

# LIVING FREE UNDER AUTHORITY

Sunday, October 19, 2025 -- 1 PETER series -- msg 16 -- Pastor Andrew Coleman

## 1 PETER 2:13-17

English Standard Version (ESV)

**13** *Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, **14** or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. **15** For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. **16** Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. **17** Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.*

## REVIEW & CONTEXT:

Peter's overarching theme is holy living amid suffering and exile.

- **Ch. 1–2:12:** Christians are a chosen people, set apart to declare God's excellencies even while living as *sojourners and exiles* in a hostile culture.
- **Ch. 2:13-3:12:** Peter now applies holiness to **social relationships** — government, work, marriage, and community — showing that submission is not weakness but spiritual strength that glorifies God.
- Thus, submission to human authority is an expression of trust in God's sovereignty, not compromise with evil.

## SUBMISSION to HUMAN AUTHORITY:

### 1) Submit for the Lord's Sake (vs 13-14)

*"Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution..."*

**Be subject** plainly means to submit... to willing bring yourself under authority.

**for the Lord's sake** this is the motivation for our submission.

We are representing the Lord to the world.

We influence the way people think about God.

**to every human institution** means the divinely permitted structures for societal order.

**emperor and governors**

Emperor Nero! a horrific, diabolical, maniacal emperor who persecuted Christians

**punishing those who do evil** — this is a role of civil authorities

for deterrence of evil

for reform of evil doers

**praising those who do good** — this is part of civil leadership

## 2) Silence the Critics by Doing Good vs 15

*For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people.*

Notice: This is the will of God. This means God designed it to work this way.

Notice: By doing good, mockers of God can't criticize the truth.

By respecting authority (when it is not contrary to God's authority) we win credibility.

### TITUS 3:1-3 Paul gives instructions to Titus as he trains new leaders...

*1 Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, 2 to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people. 3 For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.*

In other words, our submission to authority and doing good can be a witness.

## 3) Live as Free People, Yet as Servants of God. vs 16

*Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.*

We are people freed by God not from authority but from sin to serve God.

ROMANS 8:2

*For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death.*

JOHN 8:36

*So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.*

GALATIANS 5:13

*For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*

## 4) SUBMISSION APPLIED TO ALL OF LIFE: 4 COMMANDS!

*Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.*

- **Honor everyone** — This is not normal around the world.  
This is a radical command... slaves, poor, rich, various ethnicities.  
This points to every human being is made in the image of God.  
God values them, so you value them! You don't get to decide.
- **Love the Brotherhood** — This means love fellow believers.  
1 JOHN 5:1  
*Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him.*
- **Fear God** — When we fear God we don't have to fear man or what he can do to us.  
PROVERBS 9:10 *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.*
- **Honor the Emperor** — Peter circles back to both HONOR and the EMPEROR (vs 13).  
Proclaim Christ by honoring your persecutor.

**MATTHEW 5:43-45** *Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.*