

Should Caesar Always Be Obeyed (Romans 13:2)

- Left to ourselves, we are like those described in Judges: In those days there was no king in Israel. Every one did what was right in his own eyes (21:25)
- This is why Paul insists in Romans 13:1 that we are to obey secular authorities
- The state is God's wise provision for avoiding anarchy.
- Having been told we must obey secular authorities, He now tells us why (vs.2)

I. Must Our Obedience Be Absolute?

- Are there conditions in which rebellion against existing authorities are justified?
- What if there are violations? Must obedience be absolute or are there limits?
- This question was answered by Jesus when He was questioned about taxes
- His enemies tried to trap him, by siding with the Romans or angering the Jews
- Jesus points to a coin: 'give to Caesar what is Caesar's & God what is God's'

II. Four Logical Options

- 1) God alone as the authority with the authority of government denied
 - This is the choice of those who refuse governmental authority: Monastics
- 2) Caesar alone with the authority of God denied
 - This is the option of most secularists and even some Christians: Caesar alone
- 3) The authority of both God & Caesar, with Caesar in the dominant position
 - This is the position of many today, but it is the position of cowards
- 4) The authority of both God & Caesar, with God in the dominant position
 - Position Jesus taught: Give to Caesar what is Caesar's & God what is God's

III. Limitation One: Evangelism

- We are duty bound to disobey the government when it forbids evangelism
- The disciples disobeyed the Pharisees to obey Christ (Acts 4:19 20; 5:28,29)

IV. Limitation Two: Morality

- No government has the right to command a Christian to perform immoral acts
- In Nazi Germany Christians resisted the authorities, we must resist racism, etc

V. Limitation Three: Civil Disobedience

- This is a difficult one when we feel that words won't work but only actions

What is Needed

- There is no justification for destruction of property, the taking of life/violence