

TITLE: "Silencing the Critics" (Part 4)

PASSAGE: 1 Peter 2:13-14

THEME: The Believer's Submission to Civil Authority

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Read Passage

It's been a long & winding road thru this passage

We've looked at a lot of relevant background information // spent some time examining Romans 13:1-7 - a passage that strongly parallels this text.

So as we settle in now to vv. 13-17 I want to again remind you that there's a thread of thought Peter is developing that goes all t/way back to v. 4.

{Review of verses 4-10}

Then we come to what I suggest is a defining mark of the believer in verse 11

Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers, to abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.

You are foreign to t/world. An Exile // Pilgrim. A temporary resident of a foreign land w/your hope fixed on t/homeland. While we have an eye on home, we don't lose focus on why we're here. Remember, v. 9 says we are to {cite}

One way we do that is to ==>

Keep your behavior excellent among the pagans, so that in whatever they accuse you as evildoers, they may see your good works and glorify God in the day of visitation.

While our eyes are fixed on home that doesn't mean that we forsake our responsibilities here

IOW - We have been called to serve X right here in this place at this time. We dare not neglect that calling.

It's true that, as 2:5 says {cite 5}

It's true that, as vv. 9&10 say {cite 9a&10}

But it's also true that we live among those who disbelieve {cite 8}

So we are to {cite 9b}. We are to publish God's excellencies to a lost & dying world that he may save some & that's v. 12 ==>

Keep your behavior excellent among the pagans, so that in whatever they accuse you as evildoers, they may see your good works and glorify God in the day of visitation. {restate}

So we come to vv. 12-17 which really serves as an elaboration on that point.

"Respectfully submit to civil authority so that the critics be silenced."

That statement comes from v. 15 which forms t/kernel of t/pssge {cite}

Really Three Different Perspectives that Peter Gives

View your life in 3 ways. Number 1, you must see yourself as a pilgrim in this world (that's what we see in vv 11 & 12). Then in vv 13 to 17 he says even tho you are pilgrims you are still citizens, even tho you live in another dimension, you still are here in this world & you must conduct yourselves in a proper way as citizens of t/nation to which you belong.

Thirdly, in vv 18-20, he discusses the matter that we are servants. So Peter sees t/Xn as a pilgrim // citizen & as a servant. Each of those perspectives relates to how t/watching world views us. As t/world sees us

they must see us as pilgrims, as aliens. As they see us they must see us as good citizens, and they must recognize that we are also humble servants.

As it relates to t/latter two of those {cite}, t/main topic is submission to authority.

That's what we will see in vv. 18-25

Theme of submission is going to take us all t/way to 3:12.

II. The Believer's Submission to Vocational Authority: Servants and their Superiors (2:18-21a)

III. The Believer's Example of Submission: The Suffering Savior (2:21b-25)

IV. The Believer's Submission to Domestic Authority: Winning Lost Husbands (3:1-7)

V. The Believer's Reminder toward Christlikeness: Inheriting a Blessing (3:8-12)

First things first, so we need to go back to 2:13-17 ==>

I. The Believer's Submission to Civil Authority: Silencing the Critics (2:13-17)

A. The Command for Submission (2:13a)

Submit yourselves to every human institution . . .

1. Literally, every "human creation"

We've noted that these "human creations" are ultimately given & ordained by God. So you have man on one hand creating governments // men who become leaders by how ever means (free election; monarchy; dictatorship) & you also have a sovereign God who ordains that such governments and political leaders be, even to t/extent that whomever is in power is there by God's very design.

a. Theologically, this fits neatly into what's known as t/doctrine of "Concursus divinus" or "concurrence"

Concurrence describes t/relationship between t/sovereign will and work of God & t/free acts of men.

Theologian Wayne Grudem defines concurrence as "God's cooperation with created things in every action, directing their distinctive properties to cause them to act as they do."

Concurrence is seen in Eph. 1:11 which says that God works all things according to the counsel of his will // Romans 8:28 - God causes all things to work for the good in the life of the believer // passages such as Acts 4:27-28 which affirms that men wickedly conspired against t/Son of God to put him to death, and yet they did what God had predetermined to occur according to his good purpose.

(1) Concurrence also applies to human affairs in government

T/O history men have organized governments, all kinds of governments. They do so using what we might call "natural means" - by free election, by force, through monarchy; yet, God ordains governments & leaders rise and fall in keeping with his will.

So we see in Romans 13:1 ==>

. . . For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

You have Jesus B4 Pilate in John 19. In response to Pilate's claim of authority over t/situation, Jesus says,

Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above;

b. See same thing in the OT

Proverbs 21:1 The King's heart is like channels of water in the hand of t/Lord; He turns it wherever He wishes.

Even a king as wicked as t/Babylonian Monarch Nebuchadnezzar realized this. {give background to this account} . . .

Daniel 4:34-35 "... I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever; For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom endures from generation to generation. "And all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, 'What hast Thou done?'

Acts 17:24-26 says that God is Lord of heaven and earth, He gives life & breath to all things (your next heart-beat is a gift of his grace, as well as your dogs). He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the earth and he has predestined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings.

Did you get that? Nations and leaders rise and fall, but they do so under His hand; it's in keeping with his pre-appointed time & he sets even t/boundaries of their rule.

Concurrence upholds t/fact that men are responsible. People act freely; freely in keeping w/their nature (that's diff. than free-will). But God yet stands sovereign over t/free acts of men.

c. And God has ordained governments among me so that men may live apart from chaos

Think about how chaotic it would be if there were no government. If every man did what was right in his or her own eyes? Total libertinism. If you want to drive 110 mph on t/freeway you do it. If you want to run red lights you do it. If you want to steal or murder you do it. Government is one of those things that distinguish man, created in God's image, from t/animal KD. Animals don't have government! Sure, you find organization, but not government, not ethics. Animals don't have ethics, they have instincts. Biblically, governments are given by God to do three

things: 1) To restrain evil; 2) to promote good; 3) to punish lawbreakers. Animals don't {restate}. You see, in an atheistic or non-Xn world there is no real grounds for government.

I. The Believer's Submission to Civil Authority: Silencing the Critics (2:13–17)

A. The Command for Submission (2:13a)

Submit yourselves to every human institution . . .

Also in v. 13 ==>

B. The Motive for Submission (2:13b)

. . . for the Lord's sake . . .

1. For the sake of Jesus Christ

Word "Lord" here referring to God t/Son, not God t/Father. Freq. in t/NT to find t/word "Lord" used of X & t/word "God" used of t/Father.

When we willingly & graciously place ourselves under t/authority of our gov. & it's elected leaders, when we humbly live in obedience to t/laws of our land whether we agree w/them or not, we are being obedient not only to them, but also to JC. Do we need any more motivation than that? What does Paul say in 2 Cor. 5:9? Our ambition is to live a life that's pleasing to Him!

It's t/expressed desire of our Lord that we demonstrate self-restraint // virtue // lawfulness. That we do all we can to live in such a way in peace & good will that we deprive our enemies of t/grounds for all their false accusations. We are to silence t/critics by our virtuous life & that virtuous life must include respect for all law & authority.

2. Jesus exemplified this in his own ministry

Turn to Matthew 17 . . . {read vv. 24-27}

a. Peter was a well-known resident of Capernaum

Perhaps for this reason he was singled out by t/tax coll. So they approach Peter & ask him, "Does your teacher not pay the two-drachma tax?"

(1) This was known as the "Temple Tax"

Roman approved tax, funds of which were to be used to operate t/Temple. That in itself was a continuation of t/OT Temple tax levied on every male Jew 20 yrs. and older.

In Jesus' day it was also known as the "Two-Drachma Tax." "2-drachma" was about 2 days' wages for a typical worker in that day.

(a) About a month prior to Passover, tax-collectors traveled throughout Palestine to collect this tax

Verse 24 indicates there were at least 2 of them, & t/wording "does your teacher not pay t/2 drachma tax." would indicate hostility. Sort of like asking someone, "have you not stopped kicking your dog?" Either way you answer it you're in trouble.

Peter's answer was, "Yes" (not "yes" my master does not pay t/tax, but yes he does). Peter knew that X honored t/law & he answered w/o hesitation.

b. In verse 25 we get a glimpse of our Lord's divinity

He is clearly omniscient & knows not only what happened o/s but t/very thoughts of Peter's heart {read v. 25}

Perhaps Peter was thinking, "Why does my Master, the Son of God, stoop to pay taxes to those over whom he is Lord?"

(1) Jesus asks him a 2-fold question

"From whom do the kings of the earth collect customs or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?"

Question was rhetorical. It would be senseless for a father to collect revenues from a son who was dependant on him. That father would be taxing himself. So kings would tax only those o/s t/royal family.

Peter knew this, as his answer indicates in v. 26 & Jesus says, "Consequently the sons are exempt."

(a) Think about that

What tax is in question here? Temple tax. Who was t/Temple dedicated to? Specifically, the Father. In John 2:16, Jesus referred to t/Temple as "My Father's House." T/Temple is for t/Father, t/Tax is for t/Temple, & JC is t/Son of t/Father. Therefore, if there was any tax liability that Jesus could claim exemption from, it's this one. Rem. he even declared himself "greater than the temple" in Matt. 12:6.

(b) But look at what he does in verse 27

He says, "But lest we give offense." IOW - Yes, I am exempt from this tax. In fact, I am t/Lord of t/Universe & exempt from all taxation.

"But, lest we give offense, go to the sea, throw in a hook and take the first fish that comes up; and when you open it's mouth, you will find a stater. That it and give it to them for you and Me."

Why didn't Jesus just reach into his wallet? Why did he choose to provide t/required amount supernaturally, by way of miracle? To demonstrate that he was indeed the Son of God and that he was indeed sovereign over all, including the tax system.

BTW - it was customary for 2 Jewish men to pay their tax together using a single stater & so Jesus provided t/exact amount for not only Himself, but for Peter also.

c. What about us?

We're children of God, aren't we? We are heirs according to promise. God is our Father. Shouldn't we be exempt? What if our govt. uses our tax money to promote wickedness? What if t/Income Tax, as some argue, is unconstitutional?

I like what one writer says about this ==>

"No matter how unfair or unjustified a particular tax is or seems to be, the Son of God instructs His disciples [including us] to pay it, even if the assessment is used wastefully, foolishly, and in other ways that do not honor God. If Jesus did not excuse Himself from paying taxes to the 'den of thieves' and 'house of merchandise' run by the proud, greedy, hypocritical Jewish religious leaders, how much less can we shirk our duty to pay the taxes we owe?" [MacArthur, Why Government Can't Save You, 74]

Certainly Paul understood that, as he wrote in Romans 13:7 ==>

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.

Remember t/account in Luke 22 where t/scribes & chief priests attempted to trick Jesus into saying something they could use to condemn him. So they sent spies who pretended to be righteous, to try to catch Him in some statement, that would render him guilty before Rome.

So these spies came and questioned Him, saying, "Teacher, we know that You speak and teach correctly, and You are not partial to any, but teach the way of God in truth. "Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?"

Verse 23 says that He detected their trickery and said to them ==>

"Show Me a denarius. Whose likeness and inscription does it have?" And they said, "Caesar's." And He said to them, "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

IOW - *"Of course it's lawful. It's the law. By God's design, taxes are the rightful jurisdiction of t/govt."* So render (word implies paying a rightful debt) to Caesar the things that are his. And to God the things that are His."

Same for us. We have a God-ordained obligation to joyfully pay our taxes (obed. should always be joyful).

What kind of example do you think it is for a Xn to cheat on his or her taxes? What does t/unbelieving & watching world think when a supposed believer is having his wages garnished by t/Govt. because he chose to opt out of t/tax system or cheat it in some way?

Bring it back to 1 Peter==> {read 2:12 and 2:15}

C. The Extent of Submission (2:13c-14)

1. It's to every human institution

Submit yourselves to every human institution . . .

a. I don't want to spend a lot of time on this point

I think we've already made it pretty clear that every means just that. Every. All. No exceptions unless you are commanded to do something God forbids or you are forbidden to do something God commands.

Just in case there's any misunderstanding Peter gives a few examples==>

Submit yourselves to every human institution, whether to a king as one in authority. . .

Not only is it to every human institution, that is, govt. in general, but ==>

2. It's to every supreme leader

Not just government in general, but leaders in specific. Only good leaders?

When Peter wrote this he may just as well said ==>

Submit yourselves to every human institution, *even unto the wicked Roman Emperor Nero* . .

a. Nero - One of the most ruthless tyrants of all history

Nero - t/sexual pervert; Nero - t/homosexual. Nero - who arranged t/murder of his own mother. Nero - who torched t/city of Rome for kicks on July 19, AD 64. Nero - who blamed t/Xns for that fire. Nero - who used that as an excuse to persecute Xns, rolling them in pitch & burning them alive. Nero - who used their flaming carcasses as lights to illuminate his gardens. Nero - who fed these peculiar worshipers of JC as God to lions for sport.

Submit yourself to this criminal, this deviant, this madman, this blasphemer of God and persecutor of His people. And even, as Peter says in v. 17 ==>

... honor this emperor.

b. What does that say?

Try to screw that question into your mind. What does it mean for God to say "honor this man, submit to him?" What are t/implications? Is God acting capricious here? *"C'mon God. You don't know what this man's about. This doesn't make sense. I mean, t/way that men on earth deal with these things is to use their common sense & if the guy is a bad leader, we disobey him. We might even try to kill him. And if the laws of t/land are foolish or if we think they are unreasonable or bad, we disobey them."*

(1) What is this about?

I'll tell you what it's about. *It's about t/fact that God is sovereign & it's about the fact that we don't approach things the world's way, but His.*

(a) Again, I'll point you to an account in the life of our Lord

John chapter 18. Jesus is before Pontius Pilate. Pilate asks him point blank, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus asks him a question, "Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?" Pilate answers, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief

priests delivered You up to me; what have You done?" Note this ==>
36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting, that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm."

Hey, if my KD were a worldly KD my followers would resort to worldly means. They would take up swords and engage in battle. But my KD isn't of this world.

Same thing we saw a few weeks ago in 2 Cor. 10 ==>

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

We could substitute the word "world" for "flesh" ==>

For though we walk in the world, we do not war according to the world, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the world, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

God's KD isn't of this world! We don't engage culture or try to reform culture by way of worldly actions.

Stark example of t/utter disgrace of that approach happened 13 years ago when, in 1994, a jury convicted a Presbyterian Pastor of the murder of an abortion doctor.

But even using lesser means that are illegal such as trespassing, or vandalism are equally out of bounds for t/Xn.

All these attempts do is bring reproach on the name of Christ. And they also demonstrate a lack of belief in God's sovereignty.

Are you ready, should someone as antithetical to Xnty as Hillary Clinton be elected as President, to respect her and pray for her? Whether it's her,

or someone who shares her godless views, we are to grant them honor and respect.

I think of t/wonderful prayer given by t/1st c. theologian Clement of Rome. Clement lived through t/rule of t/wicked emperors Nero & Domitian. You've heard about Nero. Rem. it was Domitian who demanded to be worshiped as "Dominus et Deus" - as Lord and God // who persecuted Xns and Jews // who exiled TAJ to t/Island of Patmos. His behavior was so bad, even to pagans, that they formed a conspiracy and had him executed.

Even in light of their wickedness, Clement prays ==>

"Guide our steps to walk in holiness and righteousness and gentleness of heart, and to do those things that are good and acceptable in Thy sight, and in the sight of our rulers. Yes, Lord, cause Thy face to shine upon us in peace for our good, that we may be sheltered by Thy mighty hand and delivered from every sin by Thine outstretched arm. Deliver us from those who hate us wrongfully. Give concord and peace to us and to all who dwell on earth, as Thou didst to our fathers, when they called on Thee in faith and truth with holiness, while we render obedience of Thine almighty and most excellent name, and to our earthly rulers and governors. Thou, O Lord and Master, hast given them the power of sovereignty through Thine excellent and unspeakable might, that we, knowing the glory and hour which Thou has given them, may submit ourselves to them, in nothing resisting Thy will. Grant them therefore, O Lord, health, peace, concord and stability, that they may without failure administer the government which Thou has committed to them." [cited in MacArthur, Why Government Can't Save You, 82-83]

So what's ??==>

C. The Extent of Submission (2:13c-14)

1. It's to every human institution

(governments & government agencies)

2. It's to every supreme leader

Whether it be an Emperor the likes of Nero, a Dictator t/likes of Castro, or a President the likes of Clinton or Bush.

Thirdly ==>

3. It's to every secondary leader

Those leaders & rulers who are lower on t/political scale. As Peter puts it: **or to governors as those sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.**

a. "governors" were local representatives of the Roman Empire

This term was applied to legates, procurators, & proconsuls. Used of officials who collected taxes. By way of application we could extend it to all officials, civil servants, police/military, etc.

b. There's a big interpretive question here: "Who's Him?" or to governors as those sent by him . . .

Who's the him? Who's sending here, t/king or God? Should this be lower case referring to t/Emperor, or upper case referring to God?

Most translations follow the NASB in using the lower case "h". Might compare v. 9 (excellencies of "Him").

(1) It could be translated either way

But t/nearest antecedent to "him" is whom in v. 13? The King! Gramatically it owuld be more natural to understand this as refering to those governors who were commissioned by Nero.

But if you disagree, you have some good men on your side. No less a Greek lang. scholar than ATR supports t/idea that God is in mind here=>

"*Di' autou* is 'by God,' as Jesus made plain to `; even Pilate received his authority ultimately 'from above' (John 19:11)." [ATR, 101]

Wayne Grudem argues that $\delta\iota'$ $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$ should be understood as "through God" - that is, the governors are sent by the emperor through God. [120].

Calvin goes so far as to say that those "who apply 'him' to the king are greatly mistaken." [82]

It is tempting to read it that way, in light of Romans 13:1-7, where it is clear that God ordains ruling authorities.

(2) In the end, it really doesn't matter, because God is sovereign

They are all ultimately "sent by Him." Supreme leaders may be t/mediate source; God is t/immediate or ultimate source of their rule.

We see that, along w/the doctrine of concurrence, in Gen. 45:8 - Joseph, sold by his brothers into slavery & who is used by God to deliver t/fledgling Jews, later tells those same brothers that they did not send him there, God did.

Exodus 9:16 (God declares to Pharaoh) "But, indeed, for this cause I have allowed you to remain, in order to show you My power, and in order to proclaim My name through all the earth.

In Daniel 5:21, Daniel relates to t/son of Nebuchadnezzar what God did to his father ==>

"He was also driven away from mankind, and his heart was made like that of beasts, and his dwelling place was with the wild donkeys. He was given grass to eat like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he recognized that the Most High God is ruler over the realm of mankind, and that He sets over it whomever He wishes.

Psalm 75:6-7 For not from the east, nor from the west, Nor from the desert comes exaltation; But God is the Judge; He puts down one, and exalts another.

From that perspective we would all agree with Calvin who says ==>

" . . . obedience is due to all who rule, because they have been raised to that honor not by chance, but by God's providence." [Calvin, 81]

C. The Extent of Submission (2:13c-14)

1. It's to every human institution

(governments & government agencies)

2. It's to every supreme leader

3. It's to every secondary leader

4. Peter focuses on two specific reasons why these governments and leaders are given by God

. . . for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.

a. For Punishment of evildoers

(1) Word "punishment" has the idea of vengeance or justice

Same word is used 2x in Romans 12:19 ==>

Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God. For it is written, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will Repay,' says the Lord.

Governments & leaders have been granted by God to punish evil, to keep wickedness in check.

(2) In case you might accuse Peter of being naive

He knows full well that governments do not always do this. Peter was well familiar with evil rulers such as Pharaoh & Nebuchadnezzar.

Peter was aware that X Himself was unjustly condemned under Pilate, as was James who was put to death under Herod Agrippa (Acts 12:3).

But even t/most oppressive governments serve some purpose, holding evil in check to some point, at least short of complete anarchy.

Tyranny is a horrible thing, but even tyranny is better than anarchy. In fact, anarchy always results in tyranny for that very reason. One thing people will not tolerate (not for long) is anarchy.

4. Governments and leaders are given by God ==>

... for the punishment of evildoers ...

Admittedly, that's not something our government does a very good job of doing. Partly because we have lost the concept of sin & depravity (everyone is reformable); partly because we have lost the concept of the value of life. A murderer is rarely put to death, which governments are commanded by God to do (Gen. 9:6). Killers are not forced to face t/severity of their crime and pay "blood for blood."

So t/taxpayers pay for more and more men who sit in prison, join a gang, lift weights, and milk t/system. Good thing S.H. wasn't tried here. I could see him 10 years later, covered w/tatoos w/arms like Swarzenegger!

Murderers are given 25 years & many are back out on t/streets in less than that & how often do you read of them repeating t/same crimes all over again.

I remember as a kid, t/infamous Tison gang who spread terror t/o t/state of AZ. Here were two convicted murderers, Gary Tison and Randy Greenawalt, sprung from prison by Tison's two sons. They go on to brutally murder 6 people, including t/horrific shotgun death of a young

couple, a teenage girl and a baby boy, all gunned to death cowering in the backseat of a car.

Think about it? These innocent victims would still be alive, by God's grace, if the government would have obeyed the law of God & put those felons to death for their previous murders. That story is repeated again and again. How many rapists are paroled to rape again // child molesters.

"Governments that fail to punish wrongdoers disobey God's purpose for their existence." [Grudem, 120]

Well, we're out of time. I had hoped to get through v. 15, but you probably knew already that I wouldn't, didn't you? We'll get there next time.
