

Resistance to Tyranny Is Obedience To God

by Paul Lyndon: Johnson

James 2:10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law and transgress in one point only has nevertheless transgressed the whole law.

James 1:5-8 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men liberally, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering, for he that wavers is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord. A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.

James 2:14 Of what does it profit, my brethren, though a man says he has faith, and not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be destitute and naked and one of you say to them, "be warmed and filled, depart in peace.", and yet does nothing to provide that with which to be warmed or filled, of what profit is that? Likewise faith, if it has not works to back it, is dead by itself. (read through vs 26)

When is the line drawn over which must cross those who would be obedient to God more than government? If a person knows without a shadow of doubt that the government which he is instructed in the scriptures to serve has instructed him to disobey God, should he then not resist? If so, then how? How strongly?

1 Peter 2:13 - 17 states that to submit to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake is a good thing. Whether to the King (President) or to Governors (Civil Authorities) as unto those who are sent by God to put lawlessness down by the punishment of evildoers and to give praise to those that do well. For so is the will of God, that with the well-doing you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. (Ps.14:1) As free men, and not using your liberty as a cloak to hide maliciousness behind, but as servants of God.

If then, being servants of God with liberty, the government is obeyed without question, does not the servant of God disobey his Lord? Where is the wisdom in this?

Romans 13: 1-10 says let every soul be subject to the higher powers (supreme powers; *Phil 2:3; 3:8; 4:7; 1 Peter 2:13*) for there is no power but of God and the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever then, resists the power, resists the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Will you then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good and you shall have praise of the same. For he (the ruler) is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do that which is evil, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that does evil. So you must be subject to this or these rulers not only to escape wrath, but also to keep a clear

conscience. For this cause pay taxes also, for they (public servants) are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing (chasing out evil). Render therefore to all their dues. Taxes unto whom taxes are due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor. Owe no man anything but to love one another. For he that loves another has fulfilled the law. For this, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, you shall not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely that you shall love your neighbor as yourself. Love works no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Having quoted sufficient of The Word to bring a point to surface, I must address the issue of false witness. Knowing that to break one commandment is to break all. I do not think there are any who read this who could possibly cast the first stone, for the blood of our Lord covers us all because of His love and our inherited nature which would make a statement of sinlessness by any individual other than Jesus impossible.

Fraught with discrepancy as we as individuals might be, we are still under obligation to obey our Lord whenever and however possible on a day to day basis. As we go on in daily life attending to our neighbor, treating his possessions as our own and dying to self in the process, this one huge problem manifests itself inevitably. That of bearing false witness. This can be for something as seemingly insignificant as averting the eyes so as not to see what could be evil and escape the responsibility to a neighbor. It can be an unintentional doing based on ignorance of facts. The responsibility for our actions as facts are revealed to us, however, make for a very real trial of the faith we profess to have received from the Lord whom we profess to serve!

Jesus tells us in **Matthew 22:21** to "*Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, and unto God that which is God's*". The civil government supposedly stands under the Law of God as one of the offices that is supposed to protect society from the chaos which is the natural result of fallen nature.

However, when any office commands that which is contrary to the Word of God, those who hold that office give up their authority and are not to be obeyed. That includes the office of State. God has ordained government as a delegated authority. With the purpose of being an agent of justice, to restrain evil by punishing the wrongdoer and to protect the good in society. When it does the reverse of what it was delegated to do, it has no proper authority, as it is then a usurped authority which is lawless and the result is tyranny and oppression.

Romans 13:5 states that in properly structured government, Christians are to obey as a matter of 'conscience'. In the early church, Christians were thrown to the lions because they would not worship Caesar! They disobeyed the law and were summarily killed as a matter of disobedience, religious beliefs as far as the Roman government was concerned did not matter. If people say that the early church did not show civil disobedience, it is only because they are ignorant of church history. There are many other instances recorded in history. A suggested reading of Foxes Book of Martyrs can help those who truly want their eyes to be opened.

Thus the difficulty lies within the individual to decide whether they should obey without question the governmental or civil authorities who are not heeding that which the scriptures plainly state is their duty to do. That of ridding society of evil according to the standards that

God has depicted, and doing so by punishing the evildoer. It would seem that evil has taken on a new definition apart from that which the Bible so clearly states and has now become that which law has stated as such instead of what God has stated. In other words Law now supersedes God instead of the other way around.

Samuel Rutherford, in his book titled *Lex Rex* suggested that when the State is deliberately committed to destruction of its ethical commitment to God, then resistance becomes appropriate. He goes on to suggest three appropriate levels of resistance. First, he must defend himself by protest, i.e., legal action. Second, he must flee if at all possible, and third, he may use force if necessary to defend himself. Force should not be used if flight can save him. Nor should running away be the answer if he can save and defend himself by means of protest. He further cautioned the distinct difference between lawless civil disobedience and lawful resistance. If possible, resistance should be under protection of duly constituted authorities such as local officials, bearing in mind that the local office is just as much delegated by God as the highest government official.

"When the supreme magistrate will not execute the judgment of the Lord, those who made him supreme magistrate, under God, who have under God, sovereign liberty to dispose of crowns and kingdoms, are to execute the judgment of the Lord when wicked men make the law of God of none effect."

In other words, and in reference to this country of a government of the people, by the people, and for the people; the people have the power to topple and make anew the government which has gone astray.

From the writings in *Lex Rex* came the writings of John Locke which made four basic points:

- 1) Inalienable Rights**
- 2) Government by Consent**
- 3) Separation of Powers**
- 4) The Right of Revolution.** (or the right to resist unlawful authority.)

These four points were instrumental in the view with which the American Founders who followed Locke came to conclusion which resulted in the birth of our country.

Where we stand now, in history, is in dire need of reformation of the values of society as a whole which has overthrown the values taught of in scripture, and instead is relying on the government which has shown itself to be nothing more than secular humanism which has thrown God out of His rightful place as Lord of All, and instead declared that there are no absolutes from which to form a foundation to build upon and govern our individual lives. In fact, as time goes on, it has become increasingly apparent that government has taken the place of God in this society and has used its power to inflict its viewpoints on the rest of the world, and in doing so brought about the makings of the One World Government which Scripture has warned us about. Specifically, The New World Order, which has been growing in power by leaps and bounds.

Individually, we are still responsible to our Lord for the manner and motive of our lives. As Paul the Apostle has said "*Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.*" When we become aware of wrongdoing, are we to put blinders on so as not to be held responsible and accountable? Are we our brothers keeper? What we do in the name of obedience to our Lord must never be construed as mere patriotism or defense of our "rights". In establishing a society where liberty and freedom to all as long as the inalienable rights of others are not encroached upon, our countries founders never meant for tyranny and oppression to become the norm.

Our country was founded primarily on the precepts established by God long before, with His moral order as the measuring tool by which to compare our progress. This cannot be done or upheld without the boldness of His people. Neutrality is not an option. Panic and confusion will ensue for those who are fearful. Wisdom should be asked for as He has promised to give it to those of His who would ask. More than ever before are we to be bonded together in prayer and fellowship. Beware of chasing side issues. For each, the priorities may be a little different, but His Spirit should be the guide, and will bond us together far more effectively if we are humble.

It will cost the individual who professes a knowledge of God and yet denies His power in this life far more in eternity than in the short time we live on earth today. Let God's wisdom and guidance compel each of us to unite in His Love and be the salt of this earth which we are supposed to be.

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God...