

# PREPARED TO LIVE IN VICTORY: LIVING ON EARTH AS CITIZENS OF HEAVEN

Houses of Light Church • June 11 y 12, 2022 • Pastor Netz Gómez

## 1 Pet. 2:13-17

*'Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, <sup>14</sup> or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. <sup>15</sup> For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. <sup>16</sup> Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. <sup>17</sup> Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.'*

### I. INTRODUCTION

- A. We are going to see how we Christians who belong to another country relate as citizens to the governments of this world and to human institutions. To place these verses in context let's review the previous verses:

**1 Pet. 2:11-12** *"Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. <sup>12</sup> Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation."*

- B. We Christians must be clear about our identity, we are pilgrims and exiles in this world, the portrait is similar to the Ukrainian exiles who are being displaced from their country and are now settling in other countries but live as foreigners.

**Phil. 3:20** *"But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ."*

- C. The goal in these verses is to describe our identity as foreigners, but this does not mean that we ignore or are in conflict with the current human institutions of this world.

### II. HOW DO WE SUBMIT AS CHRISTIANS?

- A. **v.2:13** *"Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution"* How can our subjection to every human institution be Christian even when that authority does not honor God? and the answer is **"For the Lord's sake," this means that we submit to these institutions so that God may be exalted and because He sent us to do so.**

- B. This text deals with the tension that exists: There is a government, a president, governors, mayors; a congress, a supreme court, to which we must submit but **how are we supposed to act?** Let's see the advice of the Holy Spirit through Peter in the entire letter **1 Pet. 2:18; 3:1, 7a, 8; 5:5**

1. ***"Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust."***

2. **"Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives"**
  3. **"Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel..."**
  4. **"Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."**
- C. Peter talks about how Christians relate to each other everywhere: as citizens (2:13-17); like those who were in the difficult situation of being slaves who had a master; like those who have a business (2:18); within the family and unequally yoked marriage (3:1); in the context of the church. Peter ends by saying: **"submit yourselves to every human institution."** He refers to every place where human beings generate a legitimate structure and how we must find the appropriate way to submit. In society there are policemen, bosses; parents, husbands, teachers, leaders, that is, anywhere where there is an authority structure.
- D. **"... governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good"** What if the government instead of praising or rewarding the good and punishing the bad does the opposite? **We must know that although the government is not yet governed by the manifest reign of Jesus on earth, however, there is an overlap between the kingdom of this world and the kingdom of Christ that can be recognized as good.** This means that our participation in the government becomes appropriate or even essential to point out to the government, as much as the structure allows, what it really is to do good and what it is to punish those who do evil.
- E. What are the structures of society given by God to punish those who do evil and praise those who do good? **The good that governments should praise are things in which we Christians should be excellent.** We must know that there are elements between the Christian conception of doing good and the government's conception of doing good that the world can see and recognize in which we must exceed the norm.
- F. So the question for us who do not have our first citizenship in this world but in the heavenly homeland, **do we have any obligation to the president or any other human institution? The answer is 'Yes.'** Jesus perfectly put this principle into practice:
- Mat. 17:24-27 "When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the two-drachma tax went up to Peter and said, "Does your teacher not pay the tax?" <sup>25</sup> He said, "Yes." And when he came into the house, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tax? From their sons or from others?" <sup>26</sup> And when he said, "From others," Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free. <sup>27</sup> However, not to give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook and take the first fish**

***that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel [four days salary]. Take that and give it to them for me and for yourself."***

- G. Jesus is emphasizing: if God is your Father and He is the King of this world and you are children of God; you don't owe anyone anything just because of the authority they hold. You only owe them subjection if God tells you that you owe them, but Jesus tells Peter: pay the taxes even though you and I as children are exempt from the tax burden.

***Mk. 12:17 "Jesus said to them, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And they marveled at him."***

- H. Everything belongs to God and once you recognize it you submit to Him in everything and you can discern what belongs to Caesar and give it to him appropriately.
- I. ***v.2:15 "For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people"*** So we are told to maintain our exemplary conduct among those who do not know God, so that while they describe us with all other kinds of labels; ***when we do good, they will change the way they talk about us.*** Those who do not believe describe the ethical commandments that God has given us as something bad (Ps. 2:1 and 3) and as we embrace these moral principles they see us as bad but when they see our good works they will glorify God when He visits them (1 Pet 2:12b).
- J. Christians do not have a moral standard that is completely out of sync with the world otherwise there would be no way for the government to praise what Peter regards as good and there would be no way for the world to be silenced for our doing good.
- K. When Peter says: ***"not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God"*** (2:16) the question is free from what? We do not live without the authority of God; we are subject above all to the Lord, we are his servants. We are free from the emperor and the governors, but we do not use this freedom as a pretext to do as we please.

### **III. OUR HIGHEST AUTHORITY**

- A. If the governor asks us who our highest authority is, we are going to tell him that God, the Lord, and that we were sent by God to submit to them. This was the experience of Peter and the first century believers that came to cost them their lives.

***Acts. 4:19 " But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge."***

***Acts. 5:29 "But Peter and the apostles answered, "We must obey God rather than men."***

***Acts. 5:33 y 40 "When they heard this, they were enraged and wanted to kill them... 40 and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go."***

**Acts. 12:1-3a "About that time Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church. <sup>2</sup> He killed James the brother of John with the sword, <sup>3</sup> and when he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded to arrest Peter also...."**

- B. We are free from rulers; their intrinsic authority is not because we submit to them **but because we are servants of a King who is higher** and He sends us to this world in which He has established these authorities (Rom. 13:1) and we submit to them for the sake of the Lord, for He is our Master, not the ruler himself.

**Jn. 19:11 "Jesus answered him, "You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above..."**

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

- A. In conclusion, you are a servant of God, everything belongs to Him and He sends you to submit for His sake to all human institutions not because they deserve it or because they have the ultimate authority over your life but because God He does and He is going to use you in that context for His glory.

**Mk. 13:9 "But be on your guard. For they will deliver you over to councils, and you will be beaten in synagogues, and you will stand before governors and kings for my sake, to bear witness before them."**

#### **V. REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

1. How do you consider that you are submitting to the authority of men as a servant of God?
2. Share with your Friendship Group what has been the most difficult part of submission in your daily life.
3. What good things should you do with more excellence to silence the ignorance of those who do not believe?

#### **THIS WEEK'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Women's Retreat will be July 8 and 9. You can sign up at the bookstore or at [www.housesoflight.org](http://www.housesoflight.org)
- The Healing Rooms will be open on Thursday, June 16 at 7:00 p.m. Please sign up at [www.nhop.la](http://www.nhop.la)
- OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY. Sign up at the information center at the entrance.
- Young Adults who wish to seek the face of Jesus and grow in community are invited to the prayer set on Wednesdays from 8:00-10:00 p.m. Children are welcome!