

## One of the Best Arguments for the Gospel

1 Peter 2:11-17

**Question:** What is one of the best arguments for the Gospel?

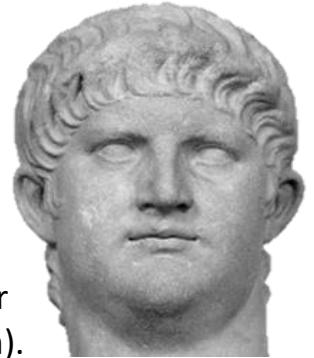
**Answer:** A Gospel believer who lives a holy, good, honorable, respectful, submissive, loving life

Such a life can silence slanderers. It can quiet the critics. Such a life makes the Gospel believable. The Gospel, when accompanied by such a lifestyle, is not easily ignored and rejected. The opposite is also true. A Christian who does **not** live this way makes the Gospel hard to believe. Such a Christian becomes an argument **against** the believability of the Gospel.

Although we so easily get annoyed with and rebel against authority in our lives, the truth about authority is this: as finite and sinful human beings, we need authority over us. It's actually a good and wise gift from our God. And this unquestionably includes human government. See Romans 13:1-7.

Always having someone over us is not something we can ever escape. We are creatures who are constantly under authority. That won't stop. Who's in charge of us will change as we age and go through different stages of life, but someone will always be in charge of us.

All human authority is flawed authority, and many human authorities are unjust, evil people. The emperor who reigned when Peter wrote this letter was very likely Nero (who also reigned when Peter was executed for his faith).



Accepting such authority becomes easier when we understand and believe these two truths:

- The person over us always has God above him or her.
- That person's authority only extends so far and only lasts so long.

God alone possesses supreme, absolute, unending authority over everyone and everything He has made (His creation). All other authority is limited.

We obey our **unseen** authority (God) by obeying our **seen** authorities. We obey God by always obeying our human authorities unless obeying our human authorities would mean disobeying God. Just as we should not think that we love our unseen God if we don't love our seen brothers and sisters, so we should not think that we are obedient to our unseen authority if we don't obey those whom we can see. If we disobey them, we disobey Him.

Are there times when we disobey human authorities so that we can obey God? Yes, both the OT and NT give us many examples of such disobedience by God's people for the sake of obeying God (including Peter—Acts 5:27-29).

- ✓ We obey our God by obeying our human authorities.
- ✓ We submit to God by submitting to government.
- ✓ We do this (we obey God by obeying our human authorities) unless obeying our human authorities would mean disobeying God.

Although we are now free people in Christ, we should use our newfound freedom to willingly submit ourselves to those whom God has sovereignly, wisely, temporarily placed over us. We do **not** do this because we are cowards but because of Christ. We seek to be good citizens for the sake of our God and His Gospel. Our willing submission comes from a heart that wants to please God and make the Gospel look good to a hostile, watching world. See also Titus 2:7-3:8.

We can live radically good, beautiful, mouth-shutting, praise-producing, submissive lives by recalling who is really King and who is always watching. **We must never forget who's really King and who's always watching.**

We subject ourselves **by faith**. We subject ourselves by seeing our unseen, sovereign King by faith. We subject ourselves by believing that our willing subjection leaves a good impression and can make an eternal difference.