

## *Civil Responsibility Under God*

### *Romans 13:1-7*

*“Conscience! A Christian should have an enlightened moral conscience because he should know the Word of God, and because he possesses the Holy Spirit to help him understand it. Also, because he has a new nature the Christian should have a stronger desire to exercise that conscience directly. A secular ruler might know a right course of action but decide not to pursue it simply because it might be inconvenient, not in his own selfish interests, opposed by his friends, or for any other number of reasons.*

*The Christian cannot think this way. Therefore, regardless of whether an action is convenient, personally advantageous, or popular, the Christian ought to pursue the right course of action.*

*This means that a Christian will stand against the state when it does wrong, regardless of the consequences. The world may say, ‘You’ll never get ahead if you do that,’ But the Christian will ask not whether the position is advantageous or popular, but whether the position itself is right and will act accordingly. Governments have often been wrong. Our own government is frequently wrong. Christians will stand against those wrong actions and for the right ‘because of conscience.’” Boice*

- I. In this ever-changing evil world system, we are bound to God alone in how we live our faith, not to the governing authorities that God has sovereignly set up to keep civil order through its laws. Yet, we are commanded by God to obey them in civil matters alone. We have no right to be disobedient to the governing authorities in matters that do not concern our faith.

Rom. 13:1

Ps. 103:19

Daniel 2:20-21

Heb. 2:14

Acts 19:20

Eph. 6:10

Jn. 18:33-36

Jn. 19:11

**exousia** = the power of authority (influence) and of right (privilege). The power of rule or government (the power of him whose will and commands must be submitted to by others and obeyed)

**Daniel 2:20-21** *“Praise be to the name of God for ever and ever; wisdom and power are his. He changes times and seasons; he sets up kings and deposed them.”*

- II. As temporary citizens here on earth, we are bound to live God's truth in the midst of a country that is not our own. We do this as representative of the gospel who are living in obedience to the governing authorities that God has established for our civil good. When the governing authorities pass laws and require things of us that are against God's truth, we are to speak up for the truth no matter what that might mean for us.

Rom. 13:2

Matt. 22:15-21

Acts 5:27-29

Isaiah 5:20

*"We are accountable to speak up...our weapon is truth, for we are a kingdom of truth. The truth is stronger than the sword. But woe to us if we do not wield the sword of truth powerfully." Boice*

- III. As aliens and strangers on earth who are longing for a better country – a heavenly one, we are commanded to obey the governing authorities to spare us from their wrath against wrongdoing. God expects us to be wise and prudent with the insight he's given us on how we are to conduct ourselves as citizens of his kingdom while living in an evil world system that is ultimately opposed to him.

Rom. 13:3-7

Heb. 11:13-16

**2 Chron. 7:14** *if my people who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and heal their land.*