

Honoring The King (1 Peter 2:13-17)

Introduction: What difference does it make that you're a Christian?
Christians aren't rebels who kick against the pricks of authority.

Context: Nero's imperial reign

Exposition:

1. For the Lord's sake (v. 13)

To live under the authority of sinful man properly, we must be very, very conscious of God (see 1Cor 7:22-23). Luther, "A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all."

2. For the sake of ignorant and foolish men (v. 15)

Men think nothing of dishonoring authority. And they'll assume that Christians will join in with their talk. It's easy to be swept along with the ignorant and foolish talk of the world. Shake them up, and silence their speech! Acts 23:5, "Then Paul said, 'I did not know, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written, 'You shall not speak evil of a ruler of your people.'"

Clarifications

1. No human authority can force us to sin.

"We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

2. Submitting to authority doesn't mean endorsing evil policy.

"The people said to Saul, "Shall Jonathan die, who has accomplished this great deliverance in Israel? Certainly not!" (1Sam 14:45, e.g.).

Application

Q. 126. What is the general scope of the fifth commandment? A. The general scope of the fifth commandment is, the performance of those duties which we mutually owe in our several relations, as inferiors, superiors, or equals.(a) (a) Eph. 5:21; 1Pe. 2:17; Rom. 12:10

Q. 127. What is the honor that inferiors owe to their superiors? A. The honor which inferiors owe to their superiors is, all due reverence in heart,(a) word,(b) and behavior;(c) prayer and thanksgiving for them;(d) imitation of their virtues and graces;(e) willing obedience to their lawful commands and counsels;(f) due submission to their corrections;(g) fidelity to,(h) defense, (j) and maintenance of their persons and authority, according to their several ranks, and the nature of their places;(k) bearing with their infirmities, and covering them in love,(l) that so they may be an honor to them and to their government.(m) (a) Mal. 1:6; Lev. 19:3 (b) Prov. 31:28; 1Pe. 3:6 (c) Lev. 19:32; 1Ki. 2:19 (d) 1Tim. 2:1,2 (e) Heb. 13:7; Phil. 3:17 (f) Eph. 6:1,2,5-7; 1Pe. 2:13,14; Rom. 13:1-5; Heb. 13:17; Prov. 4:3,4; Prov. 23:22; Exod. 18:19,24 (g) Heb. 12:9; 1Pe. 2:18-20 (h) Tit. 2:9,10 (j) 1Sam. 26:15,16; 2Sam. 18:3; Est. 6:2 (k) Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:6,7; 1Tim. 5:17,18; Gal. 6:6; Gen. 45:11; Gen. 47:12 (l) 1Pe. 2:18; Prov. 23:22; Gen. 9:23 (m) Ps. 127:3-5; Prov. 31:23

Q. 128. What are the sins of inferiors against their superiors? A. The sins of inferiors against their superiors are, all neglect of the duties required toward them;(a) envying at,(b) contempt of, (c) and rebellion(d) against, their persons(e) and places,(f) in their lawful counsels,(g) commands, and corrections;(h) cursing, mocking,(j) and all such refractory and scandalous carriage, as proves a shame and dishonor to them and their government.(k) (a) Matt. 15:4-6 (b) Num. 11:28,29 (c) 1Sam. 8:7; Isa. 3:5 (d) 2Sam. 15:1-12 (e) Exod. 21:15 (f) 1Sam. 10:27 (g) 1Sam. 2:25 (h) Deut. 21:18-21 (j) Prov. 30:11,17 (k) Prov. 19:26

Conclusion

"Christians should distinguish themselves among their fellow citizens for holding their leaders in the highest honor, despite even their most obvious character flaws, out of acknowledgement that they occupy their offices by the express appointment of God." (N. Trice, World, <http://www.worldmag.com/webextra/14617>)