



We Value Authority!

Mark 12:13-17 Roman 13:1-7 Psalm 145:1-9

February 4, 2018

Pastor Dave Bolte

The Fourth Commandment teaches us to respect and obey governing authorities. It teaches us that no one is independent, but that we all fall under authority in our various vocations: whether that be at work, in school, within society, or in your home. We are all under authority, and the Fourth Commandment teaches us that we are to **respect and obey** authority in our lives.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

Honor your father and your mother, that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God, so that we do not despise our parents or other authorities, nor provoke them to anger, but honor, serve, obey, love and esteem them.

This commandment teaches us to value authority! It teaches us that all **authority** flows from *parental authority* – because the family is the basic unit of society. All authority is designed by God to be good and helpful to us.

If someone has a position of authority, it has been **given to them** by God. If **you** have a position of authority in any of your vocations, then that authority has been **given to you** by God. St. Paul wrote, **“For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God.”** Authority is meant to be good and helpful to us; unfortunately, sinful people easily corrupt positions of authority.

Even Christ was under the authority of God the Father (1 Cor 11:3). **Jesus was 100% obedient to His heavenly Father in all things.** Jesus’ obedience is absolutely essential for our salvation.

- ✓ Jesus fully **obeyed** the Ten Commandments every moment of everyday of His life, and that **perfect obedience** is transferred to you through faith, and God considers you to have perfectly obeyed the Ten Commandments. This is called the **Active Obedience of Christ** --- Christ actively obeyed the Ten Commandments in **obedience** to His Father in Heaven.
- ✓ Jesus also **obeyed** the Father's will that He should die for the sins of the world. So, Jesus took your sins upon Himself, even *all your disobedience*. Jesus took your **disregard** and **disrespect** of authority to the cross, with all of your other sins as well. In His death, your sins are paid for; you are set free from them and forgiven. This is called the **Passive Obedience of Christ** --- Christ passively allowed Himself to be crucified for our sins in **obedience** to His Father in Heaven.

In obedience to God the Father, God the Son accomplished the work of our salvation in His life and in His death--in His *active obedience* and in His *passive obedience*.

In His resurrection from the dead on the third day, you are now given **new, eternal life**, and that **new, eternal life** is one of **obedience** to the Father and His commandments, just as Jesus was **obedient** to the Father and His commandments.

The obedience of Christ now motivates you to be obedient to authority in your life.

In other words,

we learn from Christ how to obey!

The **Fourth Commandment** teaches us to obey the authorities that God has placed over us for our good and for our protection. We are to honor, serve, obey, love and esteem them.

As you consider the Fourth Commandment in your life, here are two things to keep in mind:

1. You have a responsibility to obey the laws of the land. **Christians are not anarchists. Exactly the opposite: Christians are model citizens.** God teaches us to **VALUE AUTHORITY**. The Fourth Commandment is echoed throughout Scripture, here is an example:

Let every person **be subject** to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. **Romans 13:1-2**

As godly people, we obey the laws of the land; as disciples of the Lord Jesus, we live as godly citizens. **We obey and respect the government because God has established it and God works through it to protect and defend us from evil.**

Don't misunderstand this. *Just because God established government does not mean that the government is godly, or Christian.*

- When Jesus said, “*render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's*”, He was talking about **Emperor Tiberius** and the Roman Empire --- Tiberius was hardly a role model – even the Romans did not like Tiberius!
- When St. Paul wrote that we are to “*be subject to the governing authorities*”, the Roman Emperor was **Nero** --- the epitome of all evil and corrupt government! It was Nero who threw Christians to lions and probably martyred both St Peter *and* St Paul!
- When Martin Luther wrote the Small Catechism that teaches us about the 4th Commandment, the Holy Roman Emperor was **Charles V** --- the very man who wanted Luther dead!
- In the world right now, there are nearly **40 governments** that actively persecute and kill Christians. www.persecution.org

There is no such thing as a holy, godly, and Christian government. We are not subject to the government because government is holy or godly; nor do we obey the laws of the land because they are Christian. **In fact, every government on the face of the earth is ungodly and pagan.** **We obey and respect the government because God has established it, and God works**

through it to protect and defend His People from evil. In our country, it doesn't matter if your party won the election or not, we still obey authority. *God teaches us to* **VALUE AUTHORITY.**

2. We have a responsibility to pray for our leaders and to pray for good government.

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, **2** for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. 1 Timothy 2:1-2

Do you pray for our leaders and for good government?

In our prayers, we pray for good government; that the government will fulfill its duties to guard, protect and defend us from evil. We pray for peace, order, and stability. We pray for our leaders, their health, their families and most importantly, for their salvation in Christ the Savior.

As Christians, we are the few in our country who have direct access to God in prayer, and He promises to hear and answer our prayer. **So, we use our access to God and pray for our country, our government, and our leaders at the federal, state and local levels.**

Good government creates an environment where we can live and work and raise a family in peace; good government means that law and order are maintained, and evil is checked and punished. Good government means that the Holy Christian Church is free and unhindered to preach and teach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ! When we pray for good government, it doesn't matter which political party is in power; we pray that God would work through the government to create peace, order and stability for us.

All authority is established by God for our good. If you rebel against authority wherever it is at in your life, you are rebelling against God. We learn from Christ to obey authority.

When you live in peace and obey the laws, and when you pray for our leaders and for good government, then you are doing a good work, and obeying the Fourth Commandment! Amen!

LORD God of all authority, we pray for good government today. We ask that you Protect our land from danger and instability. Abide with our military who courageously keep our country safe. Guide our President, our federal and state legislators, our governor, our county and city government officials, and all who serve them. Grant all public servants the understanding that You work through them to keep our country stable and safe. And teach all of us to respect and obey the governing authorities in our lives.