

The Safe Way; Submission to Authorities

“Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and He will command you. For he is God’s servant to do good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God’s servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.” (Romans13:1-5)

These passages in the Bible we really need to look upon and stand along. It is a part of Apostle Paul’s message to the church of God in Rome, to the Roman believers who were under the government authority of the Roman Empire. But, to whom is this message actually given? It is for the slaves who are under the yoke of their own masters. It is for the labourers who are under the heavy demands of their superiors. It is to you who work under the burning sun; to you who work in the cold weather; to you who are working more than 12 hours per day; to you who work 7 days per week, but are paid low. To you who have no days off and holidays to rest, to you who work hard but are not allowed to receive or to share with the fruit of your hands. This is a passage for everyone of us, not only for those under such above description, because no one is exempted from the authority of God. All share the same circumstances, and “everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities.” To some this is an indigestible fact but the passage is from the Bible that clearly implies to us that:

1. All authorities that exist are established by God: It is hard to believe that even those people in authority who are away from God are appointed by God to be over others, even to be over the true people of God. Truly we find difficulty to say amen to this fact, but when Pilate told Jesus. **“Don’t you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you.” Jesus answered, ‘you would have no power over me if it were not given to you from above.’ (John19:10-11)**

2. To rebel against authority is to rebel against God: Authorities include our father as the head of the family; our leaders in the church; our masters and managers in the workplaces; and the country’s governments that to some they are abusive, oppressive and corrupt. There is no authority except that which God has established. And this means we have to respect and accept whoever is there because their power and authority has come from God. And if we grumble or complain or condemn everyone above us are protesting to God. And if we disobey or rebel against any authority let us be reminded that we are acting against God. And we can never question God for His ways are never thwarted. He is the one who appointed them.

3. People in authority are all servants of God: All power and authority is given to Jesus who by His grace has chosen as to be His friends to do good, to serve and to obey God who established governing authorities. God is using governors and authorities to keep the system and

to stabilize the rules. Even they are harsh, rude and sometimes brutal, but God allows it for a definite purpose either to discipline up or to display His deity.

There is one situation in the Bible where the people of God rebelled against God and disobeyed Him by breaking His rules and worshipping other gods. And what God did? He sent His servant Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, to attack the people of God. **“Then say to them, ‘This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘I will send for my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and I will set his throne.’ (Jeremiah43:10)** So God used King Nebuchadnezzar and called him His servant to discipline and rebuke His people who rebelled against Him. But to those who honoured God and accepted Him, Nebuchadnezzar was a help for them. Jeremiah was the example for those good people who obeyed God. Therefore this was what king Nebuchadnezzar had ordered for Jeremiah; **“Take him and look after him; don’t harm him but do for him whatever he asks.” (Jeremiah39:12)**

God ordered His people as well to serve the Babylonian to confirm to them that He knew what He was doing and that He brought them to that place to humble them; **“Do not be afraid to serve the Babylonians, he said. Settle down in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it will go well with you.” (Jeremiah40:9)** The message of the Lord to His people from this verse was for them to better submit to the Babylonians, to serve them and to enjoy the life, because it would only harm them to rebel or retaliate against this new authority.

So, how could you link this situation with your new life with Jesus? First, if you know God personally and you accept Him as your Lord and Saviour by believing in His Son’s death on the cross, and believing that He took your sins and have given you eternal life. Second, start to change your attitudes and characters as God wants you to be humble, submissive, obedient, gentle, patient and to persevere. Then you will find it easy for you to live under the authority and law that God allows to rule in that area where you live in. If you are really abiding to God in Christ Jesus, directly or indirectly you will obey all the rules being implemented to you and God will spare your suffering as He spares Jeremiah from the hands of Babylonians. **“For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but to those who do wrong. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.”** Your conscience is feeling guilty it is not because you break the law but because you have no humbleness and submissiveness that God wants from you to carry in your heart. So to start with, you have a conflict with the authority in large part because your way with God is not right. **“Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.”**

My dear and beloved: “Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do right and God will command you.” Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that He may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you.” (1Peter5:6-7)

My Prayer: I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins, who was buried and rose from the death on the third day to give me eternal life. Lord forgive me my sins _____ . Lord make me gentle and kind put humility in my heart and lead me in your way. This is my prayer in Jesus name Amen.