

Living to Display God's Grace

1 Peter 2:13-17



1 Peter: Holy Living in a Hostile Land

“As citizens of heaven, Christians submit wholly to divine authority, but the potential misapplication of that truth is that they can become indifferent and even disdainful toward the world in which they live, thereby forfeiting many opportunities for positive testimony. Believers’ detachment from the world must be balanced by proper respect for and humble submission to all the legitimate institutions of human authority.”

John MacArthur

... we would nurture a godly desire and a persevering commitment to take full advantage of the many God-ordained opportunities for showing the love and character of Jesus Christ through our submission and humility to civil authority.

Six characteristics of our godly submission to governmental authority

I. The **WHAT** of Submission to Authority (1 Peter 2:13)

I. The **WHAT** of Submission to Authority (1 Peter 2:13)

“Submit” = **hupotasso**

Imperative mood; a **command**

Meaning: to line up under, or to arrange under. It has the idea of putting yourself under authority or lining yourself up under authority.

I. The **WHAT** of Submission to Authority (1 Peter 2:13)

You must **voluntarily** assume personal responsibility for putting yourself under civil authority.

“Although Peter and Paul lived in the openly sinful, decadent Roman Empire—a society infamous for evil (homosexuality, infanticide, government corruption, abuse of women, immorality, violence), neither apostle offered any exemption by which believers were free to defy civil authority. Jesus Himself had commanded, ‘Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s’ (Matt. 22:21). Throughout history and presently there have been various violations of ordinances, acts of civil disobedience, insurrections, revolutions, and different subversive attempts to overthrow governments—all in the name of Christianity. Scripture nowhere condones such actions. On the contrary, the biblical command is simple—submit to civil authority, regardless of its nature.”

John MacArthur

Ultimately, as Christians, we are not under **human** authority.

God is our ultimate authority, and we answer to Him as His children and as citizens of His heavenly kingdom.

We are not commanded to **blindly** obey the government.

We **reconcile** God's authority and human authority when we submit to human authorities because of our relationship with God, because **as we submit** to human authority **appointed by God**, we do the will of God, and we please Him in our testimony of faith.

Our instinct and intention should be to obey.

My pastoral concern is that we would nurture a **godly desire** and a **persevering commitment** to take full advantage of the many God-ordained opportunities for showing the **love and character** of Jesus Christ through our submission and humility to civil authority.

GRACE CHURCH
WILLIAMSBURG