

The Old Hickory

Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

841 Old Hickory Blvd.
Jackson, TN 38305

March 20, 2011

Volume 31, # 12

DO YOU OPPOSE THE ORDINANCE OF GOD?

The Apostle Paul explained responsibility to civil governments in this way: “Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.” (Rom. 13:1). These responsibilities are enjoined upon all men, at every time and at every place, especially Christians. Having confessed Jesus Christ as Lord did not remove obligations of submission to governing authorities. The fact that governments sometimes behave badly, oppressively, unjustly and are heavily taxing to their citizens, does not change this command, nor do these conditions prove the directive to be untrue. When this letter was written, the Lord was not giving blanket approval to Caesar, not to any particular king or ruling authority. The approval is given to the *concept* or *idea* of authoritative governments, which provide order to society, security of life and property, regulatory laws for society and the power to enforce those laws. The source of governmental authority is God – “those which exist are established by God.”

Opposition to God: Paul continues by stating the seriousness of resistance to God’s expressed will: “Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.” (Rom. 13:2). When the governments of men require something that is contrary to God’s will, “We must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). Otherwise, notice that when anyone opposes the ordinance of God, he will receive condemnation (KJV – “damnation”). This judgment will come from civil government, but most severely, from God. Clearly, to oppose the

ordinance of God is the most foolish of actions leading to the most serious of consequences!

Opposition to God's ordinances and the resulting horrible consequences also happen in other areas of behavior. Let's think about some.

Rejection of God's purpose: Jesus spoke about John the Baptist's preaching in the wilderness and the Pharisees and lawyers refused to submit to his command to be baptized. Luke described this refusal in his gospel: "But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected God's purpose for themselves, not having been baptized by John." (Luke 7:30). The purpose of God was to bring the nation of Israel to repentance and ultimately to salvation through Jesus Christ. But these religious leaders frustrated that plan so far as they were concerned, by their refusal to repent and be baptized. In this example, Jesus used submission to John's baptism as the test of whether or not men reject God's purpose. In the same way, men today demonstrate rejection of God's purpose by refusing to be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 8:36-39; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21). What will be the consequences for rejecting God's purpose? Will it not be the same as it always has been?

All that has been appointed: When Jesus made Himself known to Saul by appearing to him on the Damascus road, He said, "Get up and go on into Damascus, and there you will be told of all that has been appointed for you to do." (Acts 22:10). Just as it is "ordained" (KJV in Rom. 13:1) or appointed for man to live in subjection to civil government, it was ordained or "appointed" for Saul to do something upon his arrival in Damascus. There Ananias brought the command of Jesus to Saul: "Now why do you delay? Get up and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name." (Acts 22:16). What had been appointed for him to do was baptism, and by his obedience to that command he accepted for himself God's purpose.

What about today? God requires the same response from men today. God has ordained that all who would be saved must obey the same gospel commands that all other converts recorded in the book of Acts obeyed (Rom. 6:16-17; Gal. 3:1; 5:7; 2 Thess. 1:8; Heb. 5:9; 1 Pet. 4:17). God has ordained that men be converted by the gospel of Jesus Christ, that they believe the gospel (Mark 1:15), repent of sins (Acts 17:30), confess Christ (Rom. 10:9-10) and be baptized for the remission of sins (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38). Friend, have you rejected the purpose of God for your life? Have you not done what Christ appointed for you

to do? Have you been living in opposition to the ordinance of God? May we please help you to obey God?

- GFS

Spend your time in nothing which you know must be repented of; in nothing on which you might not pray for the blessing of God; in nothing which you could not review with a quiet conscience on your dying bed; in nothing which you might not safely and properly be found doing if death should surprise you in the act. – Richard Baxter

- > Life is too short for us to do everything we want to do; but it is long enough for us to do everything God wants us to do.
 - > Time should not be spent, it should be invested in the kingdom of God. -John Blanchard
 - > The fiercest quarrels do not always argue the greatest offenses.
 - > I was not put here to "find myself," but rather to serve God (Eccl. 12:13).
 - > *"Give your face to God, and He will put his shine on it."* - Billy Sunday
-

SUNDAY'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: *"Implanting Contentment In Our Children!"* (text: Phil. 4:10-19); Sunday evening: Jesus Christ: A Closer Look – *For Better or For Worse!* (Mark 10:1-12).