

**Engel v. Vitale**  
June 25, 1962


(Prayer is banned  
from public schools)

**Roe v. Wade**  
January 22, 1973

(Abortion on demand  
is a right)

**Obergefell v. Hodges**  
June 26, 2015

(Gay Marriage  
is a right)




**Are these  
issues that  
call for civil  
disobedience?**

• **Civil injustice can call for different kinds of response.**



**Forebear**

**Resist**



**Revolt**


*Forbearance does not imply  
preference, prescription, or  
participation.*

*Revolution need not  
be violent.*

Civil permission	Civil promotion	Civil prescription
When civil authority tolerates injustice	When civil authority encourages injustice	When civil authority demands injustice
Manipulative false truths Unenforced laws Conditional Abortion, Financial irresponsibility,	Irresponsible free speech, Material greed Convenience Abortion Unjust trade laws	Restricted religious speech, Fighting an unjust war, Commanded abortions Unjust taxation

*Hebrews 12:14*

“Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.”



**the pursuit  
of peace**





**the pursuit of  
sanctification**

**pull us in different directions?**

*Acts 5*

“<sup>19</sup> an angel of the Lord said, <sup>20</sup> “Go, stand and speak to the people in the temple the whole message of this Life.” <sup>21</sup> Upon hearing this, they entered into the temple about daybreak and began to teach.... <sup>27</sup>... And the high priest questioned them, <sup>28</sup> saying, “We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and behold, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.” <sup>29</sup> But Peter and the apostles answered and said, “**We must obey God rather than men...**” <sup>40</sup>... after calling the apostles in, they flogged them and ordered them to speak no more in the name of Jesus, and then released them. <sup>41</sup> So they went on their way from the presence of the Council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for His name. <sup>42</sup> And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.”

• **God has ordained civil authority both good and bad.**  
Titus 3:1, 1 Pet.2:13-3:7, Rom.13:1-7, Dan.4:32

*Titus 3*

“<sup>1</sup> Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, <sup>2</sup> to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men. <sup>3</sup> For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.”

- **Submission to unrighteous civil authorities, is expected and commanded.**
- **Empathy should lead us to tolerance.**

• **God has ordained civil authority both good and bad.**  
Titus 3:1, 1 Pet.2:13-3:7, Rom.13:1-7, Dan.4:32

**God commands people to submit to all in authority (civil, religious, commercial, family).** 1 Pet.2:13-3:7 “Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every authority instituted among men.” (v.13), Prov.24:21

**Obedience is in our best interest** “Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf; for in its welfare you will have welfare.” (Jer.29:7)

**Obedience (even to those who are unrighteous and evil) is necessary.** Nero is “God’s servant” (Rom.13:1,4). **Partners who are** “disobedient to the word.” (1 Pet.3:1)

- **When judgment is needed, God will do it (not us).**  
1 Cor.5:12-13 “<sup>12</sup> For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? <sup>13</sup> But those who are outside, God judges.”
- 1. **Seek to be a peacemaker, not a trouble maker.**



- Christians face varied responsibilities.

Seek Peace	Seek Protection	Seek Purification
Forebear with unjust laws	Resist unjust laws	Replace unjust laws
Tolerating does not imply preference, prescription, or participation	As our brother's keeper we are to promote what is good for all mankind.	We are to bring all institutions captive to the rule of God.
<i>Romans 12:18</i> "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men."	<i>Galatians 6:10</i> "Do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith."	<i>Genesis 1:28</i> "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over it."

## 2. Seek wisdom in prioritizing your responsibilities.

- Civil disobedience can take different forms.

Revolt against	Refusal to follow
Violence	Nonviolence
Fight it	Flee it
Reject its punishment	Accept its punishment
American Revolution Civil War	Conscientious Objection

## 3. Seek wisdom in choosing your response.

### Three levels of civil disobedience



#### 1. Unconditional submission

Civil disobedience is never permitted against **legitimate** authority.

#### 2. Conditional submission

Civil disobedience is necessary in **some** cases.

#### 3. Cultural revolution (war)

The culture wars **demand** Civil Disobedience to anything that is contrary to Biblical Law.

### DOMINION THEOLOGY

starts with the questionable assumption that America has a special covenant with God.

- **Kingdom NOW theology** (Pentecostal) calls for taking back what Satan has controlled.
- **Reconstructionism** (Reformed) calls for reinstating the rule of Old Testament Law.

### 2 Chronicles 7:14

"if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."  
NIV

### Notes

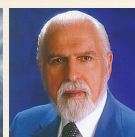
- The land in question is **Palestine** which was **God's land** ("My land" vs. 20) **given to Israel** who was ("brought from the land of Egypt" vs.22).
- If there is a parallel in application to our day it would be the **church** (the new covenant people of God) **but who do not reside in one special land** (from every tongue and nation).
- For those who want to apply this text to America consider:
  - Are you willing to be consistent and obey all of the Old Testament commands to Israel as demanded in 2 Chron.7 (to do according to all that I have commanded you, and will keep My statutes and My ordinances.) vs.17?
  - Does America belong to the **Body of Christ** ("my people who are called by my name" vs.14) **or are they aliens** in it?

### Was the American Revolution justified?

- Can God-given moral rights be the basis for revolution as Jefferson suggested in the Declaration of Independence?
- Calvin taught that the submission to government was mandated only as it served under the umbrella of God's Law.



Greg Bahnsen



R.J. Rushdoony



John Whitehead



Gary North

### Christian Reconstructionism

## Theonomy

### Dominion theology

### Reinstatement of Biblical Law





"We must use the doctrine of religious liberty to gain independence for Christian schools until we train up a generation of people who know that there is no religious neutrality, no neutral law, no neutral education, and no neutral civil government, . . . Then they will get busy in constructing a Bible-based social political and religious order which finally denies the religious liberty of the enemies of God."

Gary North

## Rule by God's Law



ISLAM

Sharia law over  
Democracy

Jihad



Theonomy

Reconstruction

O.T. Law over  
Democracy

Jihad - Dominion

## Rule by God's Law



### Deuteronomy 17:2-5

"<sup>2</sup> If there is found in your midst, in any of your towns, which the Lord your God is giving you, a man or a woman who does what is evil in the sight of the Lord your God, by transgressing His covenant, <sup>3</sup> and has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, or the sun or the moon or any of the heavenly host, which I have not commanded, <sup>4</sup> and if it is told you and you have heard of it, then you shall inquire thoroughly. Behold, if it is true and the thing certain that this detestable thing has been done in Israel, <sup>5</sup> then you shall bring out that man or that woman who has done this evil deed to your gates, *that is*, the man or the woman, and you shall stone them to death."



Gary North

"The negative penalties of the Old Testament case laws were not harsh but just, not a threat to society but rather the necessary judicial foundation of civic freedom...the Old Testament was harsh on criminals because it was soft on victims."

### Was the American Revolution justified?

- Can God-given moral rights be the basis for revolution as Jefferson suggested in the Declaration of Independence?
- Calvin taught that the submission to government was mandated only as it served under the umbrella of God's Law.

### But then again

- God gave the sword to the government to rule, not to the citizens to revolt.
- God exhorts against joining revolutionaries. *Prov.24:21* "Fear the Lord and the king, my son, and do not join with the rebellious."
- Slavery presents a possible parallel. In the N.T. slaves were encouraged to seek freedom but were never encouraged to use violence to gain freedom.
- Moses was judged for his violent act in Egypt.
- Jesus exhorted against using the sword. *Matt.26:51*
- Jesus spoke against retaliation. *Matt.5:38-39; Rom.12:19*



## Consider

### 1. What is my framework or “big picture” theological perspective?

What am I called to?

- **Pacify** the social situation,
- **Protect** society,
- **Purify** culture

My priorities and values will shape my judgments and decisions.

### 2. How critical is this particular issue in light of the culture wars? Is this a hill worth dying on? Does the kingdom lose more than it gains in the long run?

### 3. Am I consistent in my civil disobedience or forbearance? Are my priorities wisely chosen?

4. Do I have the facts right or am I just following a crowd?
5. Have I respectfully appealed to authority for justice?
6. Have I made this a matter of Prayer?
7. Have I worked legally to change unjust systems?
8. Am I willing to graciously suffer the consequences of disobedience?
9. Is fleeing from oppression an option?
10. The best way to effect lasting change in an unjust system may be by being a spiritual example, not by revolution.

#### NOTE:

- 2 Chron. 23 speaks of a God-appointed revolution against Athaliah.
- Without revolution tyranny reigns.
- Just war arguments can be used for just revolutions.

The Charismatic religious right wants the kingdom before its time  
**and without its Values.**

The Calvinistic religious right wants the kingdom before its time  
**and without its Spirit.**

The Cultural religious left wants the kingdom before its time  
**and without its King.**

Seek the kingdom with its  
Values, Spirit, & King  
in its time

**without being too  
attached, anxious  
& angry with this  
world as we wait.**