

03 God and Government – Disagreements in application

Series God and Government Pt 3

August 23rd P. M. Service

Reading **Romans 14:19-23**

Last week we went through the scripture passage that allow or show people resisting the government individually. We saw three principles that can be taken from them. The first principle was that all authority comes from God and He is the ultimate authority. God gives this authority to men to use, under his authority. While men may try to claim more and do, we will each be accountable to God. The second and third principles deal with when could man disobey the authority of the government? The second one taken from Daniel 3 states that “What God has forbidden, can not be commanded.” Man is under a higher authority than government when God has spoken clearly on a subject. We are than required to stand, we can not bow. Likewise, we see Daniel also teaching us the opposite principle, “What God has commanded, can not be forbidden.” These rules cease to have authority as we are to obey God rather than men. This is clearly expressed also by Peter and John as well when they answer the Pharisees that “We ought to obey God rather than men” in Acts 5:29. This is clearly in regard to the teaching and preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Today we want to move into the next part, what do we do when we disagree.

- Return to our foundation stones:
 - Authority
 - **Roman 14:11** ¹¹ For it is written: "As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God¹."
 - Our Authority for what we do comes from God and we will have to answer to God.
 - Therefore; let us make sure that we are pleasing Him, first last and always.
 - Attitude:
 - **Col 4:6** ⁶ *Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.*
 - Our attitude of heart. We answer with Grace... assuming the best, yet trying to speak truth as we are able.
 - Reason
 - **1 Peter 3:15** ¹⁵ But sanctify the Lord God¹ in your hearts, and always *be* ready to *give* a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;
 - We must have scripture on our side to guide us. It can't be a vague... standing for truth... but an actual example / verse of what scripture requires.
 - Peter could have told the Pharisees that Jesus had said: (Matthew 28:18-20) "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ "Go therefore¹ and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age."
 - You must have a verse or an example that clearly points to what is correct, not just a similar situation.
 - Example: Family magazine had an article on how to stop children from arguing over where to sit at the table. Each child should have their assigned seat. So far the advice is good and something that most parents have figured out. But then the author makes a statement that I disagree with.
 - **1Sa 20:18** ¹⁸ Then Jonathan said to David, "Tomorrow *is* the New Moon; and you will be missed, because your seat will be empty.
 - **1Sa 20:27** ²⁷ And it happened the next day, the second *day* of the month, that David's place was empty. And Saul said to Jonathan his son, "Why has the son of Jesse not come to eat, either yesterday or today?"
 - You can see that Saul did this, so this is a biblical principle.

- No teaching was taught. It was something done as David was a commander of the army, a hero who sat at Saul's table, and was married to Saul's daughter. Yes he had a saved seat.... But this is not a principle that is taught in scripture. This would be a weak application. You may use examples, like we did in Daniel, but they are confirmed by the rest of Scripture, especially **Acts 5**.
 - You must have teaching on the subject. Then examples that support it by agreeing or by being corrected by God.
 - We have strong feelings on the subject of freedom, taxes, unjust laws.... They effect and affect us strongly.
 - We have these feelings as we see these issues as issues of justice. There is what we clearly believe to be a just side and a unjust side.
 - Israeli Politics.
 - American Politics in previous generations between Democrats and Republicans.
 - Abortion versus Help for the Poor.
 - One sees Abortion as the end all of all issues.... The other doesn't believe that the Republican candidate will change anything so votes on other issues that to that person is a justice issue.
 - Which is right???? You can't say.
- Do we have verses that address this?
 - **Romans 14:1-4** Receive one who is weak in the faith, *but* not to disputes over doubtful things. ² For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats *only* vegetables. ³ Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him. ⁴ Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.
 - This whole chapter is about dealing with disagreements. When two brothers see things differently.
 - We are to receive the one who is weak... If they come, if they listen, we are not to point out their faults, but to receive them as a brother or sister....
 - Why?
 - 1. God has received him....
 - 2. Who are you to judge another's servant? We do just actions and teaching that is clearly wrong. If it is clearly defined in the bible, we have to move forward. If it isn't a 'sin' issue, we receive them.
 - Eating meat...
 - Sabbath Days....
 - **Romans 14:10-13** ¹⁰ But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ¹. ¹¹ For it is written: "As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God¹." ¹² So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. ¹³ Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in *our* brother's way.
 - We are to love our brethren.
 - **John 13:34-35** ³⁴ "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."
 - **1 Co 13:4-8** ⁴ Love suffers long *and* is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; ⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ Love never fails. ...
 - **Rom 14:14-15** ¹⁴ I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that *there is* nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean. ¹⁵ Yet if your brother is grieved because of *your* food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died.

- There are many things that are legal to me as a Christian, that aren't helpful, are even harmful.
- Yet some will have some of these things.
- Our job isn't to correct our brother, but to not grieve our brother.
 - **1Co 8:13** ¹³ Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.
- **Rom 14:19-23** ¹⁹ Therefore let us pursue the things *which make* for peace and the things by which one may edify another. ²⁰ Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed *are* pure, but *it is* evil for the man who eats with offense. ²¹ *It is* good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor *do anything* by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak¹. ²² Do you have faith¹? Have *it* to yourself before God. Happy *is* he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. ²³ But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because *he does* not *eat* from faith; for whatever *is* not from faith is sin¹.
 - Principles
 - 1. Pursue the things which make for peace and edify one another.
 - 2. Do not use my liberties to destroy my brother.
 - 3. Whatever is not from faith is sin. (Faith must be based on Scripture alone. Clearly worded, teaching scripture.
 - If I don't assign my twin boy seats at the table, but let them change, am I in sin????
- MacArthur and Jonathan Leemans
 - MacArthur – Clearly defined the need for Churches to meet to worship. We are to “Assemble”.
 - Hebrews 10:25 WE are to not forsake (abandon)... this
 - The Lord's table is to be when the church is assembled....
 - MacArthur asked Christians to join Him. It did come across that if you didn't you were in sin.
 - Jonathan Leeman
 - Civil disobedience may not be the only legitimate option....
 - 4 points to consider
 - 1. The Church can meet outdoors. (true for Virginia, not true in California not able to meet with people outside of your household without quarantining for 14 days.)
 - 2. We are to work to accommodate government restrictions...
 - 3. **1Co 6:12** ¹² All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.
 - Is this wasting my political clout on an area that the church doesn't have the moral high ground on?
 - 4. Is this an overlap of Jurisdictions? Government and Church? Preservation of Life and Command to Worship?
 - “What is implied in this statement is that the elders don't believe there is a real threat with Covid-19. Again, that is a judgment call they are allowed to make. And that judgment call presumably stands behind their subsequent judgment call to disobey the government. One more, my goal here is not to necessarily disagree with, much less condemn either judgment. My goal is to open up a little space of Christian freedom for other churches to make different judgments, and then to encourage all of us to exercise patience and charity with one another and our churches as we make different decisions.

Let's make sure we don't “pass judgment on one another” (Romans 14:13), but instead “accept one another” (Romans 15:7). This attitude should characterize the conversation between Christians, between churches, and even between church leaders and members as they come to different conclusions, as challenging as that might become. We must “make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification,” even if that means you decide to leave one church for another. (Romans 14:19), because you've become convinced your leaders are making the wrong call. Go in peace, charity, and grace. God's kingdom is bigger than any on of our gatherings.”