Peter 2 verse 13, “Submit yourself to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake.” When you submit yourself to some governmental authority, you’re not doing it for his sake; you’re doing it for Jesus’ sake. And that makes a difference. You see, God has established authority everywhere. And God is behind all authority. So when you’re submitting, you’re not submitting to some human being, you’re



submitting really, ultimately to Almighty God. And when you do that, God begins to invest in you kingdom authority.

Remember that when you have the spirit of rebellion, you're like Satan. He was the original rebel. When you submit to authority you're like the Lord Jesus, "Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God but made Himself of no reputation, being found in the form as a servant, He humbled Himself and became obedient." Philippians 2 verses 6 to 8.

Now, Satan said, "I will exalt myself." God says, "You're going down." Jesus said, "I humble myself." God said, "I'll give You a name that is above every name."

Now, Jesus has this incredible authority because of this principal. Remember what Samuel told Saul, that, "Rebellion is as witchcraft," First Samuel chapter 15 verse 23. When you have a rebellious spirit, you're practicing the same spirit that made the devil the devil to begin with and that is witchcraft.

Now, you want kingdom authority. I do, too. I want to live victoriously. I want power over the world, the flesh and the devil. But come up close and I want to tell you something. Authority and submission are heads and tails of the same coin. Authority flows out of submission. That's a principal that we need to understand. And being submissive does not demean you, it exalts you. It makes you like the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, that is the principal of submission.

Now let's talk about some places of submission. We've already mentioned them, but Peter picks out three very hard places. Number one, he's talking about being submissive to a godless government. Now you say, "Well, when Peter wrote this, he didn't know who was in the White House." Let me tell you who was on the throne of Rome. His name was Nero. Well, first of all, let's read First Peter 2 verse 13 to 17, "Submit yourself to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the king, as supreme or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of them that do well, for so is the will of God that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men as free," we're free, "and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king."

Well, you say, "If they had a good king, I can understand that." Well let me tell you who was the king. His name was Nero. Let me read what one man said about Nero, "He was just three years old when his father died. It was little loss to the boy, for his father had been a killer, a bully and a cheat. His mother took over the family trade and continued the boy's education. She murdered his step-father with a dish of poisoned mushrooms. He was reared in squalor and proved a notable son to his parents.

While still young he committed his first murder, killing a teenage boy who stood in his way and watching him die with callous indifference. He married at fifteen, but soon had his wife killed. He married again and slew his second wife also. In order to marry a third time, he murdered the husband of the woman he wanted. His mother annoyed him so he arranged her murder, first by guile but when that was unsuccessful he murdered her without pretense.

He was an ugly man with a bull neck, a beetle brow, a flat nose, and a tough mouth. He had a pot belly, spindly legs, bad skin, and an offensive odor. At the age of 31 he was sentenced to death



by flogging. He fled to a dingy basement in the house of a slave, cut his own throat. He survived that and he gave the infant church its first taste of things to come. His name was Nero. He was the first of the persecuting Caesars of Rome.” That’s the one, that’s the one that Peter says, “Honor the king. Honor the king.” That’s incredible. Well, why is this? Because verse 14 teaches us that authority is necessary.

C.S. Lewis said this about democracy. He said that he was in favor of democracy not because everybody is equally intelligent or equally qualified to have an equal say, but because everybody is equally sinful, and we all need to keep an eye on each other. That’s why he said we’re in favor of democracy.

Well whatever it is, whether it is a king, or democracy, an oligarchy, whatever it is, there can be no civilization without government. We are to have a submissive spirit to the government. And an attitude of rebellion is as bad as the rebellion itself. Look again in First Peter 2 verses 16 and 17, “We’re free, and not using your liberty as a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.” Now look at this, “Honor all men.” In our social life, we’re to honor all men, every man, red, yellow, black, white, young, old, Christian, pagan, every man in the similitude and image of God is to be honored! The word honor, is a Greek word, it’s the word from which we get our word preciousness. “Red and yellow, black and white, they are precious in His sight.” All men are intrinsically precious to God. Do you believe that? I hope you do. I don’t care who he is. It matters not what he’s done. The Bible says honor all men, in our social life.

And then in our church life, in First Peter 2 verse 17, it says, “Love the brotherhood.” Now we are special. There is a special love that we’re to have for our brothers and sisters in Christ. I love all people but my wife is my beloved. She is above all other women in my life. And in the Christian world, our brothers and sisters in Christ are special. We’re to love one another with a very special love, and so the Bible says we’re to honor the brotherhood.

And then in our spiritual life, he says, “Fear God,” First Peter 2 verse 17. If there’s one thing that we need in America today it is to bring back the fear of Almighty God, for the Bible says in Proverbs 1:7, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge,” and America has lost that.

But then he says finally in our political life, not only in our social life, our church life, our spiritual life, but in our political life, we are to honor the king. Whether that government is led by king or president, the principal is the same. Put in your margin First Timothy chapter 2 verses 1 through 2, “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.” And so, we are to submit to godless government.

You say, “Well, I’ve got some big questions about that.” Maybe I’ll answer them before the message ends if you’ll listen in a hurry.

Now, second thing, not only should we submit to a godless government, but to a bad boss. Look if you will in First Peter 2 verses 18 and 19, “Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thank worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully.” Now, the word servant here literally



means household slave. It's not talking about a domestic servant like we have today who is paid, but it's talking about a person who is a slave. And these slaves were not inferior people. In that day a man would have a doctor slave to take care of him. He would have a teacher slave to educate his children. But Aristotle, his philosophy had come to full flower and he said, Aristotle said, "Master and slave have nothing in common. A slave is a living tool just as a tool is an inanimate slave." Slaves were not treated as persons, they were treated as things. And yet Peter says, "Slaves, be in submission to your master as unto the Lord."

You say, "Well, now wait a minute. Shouldn't we be against slavery?" With all of our heart. And what Peter taught here brought slavery crashing down. He was speaking of reality. They found themselves in a situation over which they had no control. But he said now, "Guard your spirit! Have a submissive spirit!"

Maybe some of you today are not a slave in that sense but you work for what you call a slave driver. Let me tell you something. There is no better place for you to demonstrate the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ if you have an unfair or an ungodly boss. Any pagan can gripe and rebel when things are wrong. But notice what he says in First Peter 2 verse 19, "For this is thank worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief suffering wrongfully."

Now he mentions a third case of an unworthy authority. How do you react toward unworthy authorities, godless government, bad bosses, mean mates? Look in First Peter chapter 3 verse 1 to 4, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the Word," this is not talking about a Christian husband, it's talking about an ungodly husband who will not obey the Word of God, "they may without the Word be won by the conversation of the wives;" that is, "while they behold your chaste," or pure, "behavior, joined or coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be the outward adorning of the plaiting of the hair or the wearing of gold or the putting of apparel." Now, lady, he's not saying it's wrong to fix your hair or to wear gold, if it is, it's wrong for you to wear clothes. He's not saying that. He's saying that is not your adornment. "But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price." This is so contrary to the wisdom of this world, that a wife is to be submissive even to an ungodly husband. But the Bible teaches that a home cannot function without the head.

First Corinthians 11 and verse 3, "But I would have you to know that the head of every man is Christ and the head of the woman is the man and the head of Christ is God." Are God the Son and God the Father coequal, coeternal? Of course. Is a man and a woman, are they coequal? Of course. She is not inferior to him. Submission is one equal placing himself or herself voluntarily under another equal that God thereby may be glorified.

Galatians 3 verse 28 says, "There's neither Jew nor Greek, neither is there bond nor free, neither is there male nor female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." That is settled! But God teaches authority. And what should a wife do if she has an ungodly, unworthy husband? She's not to lecture him,



according to this Scripture. She's not to leave him; she is to love him. Mrs. Billy Graham said, "It is your job to love your husband, it is God's job to make him good."

Now, let's move on quickly. We've talked about the principal of submission. That is that we will never be over those things that God has put under us until we get under those things that God has put over us. We've talked about the places of submission. And Peter mentions three of them: the government, the job, and the home.

Now let's talk about the problems of submission, because there're some real problems. Suppose you work for a man and he asks you to do something dishonest. He asks you to cook the books, to juggle things, to steal for him, and you try to be in submission. Suppose you are in a government, and the government enforces upon you an unjust law and asks you to do something that is contrary to the will of God. Suppose the government were to tell me that I could not preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Let me say this and I want you to listen carefully. Submission is not always the same as obedience. Submission is not always the same as obedience. Your ultimate loyalty belongs to God. You're to render unto Caesar the things that belong to Caesar and unto God the things that are God's; but never give to Caesar the things that belong to God. Never give to Caesar the things that belong to God.

Let me give you an illustration of that. The apostles were preaching the Lord Jesus Christ, and the high muckety-mucks, the magistrates said, "Be quiet! You're upsetting the status quo. Don't preach anymore." Put this verse down in your margin, Acts chapter 5 verses 28 and 29. They caught them there, and they told them not to preach and I'm beginning in verse 28, "Saying, 'Did not we strictly command you that ye should not teach in this name? And, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.' Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, 'We ought to obey God rather than men.'" Do you have that? "We ought to obey God rather than men." Now for their disobedience they were thrown into jail. They submitted as far as they could and as far as I can tell, they did not resist when they were thrown into jail. But they did not stop preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. All human authority is limited.

There are some commands that are qualified, and there're some commands that are not qualified. Let me give you an example of a command that is qualified. Now the Bible says, "We're to live in peace." But Romans 12 verse 18 says, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men." Now the reason that sometimes it's impossible is, we can't control other men. And so we must be submissive if possible, as much as lies in us. But if there comes a time when somebody commands us to do something that is antithetical to the Word of God, the truth of God, then we obey God rather than men.

You see, the greatest principal is that of obedience to God. And it always takes priority over the lesser principal of obedience to men. You can find examples of this all in the Bible. For example, I just mentioned where pharaoh in Moses' day said, "All the little boy babies are to be killed." Well, the godly midwives would not kill the little boy babies. That was disobedience. And if you work in a hospital and they're performing an abortion, you just say, "I'm out of here. I'm out of here! I am not going to participate in the killing of a baby. Fire me if you will. If it ever gets to be a law, arrest me if



you will. But I am not going to do it." If you're a medical doctor here in a hospital just say, "No, count me out. I am not going to do it." Now it was the law in Pharaoh's day, but they did not do it.

They told Daniel, "Daniel, you cannot pray!" But Daniel prayed. Daniel prayed. Now we must have a spirit of submission, but my friend, let me tell you this. Submission is not always obedience.

There was a pastor in Hitler's day, Martin Niemoller. And Martin Niemoller saw what Hitler was doing and they tried to shut him up, and they said, "You can't preach this anymore. Hitler doesn't like it." And Martin Niemoller said, "God is my Fuehrer. God is my Fuehrer." They put him in a concentration camp.

All human authority is limited. We render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, we render unto God the things that are God's, but we will not render unto Caesar the things that are God's.

Now let me say something about the political situation that we're in right now. We as believers in Christ need not identify the church with any political party but always with the kingdom of God. We need to be able to tell both parties to repent and get right with God. The church is not the servant of the state. The church is not the master of the state. The church is the conscience of the state. We will be civil, but we will not be silent. Nathan warned David. Elijah preached to Ahab. Daniel remonstrated with Nebuchadnezzar. Eleazar looked Jehoshaphat in the face and told him he was wrong. Moses was a prophet of God to Pharaoh. And as long as they're killing babies, there's one preacher who will not be silent standing right here today.

As long as we have a government that's trying to normalize sodomy, I cannot be quiet. As long as they're distributing condoms to children in school and trying to normalize illicit sex, we dare not be quiet. As long as a freeborn American is told he cannot pray vocally anywhere, anytime, we cannot be silent. Nothing is politically right that is morally wrong. But if you think that an election is going to help us, let me tell you something folks, government cannot make us good, only God can make us good. Government is here to restrain evil. And God's plan is a free church in a free state. And when the government does what it alone can do, that is restrain evil, the church is free to do what she alone can do and that is to preach the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ. There are problems with submission, but we need to understand that we must obey God.

What if a wife has a husband who is physically abusing her and the Bible says be in submission? The Bible says also in Romans 12:18, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men." If I had a daughter who was being physically abused and battered, I'd get her out of that situation. I wouldn't say, "Well now, the Bible says submit." Yes, she's to have a submissive spirit. But there is a time, there is a time when there is a higher law that takes precedent, and so, remember that our ultimate allegiance is to Almighty God.

A man was praying for a politician. The politician said, "Oh, I'm so glad you've learned to pray for those who are in authority." He said, "That wasn't the verse I had in mind. I was praying for those you persecute you." Now folks, listen, we are to have a submissive spirit. I've talked to you about the



principal, I have talked to you about the places, I've talked to you about the problems. Let me talk to you about the price of submission. You think this is easy? This is the hardest thing we're asked to do.

Look if you will in First Peter 2 verse 19 and through 23, he says, "For this is thank worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently? But if, when ye do well and suffer for it ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow in His steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously." That is, He appealed to the Supreme Court of the universe, and the word means He just handed Himself over to God. He had undeserved suffering, unretaliating suffering, unfrustrated suffering, because He was counting on God to even the score.

Well, you say, "Pastor, that doesn't sound fair." Well let's look at First Peter 2 verse 24 speaking of Jesus, "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness." That is, He bore our sins. He took our sins. Think of a doctor who makes himself sick in order to make the patient well, and then turns around and pays the hospital bill. That's King Jesus. Now that wasn't fair, but thank God He did it, Amen? And He left us an example that we should follow in His steps. And because of that, "God hath highly exalted Him and given Him a name that is above every name." And I'm telling you folks, God will do the same thing for us when we begin to obey Almighty God.

You see, it was the spirit of these early Christians that brought the Roman Empire crashing down. Because God gave them kingdom authority. And they turned that world upside down because they learned the strength of submission. They did not give in to evil. They overcame evil. Submission does not embolden tyranny, it destroys it. And they were just honeycombing that entire Roman Empire, that mountain of evil, with Gospel dynamite and it brought the whole thing crashing down.

God gives authority to those who understand submission. We will never be over those things that God has put under us, until we get under those things that God has put over us: the Lordship of Christ, the Word of God, those institutions that God has put in place.

They were killing the Christians up in the Coliseum. It would seat 50,000 people. I've stood there many times. Underneath the ground in the catacombs were the Christians worshipping God and praying to God. Up here, Caesar was lord. Down here, Jesus was Lord. But Caesar's gone friend and Jesus is still Lord. He's King of kings and Lord of lords. We have victory in Jesus.

Would you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. If you're not certain that you're saved, would you like to be saved, would you? Would you like to know that you really do have life? Jesus said, "I've come that you might have life." Could I lead you in a prayer? We'll call this prayer the sinner's prayer. And you can pray and accept Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. You can do it right now. Would you pray this prayer? "Dear God, I know that You love me. Thank You for loving me. And I know that You want to save me. Jesus, You died to save me and You promised to save me if I would trust You. Jesus, I do trust You. I believe You're the Son of God. I believe you paid



for my sin with Your blood on the cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. And now I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Come into my life. Take control of my life and begin today to make me the person You want me to be. And Jesus, give me the courage to make it public. Help me never to be ashamed of You. In Your name I pray, Amen.”



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