

I Peter Study

August 23, 2026

Text this morning:

1 Peter 2:13-17

Submission to authority Part II

How is it Going in the U.S today?

I Peter 2:

13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, **14** or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. **15** For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. **16** Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God. **17** Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.

Romans 13:

1 Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except God, and those which exist are established by God. 2 Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. 3 For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; 4 for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. 5 Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. 6 For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. 7 Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority

We saw last week: WE ARE TO

SUBMIT :

hypotassō

An authoritative arrangement; ordering a chain of command; and in relation to your attitude toward the chain of command.

‘BE IN THE CONDITION OF HAVING BEEN SUBJECTED TO . . . ‘

A conscious choice of subjecting yourself to something.

All Government is given by God; He has shared His Power and Authority with men, so that they can govern themselves and ensure individual peace and security . . .

RON MERRYMAN SELECTED COMMENTARY IN THIS LESSON ADAPTED FROM: 1 PETER 2:13-17, AUDIO #14 AT MERRYMANMINISTRIES.NET

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are **Life, Liberty** and the pursuit of Happiness.-- That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men **[by God]**, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, **[we have covenanted with each other in the U.S. to lay the power in the populus]**, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. - ***Declaration of Independence, 1776***

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, **insure domestic Tranquility**, provide for the common defense, **promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty** to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America – ***Preamble to the U.S. Constitution***

Liberty & the Concept of the Protection of Conscience:

The 1st Amendment to Constitution establishes the Liberty of Conscience:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

- Liberty of belief in God (or not)
- Liberty to worship God (or not)
- Liberty to assemble and worship God
- Liberty to “complain” about how the Government is doing things

SEE: THE DOCTRINE OF CONSCIENCE
(ADAPTED FROM R. MERRYMAN) PDF
PRESENTATION IN ‘SUPPLEMENTS’

The Biblical **FACT** of ‘conscience’ = *syneidēsis*. “with” + “eídō” - to see, know, perceive with

For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their *conscience* bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them . . . [ROM 2: 14, 15]

RON MERRYMAN: ‘THE PROTECTION OF CONSCIENCE: THE BIBLE; THE GOVERNMENT; MERRYMAN MINISTRIES, CASA GRANDE AZ 2009

Conscience then is:

- Your soul and thoughts bearing witness to what is right and what is wrong
 - That mechanism that will accuse you, or defend you internally
 - Is a universal convicter of right v. wrong
 - I Cor. 11:7 – man is and keeps on being in the image of God: with sense of God consciousness, moral authority, moral responsibility and volitional choice
 - The conscience is installed in every man by creation
 - The First Amendment is: a very good protector of that conscience
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Paul sets forth in I Cor. 8 of a strong (mature) believer in Christ, with consciousness of his Liberty in Christ protecting/ securing the weaker conscience of a less mature believer,

So that the weaker's conscience will not be sullied / defiled

I Cor. 10: 23-33 – even protects the conscience of an unbeliever relative to a believer who has Christ's Liberty

Romans 14: details the SAME PRINCIPLE of protection of another's conscience; and Romans 14 and the spirit of the First Amendment' protections line up beautifully

So it is (or should be) with the Government in regards with our First Amendment *(BUT)*:

- In Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, an employer is not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex or national origin
- But it does give a religious exemption to: organizations to discriminate on the basis of their conscience (not hiring non-Christians, Catholics, etc.), but (examples):
- Masterpiece Cakeshop, Ltd. v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission: is an excellent example of one set of consciences (Craig v. Masterpiece Cakeshop, Inc.)
- One conscience v. another, and the governing authority (Colo. Civil Rights Commission), choosing one over the other
- *There was a meeting in a coffee shop broadcast online of Christians meeting together as a Right to Life Group, but the coffee shop owner (I assume) was an atheist, he was offended and he demanded that the group not meet at his establishment. What should the Christians have done in this case?*
- What about: The Pandemic? How were consciences protected by the government in that?
- Fauci and all the crew: covered up source of pandemic; he gave public advice that differed from his personal thoughts (diary released 7.25.26); he profited off his position

JAMES MADISON from The Federalist No. 51:

*Power and Interests are **DISPURSED** in a moral society; and that benefits all parts:*

Whilst all authority in it will be derived from and dependent on the society, the society itself will be broken into so many parts, interests, and classes of citizens, that the rights of individuals, or of the minority, will be in little danger from interested combinations of the majority.

In a free government the security for civil rights must be the same as that for religious rights. It consists in the one case in the multiplicity of interests, and in the other in the multiplicity of sects.

. . . . under the forms of which the stronger faction can readily unite and oppress the weaker, anarchy may as truly be said to reign as in a state of nature, where the weaker individual is not secured against the violence of the stronger; **and as, in the latter state, even the stronger individuals are prompted, by the uncertainty of their condition, to submit to a government which may protect the weak as well as themselves;** so, in the former state, will the more powerful factions or parties be gradually induced, by a like motive, to wish for a government which will protect all parties, the weaker as well as the more powerful.

Is this not biblical? Separation of powers, protecting the weaker from the stronger & achieving the spirit of 'happiness' which the Declaration proposes? . . Rom 14: 22: *Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.*

The Main Rule:

When Government's edict conflicts with a believer's right under the law and his / her biblical conscience:

Acts 5:29:

But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men.

This is the test to use in matters of conscience.

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Salman Elmi was awarded "Outstanding Refugee" by Minnesota.

He was just charged for a \$1 million Medicaid fraud scheme.



Note:

- 1. This young man acted as a 'free' man; not in Christ but as a blessed refugee in America**
- 2. He used this freedom to become wealthy**
- 3. He was praised by the governing authorities!**
- 4. BUT: he was using his political freedom as a cloak for evil**
- 5. Therefore: commendation turned to his punishment for being an evildoer;**

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