

MUST CHRISTIANS OBEY EVERY LAW OF THE LAND?

INTRODUCTION:

The more complex our society gets, the more it seems we are encumbered with a multitude of governmental rules and regulations. There are property laws, traffic laws, business laws, tax laws, etc., to the point where we often feel bogged down with unnecessary bureaucratic "red tape." Some people think we are at liberty to simply ignore "some" laws while being obligated to abide by "others." Just where does the Christian draw the line? What does the Bible have to say about a Christian's responsibility in obeying "the law of the land?"

I. THE PRINCIPLE

- A. Romans 13:1, 5; Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13-14. What must the Christian's attitude and practice be toward governmental authorities?
- B. Romans 13:6-7. What specific example of obedience to the law is given in the Scriptures? What if some of our tax money is used for evil or immoral purposes?

II. THE PURPOSE

- A. What is the purpose or reason for obeying the law according to the following Scriptures?
 - 1. I Peter 2:13
 - 2. I Peter 2:14.
 - 3. I Peter 2:15.
 - 4. I Peter 2:16.
 - 5. Titus 3:1.
 - 6. Titus 3:2.
 - 7. Romans 13:1, 4a, 6b.
 - 8. Romans 13:2-4.
 - 9. Romans 13:6

III. THE PROCEDURE

- A. Romans 13:6-7. What specific laws are to be obeyed? What about obeying other laws?

- B. Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13-14. Who, specifically, should be submitted to by way of governmental authorities?

- C. Acts 4:17-20; 5:27-29. Are there any exceptions to the requirement to obey all laws of the land? What other situations could be considered exceptions?

Other discussion questions:

1. Do governmental authorities ever intimidate people without legitimate laws to back them up? If so, what should a Christian do?

2. Is it ever acceptable to violate a law on the grounds that you will pay the penalty in return for the convenience that disobedience provides? (See II. above).

3. What about "civil disobedience?"