

When is it Right to be Disobedient?

“Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.”
Acts 5:29

The (Sanhedrin) leaders had given the people of God strict orders not to preach or teach in the name of Jesus. It was their law. The men of God found it impossible to obey this law and continued to preach and teach in the name of Jesus. They preached so much that Jerusalem was filled with their doctrine. When confronted for their disobedience they gave one united response, **“We must obey God and not men.”** The Apostles never did stop preaching and teaching the name of Jesus (even though it cost some of them their lives).

The Scripture requires us to be in obedience to government, leaders, parents, and (our) husbands.

- **“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.” (Romans 13:1-2)**
- **“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. (Ephesians 6:1-3)**
- **“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.” (Ephesians 5:22)**

But...

- What happens when the leadership goes against the Word and Will of God?

- What happens when your husband does not want to obey the Word and Will of God and tries to get you to do things contrary to the Word of God?
- What happens (especially when you are an older child) when your parents want to keep you from obeying the truth of God’s Word?
- What about when the culture, or portions of the culture go against the Word and Will of God?
- What happens when your pastor wants to leave the truth and wants you to go with him?

In each of these situations we need to boldly proclaim,
“We must obey God and not men!”

God has ordained the governments of this world so that it can be the agent of justice, restraining evil, punishing wrongdoing, exalting righteousness, and protecting what is good in society.

“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.” (Proverbs 14:34)

Leadership

When the government fails to do what is right, we are not expected to follow it in the areas of the wrong. Some countries are allowing abortion, homosexuality and other things that the Bible clearly teaches against. We cannot comply with such things.

When a government, leader, or pastor leaves the principles of the Word of God, they have left their proper function and are no longer operating according to the plan and purpose of God. However, we are still expected to pray for government and those in control. Prayer changes things. We should continue to be obedient and submissive in any area that does

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not violate our convictions and the principles of the Word of God.

In Exodus 1:15-21 the king commanded the midwives that when the Hebrew women brought forth male children that they should kill them. The midwives refused to obey his orders. As a result **“God dealt well with the midwives...” (Exodus 1:20)**

“And it came to pass, because the midwives feared God, that he made them houses.” (Exodus 1:21)

No Compromise

When the three Hebrew children were told to bow down to the image, and serve other gods, they refused. As a result of their disobedience they were thrown into the fiery furnace. They would not compromise! God went into the fire with them! They came out without even the smell of smoke on their clothes.

When a law was made that no one could pray to anyone but the king; a law that could not be canceled or changed; Daniel still prayed to His God.

“Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.” (Daniel 6:10)

He refused to compromise the commandments of God. He continued to pray. This caused him to be fed to a den of lions. God backed Him up. The mouths of the lions were closed!

Husbands

It is often said that wives must submit to their husbands, even when this means violating the principles of the Word of God. We must endeavor to be submissive in every way possible, but we must still obey the Word of God. To **“submit”** means to bring yourself under the protection of someone else.

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.” (Colossians 3:18)

Here Paul specifically mentions that we must submit to husbands **“...as it is fit in the Lord.”** In most of Paul’s teachings he assumes that both the husbands and wives are in the church; and that each want to do the will of God.

Culture

Following tradition and culture is appropriate until it violates the Word of God. Many times Christians are expected to follow pagan practices at weddings, funerals, etc. We should not partake in cultural practices that violate the principles of the Word of God.

“Making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.” (Mark 7:13)

(Instructors should elaborate on cultural practices within their culture, which are contrary to the Word of God.)

We should always endeavor to be submissive. However, our submission should not be in an area that would cause violation to the higher laws of the Word of God. Every thing is subject to the higher power. Can you think of any power greater than the Mighty God and His power?

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What does “submit” mean? _____

2. What did Daniel do when there was a law that no one should pray to any other god? _____

3. What did God do for the midwives because they refused to kill the Hebrew male babies? _____

4. What are some of the cultural practices within your culture that are contrary to the Word of God? _____

5. How is each one of these cultural practices contrary to the Word of God? (Use the Bible to help you with your answer.) _____

6. What does Mark 7:13 say? _____

Additional Notes