



## 4 Reasons To Obey The Laws Of The Land

DISCOVERING GOD'S WORD BIBLE STUDY SERIES

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God has commanded us to subject ourselves in obedience to the earthly governing authorities and obey the laws of the land. For instance, Romans 13:1 says, "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities...." 1 Peter 2:13 says, "Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake...." Notice that every person is expected to be obedient to the laws of the land. You are no exception. And, every law of these governing authorities must be obeyed, according to God's commandment. The only exception is if obeying an earthly law will result in disobeying God. In this case, you ought to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29). Now, as you consider your responsibility to obey the governing authorities, consider four reasons God gives for doing so in Romans 13:1-7.

**1) Because their authority is from God.** After commanding subjection to governing authorities, Paul writes, "For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God..." (Romans 13:1-2). So, the governing authorities have not derived their authority from themselves. Instead, it is from God. Later, Paul says that such rulers are God's ministers (Romans 13:4). Therefore, if you choose to oppose these governing authorities, you are also choosing to oppose God's authority.

**2) Because they have the authority to punish.** Romans 13:4 says, "For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil." So, it is entirely appropriate for governing authorities to execute punishment on those who break the law. God has given them this authority – including the authority to carry out capital punishment. Therefore, you must recognize that if you do not obey the governing authorities, you do so at your own risk of being caught and experiencing the physical consequences of your actions.

**3) Because it is the right thing to do.** Although you ought to be afraid of violating the laws of the land due to the physical consequences, this must not be your only motivation for obeying the laws. Romans 13:5 says, "Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath

but also for conscience' sake." So, you must also be obedient to the laws of the land because it is just the right thing to do. If you will allow the word of God to properly train your conscience (your sense of what is right and wrong), you will recognize that it is the right thing to obey the laws of the land. Therefore, you will choose to respect the governing authorities and obey the laws because it is the right thing to do.

**4) Because God will hold you accountable.** The issue of obeying the laws of the land is not just a matter that is relevant to your earthly life. Instead, it is also a matter of your eternal salvation. Romans 13:2 says, "Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves." So, as we have already considered, those who oppose the governing authorities also oppose God (who gave them their authority). And, the consequence for opposing God in this way is bringing a condemnatory sentence of judgment on yourself. Therefore, on the Day of Judgment, God will sentence you to eternal condemnation in Hell if you decide to oppose Him by opposing the authority He has given to the earthly rulers.

Are you living your life in subjection to the governing authorities on this earth? Or, do you pick and choose which laws of the land you want to obey and which ones you feel comfortable disobeying? Please recognize that even when you choose to live outside of the law and are not caught by the governing authorities, God sees what you are doing (Proverbs 15:3). And, He will hold you accountable for your actions one Day. Therefore choose that you will live in subjection to God by also living in subjection to the governing authorities!

**Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series**

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