

WEDNESDAY SERMON

Willow, Alaska

Date: November 06, 2019

Scripture Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6; Matthew 7:12

Text: Multiple

Subject: CONFESSION OF FAITH SERIES – Civil

Government: Obedience of the Saints, No 53.

53. Civil Government: Obedience of the Saints*

We are to give unto all men the honor due to them as their place, age, and position requires. We are to defraud no man of anything, but to do unto all men as we would have them do unto us.

1Th.4:6; Ro.13:5-7; Mt.22:21; Tit.3:1; 1Pe. 2:13-17, 5:5; Eph.5:21-23, 6:1, 9; Tit.3:1, 2, 3; Mt.7:12; Lk.6:31.

**This is an added article not in the 1644 COF.*

- We are to give unto all men the honor due to them as their place, age, and position requires.

1 Thessalonians 4:3-6 (KJV) *For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: 4 That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; 5 Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: 6 That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter: because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified.*

Romans 13:1-7 (KJV) *Let every soul [Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. Let every man be obedient to the civil government under which the providence of God has cast his lot.] be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. 3 For*

rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. 5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. 6 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. 7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.

[For consideration due to the present circumstances in government of the nation and state. We live in a peculiar governmental set up in this land. As we all know, speaking of the national level of government in the United States – the Constitution and its twenty-seven (27) amendments are the supreme law of the land nationally. The same is true for the constitution of Alaska and any amendments for the State of Alaska. Those who serve in the office of President and Vice President, who serve as dictated in that portion of the constitution which regards the Executive Branch of government; those who serve as Supreme Court Judges as dictated in that portion of the constitution which regards the Judicial Branch of government; and those who serve as Senators and Representatives in the Senate and House of Representatives, as dictated in that portion of the constitution which regards the Legislative Branch of government. Every one of these persons, whether in the executive, legislative, or judicial branch of government (along with those appointed as helpers and aides to them) affect our lives by their decisions. This is also true of our state government. The constitution is designed to do exactly as rulers are to do according to Romans 13:3-4] **Romans 13:3-4** *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 4*

For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Rulers, according to this passage, are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. What if, then, the ruler becomes a terror to good works and clings to that which is evil – as many are doing in our land? Let me read a comment on this verse by Matthew Henry – a comment which I agree with wholeheartedly: “

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[2.] A praise to those that do well. Those that keep in the way of their duty shall have the commendation and protection of the civil powers, to their credit and comfort. ‘Do that which is good ([Ro 13:3](#)), and thou needest not be afraid of the power, which, though terrible, reaches none but those that by their own sin make themselves obnoxious to it; the fire burns only that which is combustible: nay, thou shalt have praise of it.’ This is the intention of magistracy, and therefore we must, for conscience’ sake, be subject to it, as a constitution designed for the public good, to which all private interests must give way. But pity it is that ever this gracious intention should be perverted, and that those who bear the sword, while they countenance and connive at sin, should be a terror to those who do well. But so it is, when the vilest men are exalted ([Ps 12:1,8](#)); and yet even then the blessing and benefit of a common protection, and a face of government and order, are such that it is our duty in that case rather to submit to persecution for well-doing, and to take it patiently, than by any irregular and disorderly practices to attempt a redress. Never did sovereign prince pervert the ends of government as Nero did, and yet to him Paul appealed, and under him had the protection of the law

and the inferior magistrates more than once. Better a bad government than none at all.”

(CF) 1 Peter 2:18-25 (KJV) *Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. 19 For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. 20 For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. 21 For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: 22 Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: 23 Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: 24 Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. 25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.*

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Matthew 22:21 (KJV) *They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.*

[Context] **Matthew 22:15-22 (KJV)** *Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. 16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. 17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? 18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? 19 Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. 20 And*

he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? 21 They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. 22 When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

What was the question which provides the subject for this passage? It is this: *“What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?”* To this question, our LORD said, *“Why tempt me ye, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money.”* So they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, *“Whose is this image and superscription?”* They say unto him, *Caesar’s.* Jesus said unto them, *“Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s.”* Caesar was a Roman Ruler whose business it was to collect tribute from the people.

Romans 13:6-7 *For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. 7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.*

The point is that magistrates do have authority of things in this present world and we ought to “render therefore unto the Magistrates the things which are the magistrates, and unto God the things that are God’s.’ Some will argue that all things are God’s – and to this, we fully agree. Nevertheless, there are powers (authorities) on earth, and there is none authority but of God. God has given them their place.

Titus 3:1 (KJV) *Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,*

1 Peter 2:13-17 (KJV) *Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; 14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. 15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: 16 As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. 17 Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.*

1. **JOHN BUNYAN:** "The "Pilgrim's Progress" is truly the rehearsal of Bunyan's own spiritual experiences. He himself had been the 'man cloathed in Rags, with his Face from his own House, a Book in his hand, and a great Burden upon his Back.' After he had realized that Christ was his Righteousness, and that this did not depend on "the good frame of his Heart"-or, as we should say, on his feelings-"now did the Chains fall off my legs indeed." His had been Doubting Castle and Sloughs of Despond, with much of the Valley of Humiliation and the Shadow of Death. But, above all, it is a book of Victory. Once when he was leaving the doors of the courthouse where he himself had been defeated, he wrote: "As I was going forth of the doors, I had much ado to bear saying to them, that I carried the peace of God along with me." In his vision was ever the Celestial City, with all its bells ringing. He had fought Apollyon constantly, and often wounded, shamed and fallen, yet in the end "more than conqueror through Him that loved us."

2. **THE WALDENSES:** Forced from their homes in the Italian Alps by the pope's army in the middle of winter – and they left their homes, farms, orchards, and vineyards with their elderly and infants on carts – going forth to seek a new place to live, singing hymns as they walked.

3. **FROM BROTHER J. C. SETTLEMOIR:** Brother Settlemoir answered my question which was: “In all your reading, have you ever come across Christians who stood up against civil government for governments interference into private matters?”

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- a. He said: “I do not know of any case in which Baptists undertook to resist the powers that be in the circumstances you have mentioned. Keach, Kiffen (**Baptists of the 1600’s when the London Baptist Confessions were written – Ik**) and others suffered much at the hands of their ruling powers, but so far as I have read, never did anything but appeal to those powers for all redress, which they usually did not receive. Bunyan who suffered greatly being shut up in prison in Bedford jail for 13 years, yet only besought the powers to let him alone to preach. In New England before the Revolution, many Baptists had their property confiscated and sold dirt cheap to pay for the minister's salary of the group that happened to be in power at the time. Of course, they turned out Roger Williams from his home in the dead of winter, being reasonably certain that he would not survive the winter, and he would not if the Indians had not taken him in. Afterward, they petitioned him to intercede for them with the Indians because he was friends with them. He did this and saved their town from being destroyed. “I think that in such cases we must do what the Waldenses did when the king (the pope) ordered them out of his kingdom in the dead of winter. they loaded up their old folks and babies in carts and left their homes, farms, orchards, vineyards and much of their livestock to those who came in and took everything without cost. We may indeed face such things as there are many now in positions of power that have no concept of our nation's foundational documents and are vigorously chipping

away as those foundations. It only takes a few years to undo what took ages to erect. May the Lord help us!”

4. **So, we ask ourselves** – “What shall we do when they come for our guns and other private property?” I speak unto wise men – you will know what to do. Consider your Baptist forefathers who have sailed through blood seas. Most of all consider God’s word.

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a. In the context of resisting governmental powers, if we take the sword, we can expect to be slain with the sword. In my view, resisting the powers ordained of God by the sword and dying by the sword is an infamous death.

i. **Matthew 26:51-53 (KJV)** *And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. 52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: **for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.** 53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?*

ii. **Revelation 13:1-10 (KJV)** *And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. 2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. 3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and*

*his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. 4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him? 5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. 6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. 7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. 8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. 9 If any man have an ear, let him hear. 10 **He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword.** Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.*

- b. To lead into captivity will cause one to be led into captivity – to kill with the sword will surely cause one to be killed with the sword. In my view, better it is to not take up the sword (or whatever else is meant by the sword – guns, knives, clubs, etc.,) against the powers that be, but wait patiently on the LORD knowing by the scriptures what shall be the end of all things. All those who use captivity and the sword shall reap it likewise, whether it be the powers that be or ourselves as God’s children. We already know that all us are invincible until the LORD is pleased to deliver us up to death – as he

delivered the Apostle Paul and so many others through the centuries.

Again, considering this statement of the Confession of Faith concerning submission: **We are to give unto all men the honor due to them as their place, age, and position requires.** Do not we daily live lives of submission?

1 Peter 5:5 (KJV) *Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*

Ephesians 5:21-23 (KJV) *Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. 22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.*

Ephesians 6:1-9 (KJV) *Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. 2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) 3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. 4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. 5 Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; 6 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; 7 With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: 8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. 9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.*

Titus 3:1-3 (KJV) *Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, 2 To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men. 3 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another.*

- **We are to defraud no man of anything, but to do unto all men as we would have them do unto us.**

Matthew 7:12 (KJV) *Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.*

Luke 6:31 (KJV) *And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.*