



## Nations, The Believer's Responsibility

The first prerequisite for doing the will of God in any situation in the spiritual life is *epignosis* Bible doctrine in the right lobe of the soul. This is patriotic because divine blessing is involved. This principle has direct application to believers living under a repressive or tyrannical government.

A governmental body does not have the authority to dictate what doctrines can be taught or how local churches should operate. Our Supreme Court and any other governmental entity whether local or national do not have the right to dictate Bible doctrine to believers. Divine Institution #4 - Nationalism provides freedom to reject or accept by applying Divine Institution #1 – Volition.

### Separation of Church and State

There must be separation between church and state. Individuals must have freedom of choice in matters pertaining to religion. Religious organizations must have the right to form their own doctrine.

The early Church had Bible doctrine and had the right to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and the right to adhere to their own doctrine. The Sanhedrin was acting as a governing body of Judah and as a governing body and political organization, it had no right to dictate to the conscience of the early Church. As a religious organization under Satan, it was motivated to stamp out the Church. Government opposition to Christianity continues to exist today. Every believer must stand on Bible doctrine and resist this opposition.

Obedience to God means obedience to His Word. When government violates the divine institutions, the believer must remain operational in the spiritual life and rely on the Word of God and God's grace resources. This can mean the believer opposes the actions of their government when they oppose the Word of God. Thus, when God's will and man's will are in opposition to each other, God's will takes precedence. Rom. 13:1-7.

*“Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. 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; 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. Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. 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.” (Romans 13:1-7, NASB)*

Believers have the responsibility of obedience to the laws of the land, criminal, and civil code. Examples of civil code are driver's licenses, dog licenses, building permits and so on. Such codes likely will not allow keeping pigs in your backyard in the city. This infringes upon the rights of other individuals.

The exception is where the common law of the land is superseded by activities of a dictatorship whereby the common law is no longer in effect, but the will or the desire of one individual or one organization within that national entity rules. This is a justified basis for revolt.



A good example is the U.S Revolutionary War also known as the War for Independence. In 1776, the common law of England was superseded by that which was contrary to all law that the original colonies had.

Another example is the U.S. Civil War which was a justified basis for revolt on the basis of state's rights. That was revolution that was biblical. Most revolutions are not. Formation of mobs, setting fires, bombing of buildings are all examples of unjustified revolt.

Believers have the responsibility of participation in civic affairs. We are not to withdraw from civic affairs because we are believers. However, our emphasis is witnessing for Christ and giving out doctrine. The only solution to man's problems is regeneration followed by learning a knowledge of Bible doctrine through the filling of the Holy Spirit thus translated by faith into *epignosis* or full usable knowledge of God.

Believers have a responsibility of paying taxes. Rom. 13:6-7.

*"For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. 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." (Romans 13:6-7, NASB)*

Believers have a responsibility of participation in the defense of their country. Rom. 13:1-5; Joshua 8:24.

*"Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. 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; 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. Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake." (Romans 13:1-5, NASB)*

*"Now when Israel had finished killing all the inhabitants of Ai in the field in the wilderness where they pursued them, and all of them were fallen by the edge of the sword until they were destroyed, then all Israel returned to Ai and struck it with the edge of the sword." (Joshua 8:24, NASB)*

## **The Rule of Law**

What is your responsibility as a believer to your country, to your state? God has ordained certain laws for each nation. They came out of the divine institutions. Ideally, a nation will be structured after God's order. This rules out nations ruled by dictatorships and communist ideology such as the China, North Korea, and in the past the U.S.S.R., etc. Countries ruled by Communism are inherently anti-God and certainly oppose the Laws of Divine Establishment. Rom. 13:1.

*"Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God." (Romans 13:1, NASB)*

God is not the author of confusion. There must be order in the human race if it is to survive. The human race must survive if the Angelic Conflict is to be resolved. Strong nationalism results in a strong missionary effort. Consequently, God has ordained honest, conscientious law enforcement, proper judicial procedures with due process where a citizen's jury has the ability to think, and common laws for the good of all. Rom. 12:2.



*"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:2, NASB)*

Rulers have the authority to uphold the laws of the land. In Romans 13:3, Paul was approving the principle authority in government. This refers to authority under nationalism and also refers to the government which administers justice. "Good behavior" refers to common law which parallels doctrine in the Word of God. Good works for the believer in a national entity would be voting, jury duty, and military service in an emergency or war. It would be keeping the common law. There should be taxation, but taxation with representation. Taxation should not be so excessive that the state is able to control you through it.

*"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;" (Romans 13:3, NASB)*

All of the divine institutions have authority in them for order. Volition is the authority of self to make decisions in life. Marriage operates where the final leadership authority belongs to the husband. Joshua 24:15; 1 Peter 3:1.

*"If it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve: whether the gods which your fathers served which were beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." (Joshua 24:15, NASB)*

*"In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives," (1 Peter 3:1, NASB)*

In the family, the parents have authority over their children until they reach adulthood. Under nationalism, the rulers of that nation have authority over those that live within that nation. Eph. 6:1; Rom. 13:1.

*"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." (Ephesians 6:1, NASB)*

*"Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God." (Romans 13:1, NASB)*

### **Biblical Capital Punishment**

Any believer should be a strong advocate of biblical capital punishment. This is a deterrent to crime. This is the only deterrent to drug trafficking and illegal drug use. This is the only deterrent to removing permanently the mad dogs of society. The unbeliever is restrained from evil by fear of punishment. The believer should be restrained for conscience sake. Rom. 13:4-5.

*"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. Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake." (Romans 13:4-5, NASB)*

### **Taxation and Governmental Responsibility**

Believers have the responsibility to pay their taxes. Abuse by unfair and burdensome taxes does not negate this principle. The believer is to pay taxes. The believer is to adhere to customs such as patriotism



with respect for the flag and the republic for which it stands. The believer is to respect the rule of law and the agencies that enforce them. The believer is to honor to whom honor is due which denotes respect for government authority that includes civil and military. Rom. 13:6-7.

*"For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. 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." (Romans 13:6-7, NASB)*

Believers ought to be in our legislature. Believers ought to be in the military. Don't wait to be drafted. Exercise your volition by going in and choosing your slot. Believers ought to involve themselves in city and local government. Why? Because believers should be the clearest thinkers. They should understand the rule of law and the laws of divine establishment and internal and external threats to them. They know biblical principles and can put them into action.

When a national entity violates the divine institutions, the citizens of that country are under obligation to the Word of God and not to the slavery laws of that country, which usually means divine deliverance or death. There is a clear distinction between church and state. There is an emphasis on Christian responsibility to government.

When the state does not follow biblical concepts of nationalism, the believer declares his allegiance to God. He thus makes the salvation issue clear and helps the state define and maintain its freedoms. Christian responsibility to God as well as the state is defined. The Church is to support good government, but never become that government.

### **Respect For Legitimate Authority**

What is the Christian's responsibility to church and state? Zeal? A wave of rebelling and anti-authority has swept our nation whether racial or otherwise. Why? The Book of Judges describes a similar period of history over 3,000 years ago when there was a terrific time of confusion, civil war, and strife. Why was Israel so torn up at that time? Why? They had no respect for authority and for the chain of command in the nation. Judges 18:1; Judges 19:1.

*"In those days there was no king of Israel; and in those days the tribe of the Danites was seeking an inheritance for themselves to live in, for until that day an inheritance had not been allotted to them as a possession among the tribes of Israel." (Judges 18:1, NASB)*

*"Now it came about in those days, when there was no king in Israel, that there was a certain Levite staying in the remote part of the hill country of Ephraim, who took a concubine for himself from Bethlehem in Judah." (Judges 19:1, NASB)*

How do you rate in your respect and your submission to authority? Do you recognize the final authority of the Word of God in your life or do you rebel against it? Do you recognize the final authority of the Trinity who created you and to have only one plan of salvation, and no other?

If you are a member of a local church, do you recognize the authority of the pastor-teacher given him in the Word as well as the authority of the deacon board, the congregation, and the constitution of that local church for maximum unity and privacy? If not, do you quietly get out and keep your mouth shut?

If you are a teacher in the local educational situation, do you recognize the authority of those above you, such as the board, the superintendent, the principals? This does not mean that you have to agree with them on every point. There are checks and balance on them also, but do you recognize their authority?

If you are a student out for any type of athletics, do you recognize the authority of the coach, to have



rules, and enforce them? If you are in military service, do you recognize the chain of command, the rank above, and the drill instructor who stands for military honor?

Do you as a citizen of the USA recognize the authority of common law and the highway patrolman who pulls you over? Do you recognize the authority of the judge on the bench, to fine and make it stick? All of these systems of divinely ordained authority are what make a nation prosper.