

CHRISTIANS AND THE AUTHORITIES

Today we're going to consider our responsibility to governing authorities. Jesus is our King, but that doesn't mean we don't answer to anyone while here on earth. The biggest challenge this lesson offers is one that targets our attitudes. You know, you can obey someone, but it doesn't mean it's sincere. For example: *Ephesians 6:5-7*, "Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man,". However, I'll put that on hold for the moment.

Before we look at our two main passages concerning governing authorities, I'd like to get a couple of things out of the way. You know them, but it's important to acknowledge again.

- Submitting to authorities doesn't mean we can't exercise rights given to us by them.
 - Paul & Silas (Acts 16:35-39); Paul (Acts 22:25-29). Paul would plead his case and even appeal to Caesar, etc.
- Submitting to authorities doesn't mean we obey them if it conflicts with God's command.
 - Peter & John (Acts 4:17-20); The Apostles (Acts 5:27-29); Midwives (Exodus 1:17); Moses' parents (Hebrews 11:23); Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Daniel 3:18); Daniel (Daniel 6:12-13)

Submit to authorities.

- Concept isn't new:
 - Proverbs 8:15-16; 24:21-22
- Governing Authorities
 - Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-17
 - We submit. We obey. The world would not do well without our example. We're free in Christ, but not free to do what we want.

Jesus the King

- Doesn't mean it wasn't frustrating:
 - Luke 13:31-33 (Also, take note how Jesus only left because it was God's plan, not Herod's command. He obeyed God over Herod.)
- He did it in little ways:
 - Matthew 17:24-27 (Temple Tax); Matthew 22:15-22 (Roman Tax)
- He did it in big ways:
 - Matthew 26:51-54; John 18:33-36; 19:10-11

Going beyond submission.

- Paying for our leaders - good or bad
 - 1 Timothy 2:1-6; Jeremiah 29:4-7
- Godly attitudes. This may be our biggest challenge. Receive the principle.
 - 1 Peter 2:18-25