

## 34. Godly citizen, godly rebel

December 21, 2008

Before we start this study, I am giving you a warning: I am going to be very political this morning due to the study. You may not agree with my political view, that is OK, but you'd better not disagree with our Lord Jesus. As I have said before, if you have to argue with God because you disagree with Him, it proves that you are wrong, period.

The Lord our God has established three institutions: the home, government and the church. There are people who teach riot and rebellion against government in the name of Christ.

I am sure that you all have heard news stories about abortion clinic bombing incidents or killing of abortion doctors several years ago. They call it 'Civil Disobedience'. Paul refuted this position in this chapter by explaining to us why the Christian must be in subjection to the laws of the land.

Yes, abortion is wrong. But that doesn't justify anyone to blow up someone's properties or to kill abortion doctors. Remember what we learned last Sunday. Romans 12:17 says, "Repay no one evil for evil." Two wrongs do not make one right.

It is extremely difficult to be obedient to the authority which is standing against the principles of Christianity. I must admit that I have a problem with the principle that every government authority is ordained by God. When I see some of the corrupted people like former Alaska Senator Ted Stevens or Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich and many others, I wonder how these crooked politicians could possibly be chosen by God. Since I am arguing with God's principle, I am wrong.

We can't always understand the plans of God. Sometimes when people reject God's leadership, He then gives them the leadership they deserve like He did to the Israelites by allowing them to have king Saul who was a sorry excuse for a king. If people want to rebel against God, He lets them. Our role is to accept whatever leadership God puts over us, realizing that He has a purpose in mind. He is still in ultimate control.

### **A. GOVERNMENT'S LEGITIMATE AUTHORITY AND THE CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSE**

*Romans 13:1-2 Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.*

It is God who has established the governments of the world. This does not mean that He is responsible for the sins of dictators or corrupted politicians. The government authority to rule over its people originally comes from God. To resist the law is to resist the God who established government in the world, and this means asking for punishment.

There's no wiggle room in this command. Paul makes it perfectly clear who is supposed to do what – everybody is to be subject to their government.

Basically, this means that God expects all people, as a general rule, to obey the laws of their land. He wants us to obey traffic laws, refrain from trampling on the rights of others, and pay our taxes. A godly Christian should mean a godly citizen.

V2 tells that if we disobey government, we rebel against God Himself. On that note, whatever kinds of objections you may have in your hearts at this point, please hold them back until I finish, please.

## **B. ONE OF THE REASONS WHY WE SHOULD NOT DISOBEY**

*Romans 13:3-4 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. 4 For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil.*

A government's job entails being vigilant and aggressive in hunting down evil and bringing wrath on those who violate it. This is the reason why government has law enforcement agencies to enforce the laws against those who commit crimes. Rebellion against God-appointed authority has its consequences including the death penalty.

Liberal people argue that the death penalty is unbiblical and immoral. They say that it is wrong to execute the people who killed others without conscience. Let's go over their arguments one at a time. Death penalty is ordained by God in Genesis 9:5-6.

*Genesis 9:5-6 Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man. 6 "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.*

The people who are against death penalty are generally for abortion and they'd rather save whales, pygmy owls and gray wolves than unborn babies. They would counter to us, "How can you condone death penalty while you are against abortion?" I say, "The answer is very easy. Every single death row inmate is the one who has murdered other innocent people in cold blood. But what did the unborn babies in mothers' wombs do wrong to be killed?"

Good Christians who obey the law and refrain from evil, have done nothing to be punished for. I know a young Christian man who told me that he hates cops. Guess why? It is because he had been against the law one too many times.

Does it mean that human justice systems and law enforcement systems are perfect without a fault? No. I get disgusted by American justice systems when they let go of heavy duty criminals while they go after innocent people.

Even though the systems are not perfect, we still have to be obedient and respectful.

## **C. THE CHRISTIAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO GOVERNMENT**

*Romans 13:5-7 Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. 7 Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.*

Any citizen can obey the law because of fear of punishment, but a Christian ought to obey because of conscience. The best way to keep a clean conscience is to be a good citizen.

Many of you know that I have a lead foot problem. I like to drive fast. The Holy Spirit with the corporation of my wife, has been telling me that I should obey the speed limit even though I usually can get away because I am a Sheriff's Department Chaplain. The point is that it would disgrace the name of God if I get pulled over or simply disobeying the speed limits. I knew I was wrong when I sped. I think that they should increase speed limit wherever I go, don't you think?

V7 commands us to pay what we owe: taxes, revenue, fear and honor. If we do not pay our taxes, we show disrespect to the law, the officials and the Lord. What the government does with the tax is not our responsibility, but theirs.

Who hasn't heard of the two inescapable facts: death and taxes. Maybe death and taxes are inevitable, but death doesn't get worse every time Congress meets. And it will get far worse when the Democrat controlled Congress and Senate get together next year. Somebody have to pay for all these financial bailouts the politicians have been promising. Guess who is going to pay for them? Us.

#### ***D. IN LIGHT OF CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION***

We know that President-Elect Barack Obama is an ungodly person no matter how you look at him. Before some of you get upset with me, let's look at his track record as Illinois State Senator, Senator and President-Elect. He is an extreme liberal, he stands for everything against the principles of Christianity even though he does lip service about being a Christian.

Obama has been a staunch supporter for the biggest abortion provider in the world, the Planned Parenthood, during all of his political career. Barack Obama thinks partial birth abortion is a "legitimate medical procedure". He opposes parental notification of minor girls before they abort. Do you know a school nurse must notify student's parents before they give a headache pill to the student in school? But when it comes to abortion, they don't care to notify young girl's parents. Barack Obama has stated "the first thing I'd do as president" would be to sign the Freedom of Choice Act, which would overturn every local, state and federal abortion law passed in the past 35 years.

He also is moving swiftly to appoint homosexual activists to positions within his administration. Politico.com reports that 10 national homosexual organizations are working with the Obama transition team to get more openly homosexual people appointed to the incoming administration.

Obama's transition team has also reportedly named at least seven openly homosexual people to transition panels assigned to review federal departments and agencies. During his Presidential campaign, Obama already promised that he would abolish the "Don't ask, don't tell" policy in the U.S. military so that he can have the door wide open for homosexuals in the Armed Forces.

Obama's fruit of salvation shows that he is anything but a true believer of Jesus Christ. So should I treat him as an enemy? No, he is going to be my President and I will respect his office and him as the next President of the United States of America. I

will pray for him and for his salvation. But what he is standing for, I absolutely do not respect, nor do I agree with.

I don't know what this extremely liberal upcoming federal government is going to do under the control of the extremely liberal President and Vice-President with the help of the extremely liberal Senate and Congress. I am sure they will appoint Supreme Court Judges and Federal Judges who would help their liberal agendas in the judicial systems as well.

Some of you may wonder why I am so dead set against liberals. It is because just about everything in the liberal agendas are against the teachings of Jesus Christ – from marriage, morality, homosexuality, abortion, you name it.

### **E. OBAMA IS THE MAN**

The way I look at the current political situation, President-elect Obama is the perfect person for the next President of the United States of America. The majority of people in America have been rejecting God and His truth from every area of their lives, especially from their finances. They chose money over God. So the Lord simply took away His protecting and caring hands from this once great country. Now America is facing the biggest financial crisis since the Great Depression.

America wants to have a better economy over God, fantasy over truth, empty promises over reality and unknown change over escape from upcoming judgment and wrath of God. America deserves Barack Obama so God gave him to them. Don't ever think that his brilliant campaign workers pulled this off.

### **F. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE**

*Acts 5:29 But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: "We ought to obey God rather than men.*

Let's clarify one more time. This study was not about the biblical view of civil disobedience, rather obeying the governing authorities over us. However, there are times when we rightly defy government-approved authorities who tried to impose ungodly policies contradicting God's commands. In other words, God allows us to be godly rebels in a few occasions.

When civil law and God's law are in opposition like in the Book of Acts chapter 4 and 5, the believer should protest or disobey. But when a believer feels he should disobey his government, he must be sure it is not because the government has denied him his rights, but because it has denied him God's rights.

### **G. APPLICATIONS**

- 1) Obey God always.
- 2) Obey government usually.