

## Giving Tribute to Christ by Submission to the State 1 Peter 2:13-17

Introduction: Why Peter calls for submission to the state.

- 2:9 The standing and status of Christians with God.
- 2:9 The high calling of Christians to the world.
- 2:11 The alien status of Christians in the world.

Possible question from Christians: why should we have any involvement in our society, let alone cooperate with civil authorities?

A believer's submission to governing authorities acts as a tribute to God's supreme authority over all things.

### 1. SUBMIT TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES, verses 13-14.

#### A. The Theological basis for Peter's Command:

Submission sees Christ's divine authority controlling human government.

#### B. The right heart attitude for a Christian's submission to human government.

Exile in Babylon—a paradigm for submission to human government, Jeremiah 29:4-7.

To serve our unsaved neighbors as a witness for Jesus, Christians must be subject to the existing rulers.

#### C. The foundational purpose for the state (14b) to punish those who do evil and praise those who do good. 1 Timothy 2:2-4

#### D. When government law contradicts God's Law--three alternatives:

- 1) accept whatever punishment the state may impose
- 2) go "underground"
- 3) move to a territory where your conduct is not illegal.

### 2. WHY SUBMIT, verse 15 (note verse 12)

By law-abiding conduct, Christians prove the ignorance and untruthfulness of slanders against them.

What **good works** can silence slander?

- 1) Be good law-abiding citizens, Romans 13:1-7  
Non-Christians are watching.
- 2) Live Morally upright lives, 1 Thess 4:3-5
- 3) Practice a good work ethic, 2 Thess 3:6-13
- 4) Some form of public benevolence like adoption.

### 3. A WARNING TO THOSE WHO ABUSE CHRISTIAN LIBERTY, verse 16.

The liberation salvation brings does not mean lawlessness (Rom 6:15-19)

1 Corinthians 8, liberty and causing brothers to stumble.

1 Timothy 2:11-15, liberty and recognition of proper roles in the Church

Christ makes Christians free people in their hearts. The genuine believer recognizes that he/she has submitted to the Lordship of Christ. Jesus is a kind and gracious master but still expects compliance with His Laws.

Christian liberty means willing compliance with government authority as though you are serving Christ by doing so.

### 4. CHRISTIAN LIBERTY PROPERLY EXERCISED, verse 17.

Exhortations for every sphere of Christian relationships:

- Honor everyone—our relationships to people around us.
- Love the brotherhood--relationships to the Church and fellow-Christians
- Fear God--our relationship to God
- Honor the Emperor--our relationships to the State

### SUMMARY

Submission to the State gives tribute to the supremacy of Christ.

It is a key to demonstrating that Christ is the true liberator of humanity.

Properly practiced Christian liberty will offer honor to all people, love to fellow Christians, reverent fear to God, and honor to governing authorities.