

Who's the Boss?

1 Peter 2:13 – 17

I. Intro

- A. **Division in our country; presidential election year – all vying for the top leadership/authority position in our country; as believers in Christ we're told in God's Word that we're to respect those in authority over us – whether agree or disagree**
- B. **Quote:** *Only those who do not seek power are qualified to hold it*
- C. **Illustration:** A Department of Water Resources representative stops at a Texas ranch and talks with an old rancher. He tells the rancher, "I need to inspect your ranch for your water allocation." The old rancher says, "Okay, but don't go in that field over there." The Water representative says, "Mister, I have the authority of the Federal Government with me. See this card? This card means I am allowed to go **WHEREVER I WISH** on any agricultural land. No questions asked or answered. Have I made myself clear? Do you understand?" The old rancher nods politely and goes about his chores. Later, the old rancher hears loud screams and sees the Water Rep running for his life. And close behind is the rancher's bull. The bull is gaining with every step. The Rep is clearly terrified, so the old rancher immediately throws down his tools, runs to the fence and yells at the top of his lungs, "Your card! Show him your card!"
 - i. **Not only do people need to respect those in authority over them, but those who are in authority need to have respect for the authority they've been given**
- D. **Continuing messages on family; scripture tells us we're to respect ALL authority established by God that includes within the family unit**
 - i. **Ephesians 5:22-24 (NIV)**
 - 22 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.
 - 23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.
 - 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. **(Mutual respect and honor on both parts)**
 - ii. **Ephesians 6:1 (NIV)**
 - 1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.
 - iii. **Exodus 20:12 (NIV)**
 - 12 "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.
 - iv. **Ephesians 6:4 (NIV)**
 - 4 Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.
- E. **READ 1 Peter 2:13 – 17**

F. What passage says to us and how we relate to/handle authority

II. The Responsibility of Those in Authority

A. **REFER v. 13, 14**

B. **Responsibility of those in secular authority (NOTE 1)** – to enact and enforce just laws that protect law-abiding citizens and punish law-breaking citizens

i. Last verse in book of Judges: Judges 21:25 (NIV)

25 In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit. (No law of the land, but there was law of God – so, people were disobeying the law of God and there was no law of the land for them to be held accountable to)

ii. Imagine in our secular society what it would be like if there was no law of the land – even if some people were somewhat familiar with God’s law and didn’t obey it, there certainly would be mass chaos if there was no secular law

iii. Think about times in our nation when law enforcement people have been overwhelmed and people lose all control

iv. October 6, 1969, law enforcement in Montreal Canada went on strike – people in Canada today still refer to that day as “Black Tuesday” because things got so out of control

v. God has established and uses secular authority to enforce and keep order – to keep a check on man’s sinful desires and tendencies

vi. The greatest offense any government can make is to fail to punish those who do evil – they’re not fulfilling the God-established purpose

C. **Responsibility of spiritual authorities (NOTE 2)**

i. Those in spiritual authority keep check on evil by proclaiming and upholding God’s truth by holding people accountable to God’s Word

ii. **REFER v. 16** – even those in spiritual authority must live *as servants of God*

iii. Hebrews 13:7 (NIV)

7 Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.

iv. John Piper says *[spiritual]* leaders must keep watch on behalf of their souls, or for the sake of their souls; requires watching 4 things: watch the Word of God, watch Christ, watch their conduct, and watch the people; spiritual leaders are to be Biblically grounded, Christ-like, morally upright, and compassionate towards the people

v. John Calvin quote: *Whatever title men may hold, they are to be listened to only on the condition that they do not lead us away from obeying God. So we must examine all their traditions by the rule of the Word of God. We must obey princes and others who are in authority, but only in so far*

as they do not deny to God his rightful authority as the supreme King, Father, and Lord.

- D. **Example of Peter and John: proclaiming and teaching Christ and salvation through Him, arrested, brought before the Sanhedrin council (court held by Jewish religious leaders), told to never again preach in the “name of this man Jesus”**
 - i. **Acts 4:19-20 (NIV)**
 - 19 But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God.
 - 20 For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."
- E. **Must understand the responsibility God has given to those who He has placed in authority**

III. **Our Responsibility toward Authority**

- A. **(NOTE 3) God has commanded us to respect and honor ALL those in authority, only up until the point where they might lead us to disrespect and dishonor the Word of God – doesn't matter whether they are pastor or some other church leader, president or government official (republican, democrat, or independent), CEO or direct supervisor, parent or guardian**
- B. **REFER v. 16, 17**
- C. **Question: What freedom is Peter referring to? Freedom in Christ, or freedom as citizens of a nation?**
 - i. **First, being free in Christ doesn't mean freedom from obeying laws of the land that are not contradictory to God's Word**
 - ii. **Peter talking about both – freedom we have in Christ and freedom we experience as American citizens**
- D. **Question: How should we as Christians, as followers of Christ, use our freedom? First and foremost, for the promotion/progress of the Gospel of Christ and the glory of God, certainly not for selfish ambition; this absolutely includes in our families**
- E. **Apostle Paul used his freedom, not to the expense of others, but in ministry to others – again, should be true in our own family**
- F. **Paul's words regarding believers' freedoms: 1 Corinthians 10:23-24 (NIV)**
 - 23 "Everything is permissible"--but not everything is beneficial.
 - "Everything is permissible"--but not everything is constructive.
 - 24 Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others. **(Quotes around “everything is permissible” a commonly used phrase of Corinthians – also seen in Ch. 6:12); similar to, “I'm a free citizen therefore I can do/say whatever I want”**
- G. **Paul, and passage today, Peter through inspiration of Holy Spirit saying to us ... (NOTE 4)**

- i. **Our freedoms as Americans, and rights granted us through our Constitution and Bill of Rights, we should use these submissively for the benefit of others**
- ii. **Our personal freedom in relationship with Christ within the boundaries of God's Word and our personal convictions, these also should be used as we are servants of Christ, and just as He came to earth to serve and not be served, we too use these freedoms to serve others**
- iii. **Even though we are "free" our mindset should still always be submission – to all authorities; the first being the authority of God Almighty**

IV. Close

- A. **Bring back to our homes and family**
- B. **Parents, grandparents must model and teach respect and honor for those in authority – again, by first modeling and teaching respect and honor for God's authority in our lives and the authority of His Word**
- C. **As we model and teach this for our children/grandchildren, it teaches them to respect and honor the authority of us as parents and grandparents**