

**TITLE: "Silencing the Critics" (Part 2)**

**PASSAGE: 1 Peter 2:13; Romans 13:1-2**

**THEME: The Believer's Submission to Civil Authority**

**NUMBER: 12061PE2.13/ROM13(50)**

**DATE: December 31, 2006**

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Open Bibles . . . milestone of sorts this AM. Officially, this is mssge #50 in our series in 1 Peter. A little past 1/3 thru. As I've said all along - as t/letter progresses so will our pace. So I don't anticipate that we will ever hit t/150 mark as far as # of mssges is concerned.

### **Read Passage**

Once again I want to point out the connection that exists between this passage (vv. 13-17) & t/preceding passage (11-12).

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

That's t/reminder that t/believer is an alien, a stranger.

### **Two words sort of complement one another**

First word: παροικος is a compound word from noun οικος (house/dwelling) w/Prep. παρα (alongside). Lit. an alien is someone who dwells alongside others. Someone who comes to live in another country where he has not become a citizen. A "resident alien."

Remember, I said that we get our English word "Parish" from this Gk. noun. A Parish/CH is a gathering of resident aliens. CCC is a community of aliens, of strangers who have their citizenship elsewhere.

2<sup>nd</sup> word: παρεπιδημος - sojourner, pilgrim, an exile. Used of Abraham who's called a "stranger and a sojourner" (Gen. 23:4).

Same word is used in Hebrews chapt. 11, t/chapt. that chronicles t/heroes of t/faith. Men like Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham. Women like Sarah. Writer to Hebrews notes in v. 13 ==>

All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

ISW - we, who have received t/promises, also confess that we are strangers & exiles (παρεπιδημος).

**This is a defining mark of a genuine Christian**

He's a stranger to t/world // Exile // Pilgrim. He's a temporary resident of a foreign land who has his eye fixed on t/homeland.

**While our eyes are fixed on home that doesn't mean that we jettison our responsibilities in the land within which God has called us**

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 8a} some of which are {8b}

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.**

## You see it's all about our conduct

How do you define conduct or behavior? What we say & what we do. Words/Actions. As t/ppl. of God who have been called by His name, we are living, breathing representatives of JC.

That's true in t/CH // Home // at work // neighborhood // friends // relatives //strangers . . . Also true as it relates to civil authority (government).

We are to ==>

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

That statement itself comes from v. 15 which is at t/heart of t/pssge {cite}

## 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. The Command is Simple

It's straightforward // to t/point // it's w/o exception ('every').

**Submit yourselves to every human institution . . .**

#### a. Literally, every "human creation"

Word κτισις in every one of its uses in NT refers to a creation of God. Never used in NT of t/enterprises of man, always of t/work of God. It's only a human institution in that men are t/human agents who exist under t/sovereign control of God who has ordained government.

Human institutions are ultimately derived by God.

## b. Turn to Romans 13 . . .

TAP writing to t/CH at Rome. He makes a direct statement/command in v. 1 w/this being a passage that sounds much like our passage in 1 Peter.

## I. The Command to Civil Obedience (1a)

**Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities.**

That's the statement // command.

## II. The Reason for Civil Obedience (1b)

**For**

This is giving the reason, grounds for the command. Why?==>

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

### A. Two-fold reason:

1) God is t/only sovereign (no auth. apart from Him); 2) those authorities do exist have been est. by Him (His providence). {restate}

### 1. Counter Argument . . .

*Some have said that this only means that God has est. govt. in sense of designing them. He created t/rule of govt. but He's in no way sovereign over them // evil leaders operate on their own accord; God isn't in control of them.*

### a. I Disagree; Remember Jesus in John 19?

He's standing B4 Pilate & Pilate having no idea that t/creator of t/univ. was standing B4 him, says:

**Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?"**

*"Don't you know who I am! I am Pontius Pilate. I am a Roman!*

*I have authority over every case in this land. Even your Sanhedrin cannot put anyone to death w/o my consent. I am sovereign! I alone have t/authority to release you or to crucify you."*

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

*You think you have authority? You have t/authority of men // secondary authority. Only reason you have that is because there exists a primary auth.—a holy, awesome, sovereign God!*

Yes, Pilate did authorize t/crucifixion of Jesus. This has been recognized by pagan historians such as Tacitus, in his Annals (15. 44). But in doing so he was operating under t/hand of God.

**b. This very basic understanding of God's sovereign right over his creation goes back into the Old Testament**

### **(1) Proverbs 21:1**

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

### **(2) Nebuchadnezzar**

Even a king as wicked as t/Babylonian Monarch Nebuchadnezzar realized this after his encounter w/the omnipotent Lord of history ==>

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?'

1) God is t/only sovereign (no auth. apart from Him); 2) those authorities do exist have been est. by Him (His providence).

**Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.**

The starting point for all of this is God's sovereignty.

James M. Boice in point-blank fashion: "God is sovereign. Therefore, those who exercise authority do so because God has established them in their positions." [Romans, Vol. 4, 1641]

## **B. Nero**

In case your wondering who was in power at t/time Paul wrote this, it was also Nero who reigned from AD 54 to 68 covering both t/book of Romans & 1 Peter. Nero, t/mad man.

We've been reminded afresh of a modern-day tyrant, Saddam Hussein, who was executed Friday (rightly so) for his crimes. Here is a man who's hero was Stalin // who ruthlessly tortured and murdered some 1/4 million people including his own countrymen & even members of his own family.

Nero was every bit as wicked if not more so. Nero had his mother put to death; he ruthlessly murdered 1000s of men for sport, Xns being his favorite target.

This is a guy that invites you over for a party at his beautiful estate & as you walk t/grounds at night your way is illuminated by t/flaming carcasses of Xns who had been rolled in pitch, hung up on poles & lit like macabre Tiki-torches.

This is t/ruler to whom Xns were to obey // whose authority was secondary to that of t/God he hated.

### C. The History of the world is filled with evil rulers

Men's hearts are evil & whenever power is gained by 1 man you can be sure that he will use abuse that power. Why our form of govt. (which we have muddled) was grounded upon a balance of powers. Our founders, under t/influence of t/16th c. Reformation, understood that men were not inherently good (as is believed today) but evil. So to keep any 1 man or single group of men from becoming despots, we adopted a 3-fold checks & balances system of Executive; Legislative; Judicial branches of govt.

Do you understand that only t/influence of Xnty could have brought that about? And our F.F.s knew that if t/system were perverted to where any branch gained ascendancy over t/others, result ==> tyranny. That's what we have in an ever-increasing manner today – esp. w/judicial tyranny.

History is littered w/legacy of wicked leaders. Not to say God condones their wickedness. He is not t/author of evil. Yet, He is in control over their wickedness & uses even their evil to accomplish His purpose.

### 1. Just 4 chapters earlier, in Romans 9, Paul cites Pharaoh as an example of God's sovereign purpose

Here's P. t/oppressor of t/Jews. He held them in bondage; he abused them–& God judged him. Egypt was ravaged w/10 plagues–plagues that demonstrated God's superiority over Egypt's pagan objects of worship. Last plague was death establishing that YHWH alone is God over all life.

In t/end Pharaoh & his armies were drowned in t/Red Sea.

BUT - as evil as this man was, Rom. 9:17 declares that God raised him up to demonstrate his power, that His name be proclaimed t/o t/whole earth.

In fact, going back to Exo. 9, God instructed Moses to tell Pharaoh that it was He who sent t/plagues so that they may know that there is no other like Him. *In fact, I'm not done with you*, He says. *No, I am allowing you to remain in power & alive so that my name be proclaimed t/o t/world.*

## 2. We mentioned Nebuchadnezzar earlier

He thought he was greater than t/God of Israel. After all, he was able to conquer Jerusalem & raze t/Temple. He learned that he wasn't in control after all & 3 times in Daniel 4 t/Bible says that **"The Most High God is sovereign over the kingdoms of men, and gives them to anyone he wishes."**

## 3. Could also add Cyrus the Persian

Also mentioned in Daniel. God used Cyrus to bring t/Jews back to Jerusalem from Babylon & in Isaiah 45:1 this pagan king is called "The Lord's anointed."

As t/Westminster Confession of Faith says, "God from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass." [III,1]

## D. This opens the door for all kinds of questions

Does this mean that every govt. is a legitimate govt? Is it ever right to rebel against a tyrannical govt.? What means may be used to replace wicked rulers or evil govts? What about our own American Revolution? We'll try to address these so be patient.

I think one thing we need to understand is that t/duties of t/CH are separate from those of t/state. (New Covt. distinctive.) It may be right for one nation to oppose another militarily, but it's never right for t/CH to usurp that role of t/state and do so. CH is not to be engaged in military warfare; t/CH is to be engaged in spiritual warfare.



Certainly t/CH has a responsibility to speak against evil even as it speaks for t/Gospel. Includes exposing t/wickedness of men – even rulers.

John t/Baptist lost his head for doing that very thing: for confronting t/sin of Herod, whose marriage was incestuous according to Lev. 18:16.

We have t/right to speak out; t/CH has t/responsibility to expose societal sin. But our main focus is in proclaiming t/Gospel - that God is // Holy // JC is Lord of all // That all men stand condemned in their sin // God is commanding men everywhere to repent & believe t/Gospel.

T/CH has a responsibility & indiv. Xns have a responsibility to work for Reform in govt. Yes, there's a balance here.

### **E. What I'm contending is that it's not God-honoring for the Church to usurp the role of the state**

That is, for t/CH to engage in worldly pursuits of political disobedience, taking up arms against t/government. Nor is it God-honoring for indiv. Xns to unlawfully oppose t/civil authorities or to disobey t/law when there's no biblical warrant for doing so.

I understand t/frustrations. I get frustrated w/big govt., w/taxes, w/godless decisions by those who are accountable to rule righteously. I get frustrated w/all t/red-tape & paperwork & hoops t/system makes you jump thru.

I'll give you 1 example. Ever since we moved here I've wanted to get a hunting license. I learned that you have to take a 16 hour or so safety course first. Seems like I could never get lined up w/a place that was teaching one. Well, a few other guys in t/CH were interested & did some ground work & found a Fri./Sat. class in churchville. We got signed up & it comes time for me to head over there—problem is I don't know where "there" is. I printed off some directions but, if you know me, you know that I have a horrible sense of direction. I get lost in my own house. So I'm driving down 19 - I have no idea

where Churchville is - I get on t/freeway. Problem is, I'm heading t/wrong way. All of a sudden I'm at a toll-booth and I'm getting on I-90 heading to Canandaqua. Once you get on there, there's no turning back for about 12 miles. I end up in Henrietta & t/time has come for t/class to start. I'm so frustrated that I do what no man does: I stop and ask for directions! I end up in churchville, but now I can't find t/street. I go up and down t/highway. For t/second time I stop & ask for directions. Finally, I find t/street, but I can't find t/address. Now I'm about out of gas! For t/third time I stop & ask for directions (completely emasculated). I finally find t/place. I'm humiliated // angry // frustrated // tired. I've been driving for 90 minutes. I get there & I'm something like 45 min. late. The instructor looks at me & says, "Sorry, I can't certify you if you miss any of t/class time." You gotta be kidding!/? Listen, you don't know what I've just been through! I'll pay you 20.00 to stay a few minutes & get me caught up afterward. As Calvin would say, "No such luck."

I walked out of there literally, about ready to explode. I turned around, clenched my teeth & just about threw t/thermos I had w/me across t/parking lot.

When I got home, Lois says, "Why are you home already." Wanna know why? I'll tell you why! And I remember telling her, something like *"This is stupid, I ought to just carry a copy of t/2nd Amendment w/me & say, "Here's my hunting license. You have no right to impose on me what /2nd Amendment guarantees."*

Of course, as my blood pressure lowered my reason returned. Hey, I'm subject t/laws of t/land. Anarchists for Christ might have a ring to it, but it's an offense against the throne of God.

**1. I understand that it's easy to get carried away with that sort of thing— an attitude of "they can't get away with that"**

1000s of Xns are involved at one level or another in militia movts. where they are ready & willing to aim a high-powered rifle at t/head of a BATF agent—all in t/name of JC.

Along w/that comes a hateful attitude toward our leaders in this country. I've heard Xns say things like, *"We need to gather up all t/godless judges in this country & hang-em' from t/nearest tree."*

That's not far off from t/attitude of Peter during Jesus' arrest. He yanked out his sword & tried to separate a man's head from his body.

As Jesus told Peter at that moment, **"Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword."**

*Peter, haven't you learned that t/weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but spiritual? Don't you know that if you would have killed this man you would be subject to t/sword of civil authority & that sword would have put you to death?*

Bring up names like Clinton; Schumer; Gore; Kerry; Justice Sutter & many Xns see red & throw up their hands, *"What are we going to do!? These people are so evil; they're ruining America? We've got to do something."*

Yeah, you've got to do something. How about trusting in a sovereign God? How about demonstrating a X-like attitude toward them, rather than one of mockery & hate? How about praying for them?

## **2. You want to know what you can do?**

Here's a list of 6 things you can do for those leaders you approve of as well as disapprove.

### **a. Submit to your leaders**

Willingly and graciously place yourself under their leadership & authority. Obey t/law (includes speed limits).

### **b. Respect them**

Show proper respect. Be courteous // polite. That's v. 7. {cite}

### **c. Pray for them**

1 Timothy 2:1-2 **First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions**

*and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.*

You want to have a wonderful life? // have peace & reflect godliness?  
then pray for your leaders.

#### **d. Be light to them**

Everywhere you go you are a witness to t/Gospel. A Xn worldview recognizes that Xnty is truth.

" . . . many Christians do not mean what I mean when I say that Christianity is true, or Truth. They are Christians and they believe in, let us say, the truth of creation, the truth of the virgin birth, the truth of Christ's miracles, Christ's substitutionary death, and His coming again. But they stop there with these and other individual truths. When I say Christianity is true, I mean it is true to total reality—the total of what is, beginning with the central reality, the objective existence of the personal-infinite God. Christianity is not just a series of truths but Truth—Truth about all of reality. And the holding to that Truth intellectually—and then in some poor way living upon that Truth, the Truth of what is—brings forth not only certain person results, but also governmental and legal results." [Francis Schaeffer, [A Christian Manifesto](#), 424-25]

Be light; be salt. Be a good proponent of t/Gospel & a good apologist for truth. Get involved. At all levels. Would be a great benefit to have astute Xns involved in all levels of political office, including serving as judges.

#### **e. Serve them**

Be willing to be a help rather than a hindrance.

I know of a CH whose women took it upon themselves to bake cookies & pies & drop them off to t/local police & fire stations as an act of Xn charity. They'd drop off these baked goods w/a smile saying "*we just want you to know that we appreciate you and are praying for you.*"

## f. Vote for or against them

We live in a nation where we can be directly involved in placing men in office or removing them. I don't know how many Xns complain about t/results of this election or that election & you ask them, "*Well, did you vote?*" "*Uh, no.*" If you don't vote don't complain. (Shouldn't complain anyways, Phil. 2:14-15)

## I. The Command to Civil Obedience (1a)

## II. The Reason for Civil Obedience (1b)

## III. The Consequence of Civil Disobedience (2-6)

**Therefore he who resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.**

## A. First Consequence: To Resist authority is to oppose the ordinance of God

IOW - God commands us to submit to civil authority. This isn't optional. Could it be any more clear than what we've seen so far?

1 Peter 2:13-15 - *13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, 14 or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. 15 For such is the will of God . . .*

Here in Romans 13, v. 1 - *Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.*

Could it be more clear?

## I. To Resist authority is to oppose the ordinance of God

### a. Do you realize the Apostle Paul never resisted arrest?

Never. They put him in stocks, do you think they had to wrestle him down to do so? In contrast to some pro-lifers you see on t/news, do you think they had to have 3 guys carrying dragging him cause he refused to cooperate & chose to lay there limp on t/ground?

No, he went and he put his hands in the stocks & he sang & God shook the whole earth & brought revival. T/weapons of his warfare weren't carnal.

He didn't need to lie in the dirt. He knew Whom it was he served and he knew how you deal with those issues in the power of God, not w/the ways of men.

Robert Culver, in his book, [Toward a Biblical View of Civil Government](#), says this, "Church men whose Christian activism has taken mainly to placarding, marching, protesting and shouting might well observe the author of these verses...namely Paul...first at prayer, then in counsel with his friends and after that preaching in the homes and marketplaces. When Paul came to be heard by the mighty, it was to defend his action as a preacher of the way to heaven,"

What does the CH do? Do we protest? Do we sit in? Do we demonstrate? Do we disobey the law?

### (1) Let me take you now to 2 Corinthians chapter 10

**For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh,**

"We walk in the flesh," that means we're human, we live in a phys. world.

But note this ==>

**... we do not war according to the flesh,**

War here is metaphorical. Our battle on a spiritual & intellectual front. That battle isn't conducted according to t/flesh.

**for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh,**

We don't battle using bombs, missiles, guns, ammo, harsh words, manipulation, false illogical arguments, or by breaking t/law.

**but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.**

We can't use human means. We can't stoop to the level that t/world uses. To do so makes us no different than t/world.

Remember t/emphasis of 1 Peter 2?

**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.**

**For this is the will of God, that by doing right you might silence the ignorance of foolish men.**

How do we battle? How do we confront t/social issues of our day? We do good; we share t/truth of t/gospel; we take every thought captive to t/obedience of X (v. 5).

Our weapons, v. 4, are divinely powerful. A simple literal translation of that would be Powered by God...powered by God.

How effective are they? They're ==>

**... divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.**

What are these fortresses? They're t/massive strongholds of sin, t/massive strongholds of intellectual dishonesty that rule our culture thru contemporary academia, t/arts & t/media.

What's the word destruction mean? It means to tear down, pull down. The weapons of our warfare are strong enough to rip down the massive

strongholds that have been built by sin.

**We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,**

The "fortresses" (v. 4) are described as "speculations". Λογισμεις = ideologies. We are to wage war against false, ungodly thinking, against false worldviews. Any religious or philosophical system raised up against t/truth of God.

We are to destroy these things.

Pictures an army moving against a city & just tearing it down. And the weapons are all spiritual. They're all powered by God.

And then he says ==>

**And we are taking every thought captive.**

That word in t/original was really vivid. It pictures a prisoner walking into t/city w/a soldier behind him holding a spear in his back, bringing in the captive.

As MacArthur so well observes ==>

We approach the massive institutions of men, we approach their flawed and demonic reason, we approach their lofty pride which is exalted against the knowledge of God. We approach all the systems of men and we can tear them all down and we do it with weapons that are spiritual. [Sermon on 1 Peter 2:13, 1997]

Our battle is spiritual, not carnal. We are to engage t/world on t/level of t/mind. We win t/hearts of men by t/gateway of t/mind. And we breach t/walls of t/mind by way of t/Spirit, not t/flesh.



**We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,**

Ephesians 6:12 says that **our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.**

What are we to do? Get angry? Be arrogant? Lie on t/sidewalk in front of an abortion clinic until t/police come & drag us away? Take up arms?

Ephesians 6 tells us what kinds of weapons we use: Truth; Righteousness; the Gospel; Faith; Prayer.

If you want a classic illust. of that, read t/biography of John Wesley. Read how Wesley, thru prayer & t/proclamation of t/Word on t/streets & to all who would hear turned the tide toward t/Xn faith. There were all kinds of abuses, & sin & vice in t/time of John Wesley. But his protest against that was always a spiritual one, using the Word of God and prayer.

You see, if we are to be persecuted; if we are to be incarcerated, it must be because we have been preachers of righteousness, not defiers of the law.

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Well I had hoped to cover a lot more than this, but our time is gone so we will pick it up next time.