



Disobeying civil command to honor the Lord

Contrary to what many people think, we should never under any circumstances obey any ungodly command. Disobeying the Lord to obey man is a perversion.

- A. 1 Peter 2:13-15 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; [14] Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. [15] For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:
- a) The Word of God instructs us to submit ourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake.
 - b) The word "submit" is not synonymous with "obedience." This verse is not telling us to "obey" but rather to submit.
 - c) We can be submitted to an ungodly command, yet not obey it. Submission is more of the attitude whereas obedience is the action. It is possible for someone to submit to authority yet not obey. It is also possible for someone to obey and do the right thing, yet with a sticking attitude.
 - d) We can disobey a command that is ungodly, yet not rebel at the authority.

Remember that Peter wrote Acts 4:19-20 where he seemingly acted contrary to what he is saying here in 1 Peter 2:13-15. This is not inconsistency if you understand that submission is not synonymous to obedience.

- B. Acts 5:27-29 And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, [28] Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. [29] Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.
- a) They were forbidden to teach in the name of Jesus. This was a civil command.

- b) They disobeyed it in order to keep the greater command of the Lord.
- c) If you obey the civil ungodly command, you have just obeyed man rather than God. This is wrong. We ought to obey God rather than man at all costs.

C. Cost to obeying God over men.

It will cost you if you choose to obey God over men. You will be persecuted, prosecuted, reviled, thrown in jail, and/ or killed. (2 Timothy 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.)

- a) Matthew 16:24-25 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. [25] For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.
 - i) If you are a true disciple of the Lord Jesus, you have to consider laying down your life for the Lord. You could be presented with an opportunity to do so.
 - ii) You must deny yourself.
 - iii) Being a disciple of Jesus is risky in this perverse world we live in. Does that mean we should go in hiding? No! Our light shines brighter during darkness.
 - Acts 5:33 "When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them."
 - Daniel 3
 - Daniel 6
 - iv) It is better to die or suffer for what is godly and honors the Lord, than to live for something totally ungodly and dishonors the Lord.
 - v) Not everything legal is godly. We must be careful not to fall for that lie.
 - vi) Because we are sheep, we aren't dumb sheep. We still have functional brains and are led and filled with the Holy Spirit. We shouldn't just swallow every junk that comes down in the name of humility.
- b) 1 Peter 4:12-16 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: [13] But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. [14] If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil

spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. [15] But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. [16] Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.

- i) Think it not strange. Don't be surprised.
- ii) Rejoice if you suffer for godliness. It only when we suffer for wrongdoing or ungodliness that we should not rejoice.
- iii) We are partakers of Christ's suffering and therefore partakers of his reward.
- iv) Our suffering and reproach got to be for the name of Christ, not sin or foolishness.
- v) Don't suffer as a thief, murderer, busybody, or evildoer.
- vi) Our reproach for the Lord glorifies Him.

D. Salt and light

- a) Matthew 5:13-16 "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. [14] Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. [15] Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. [16] Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

We need to continue to be the salt and light during any ungodly command. If we obey an ungodly command, we cease to be the salt and light.

- i) Light is not always good to some. It exposes their acts in darkness. Cockroaches hate light.
- ii) It wakes up those who are sleeping.
- iii) Salt is good for food, but it also hurts when applied to a wound. Before it brings about healing, it will hurt a little.
- iv) Salt is one of the best preservatives.

E. Prepare your heart to say no to something ungodly.

- a) Before the need comes to say no, you have to prepare your heart to do so.

- i) We live in interesting times. Don't be surprised if your life is on the line.
- ii) Saying no will not just happen instantly. Our hearts have to be prepared to make such decisions.
- iii) There is a place to say no to ungodly commands. If we succumb to an ungodly command for the temporal benefit, we lose volumes in the long run. If we compromise, we lose.
- iv) In some places, marrying multiple wives is the norm, sex with children, animals, same perversion (sex), marijuana, sex slave, and abortion (murder) so forth are legal. But for a godly and biblical standpoint, these things are unacceptable and ungodly.
- v) Because 9 men and women in black said something is so doesn't mean it is godly. We have to accept the godly command and reject the ungodly and unbiblical commands.

F. Attitude

- a) Which attitude do we have when we disobey any ungodly command?
 - i) It is important to understand the attitude with which we do this. We can't be cursing, rioting and revolting. Although we are standing up against something ungodly, our approach shouldn't be one in sin.
 - ii) There is a right and wrong way to do something good.
 - iii) In the process of doing what is right, we need to stay submitted to authority at all costs. This is the godly thing to do.

G. We wrestle not against flesh and blood.

- a) Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.
 - i) As we stand for the truth and reject doing what is the ungodly command, we must remember that we aren't wrestling against flesh and blood.
- b) Midwives

Exodus 1:17-21 *“But the midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive. And the king of Egypt called for the midwives, and said unto them, Why have ye done this thing, and have saved the men children alive? And the midwives said unto Pharaoh, Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian women; for they are lively, and are delivered ere the midwives come in unto them. Therefore, God dealt well with the midwives: and the people multiplied, and waxed very mighty. And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.”*

- i) These midwives feared God and they disobeyed the king. Anyone who does not disobey the king when those commands go against His Word, they do not fear God.
 - ii) God dealt well with the midwives right after lying and He made them houses.
- c) Rahab the Harlot.

Joshua 2:1-7 *“And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho. And they went, and came into an harlot's house, named Rahab, and lodged there. And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, Behold, there came men in hither to night of the children of Israel to search out the country. And the king of Jericho sent unto Rahab, saying, Bring forth the men that are come to thee, which are entered into thine house: for they be come to search out all the country. And the woman took the two men, and hid them, and said thus, There came men unto me, but I wist not whence they were: And it came to pass about the time of shutting of the gate, when it was dark, that the men went out: whither the men went I wot not: pursue after them quickly; for ye shall overtake them. But she had brought them up to the roof of the house, and hid them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order upon the roof. And the men pursued after them the way to Jordan unto the fords: and as soon as they which pursued after them were gone out, they shut the gate.”*

- i) In Joshua 2, the king of Jericho sent men looking for the spies (Joshua and two other spies) who had entered the harlot's house.
- ii) These spies were in the house hid by Rahab, but she told the men that were looking for them that they came in and left and she knew not where they went. Simply said, she lied to them to save lives.
- iii) She did not obey the ungodly request of these men to kill the spies.

H. The reward for standing up for godliness.

Although the reward ought not to be our motivation for standing up for godliness, there are indeed rewards in this life.

a) Hundredfold in this life.

Mark 10:29-30 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, [30] But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.

- i) Notice that laying down your life has to be for Jesus' sake and the gospel's sake.
- ii) Shall receive a hundredfold in this life.

b) Promotion

- i) Daniel
- ii) Hananiah, Mishael, and, Azariah.

Here is an example of this: In the USA due to the outbreak of the Corona virus, the governments of many states governors and leaders used the iron fist to shut down or restrict churches from having their services and gathering. They deemed them nonessential something that I wholeheartedly disagree with. Many churches complied but for a while (about 3 months) just for safety reasons recommended by the health officials of their states. When church leaders saw that the government officials were overstepping by continuously prohibiting the churches from reopening, and also abusing their voluntary cooperation for the purpose of safety, they decided to reopen. Many wrote letters to the governors and authorities to let them know that the time had come for them to reopen. They did this with the uttermost respect for leadership citing not only their God-given call and mandate to have the Word proclaimed and gathering together as a church but also the constitutional rights that allow them to peacefully assemble and freely exercise their 1st amendment rights of worship or religion. A time came when they had to obey the civil government to obey God as it came to preaching and ministering the Word. This was not done in rebellion nor were the church leaders calling for a revolt. They were not relishing to disobey but they had to disobey the government to obey Almighty God. There is a place for civil obedience and there is a right and wrong way of doing it. What these church leaders did was perfectly in line with the Word of God and they had to do this lest they disobey God to obey man. I believe the initial closing of the Churches was to obey the authorities for health reasons. If the authorities had wanted them to close down banning them from preaching the Gospel, the approach could have been totally different. They would have not closed the churches at all because that was a direct contradiction of the Word of God.