



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 21, 2020

Capitol Hill Baptist Church Enjoys First Gathering Since Court Ruling Against Shutdown Order

Members of the Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., [held their first worship service](#) on Sunday since District Court Judge Trevor McFadden granted the church “injunctive relief” from D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser’s draconian, discriminatory, and hypocritical shutdown orders over the COVID virus.

Appropriately, the sermon was about civil government and civil disobedience, preached by Associate Pastor Bobby Jamieson.

McFadden ruled that Bowser’s “current restrictions substantially burden the Church’s exercise of religion” and so granted the church’s petition for relief.

Thirty-four Senate Republicans filed an Amicus Brief supporting the church: “The Mayor’s discrimination against houses of worship rests on a mistaken, and unconstitutional, premise that one particular exercise of free speech — a church’s desire to gather together and worship their God — is subordinate to other First Amendment-protected activities.”

Those Republicans got most of it right. The mayor’s ruling rests ultimately on a mistaken premise that the government has the right to dictate a church’s behavior. Many Christians believe this as well, drawing support for this view from Romans 13. Here’s the NIV version:

Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.

Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended.

For the one in authority is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God’s servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience.

A quick reading would seem to support Bowser’s edicts. After all, she was duly elected as mayor — “the one in authority” — and therefore is free to impose whatever mandates she feels appropriate to the



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circumstances. And church members are to bow before them because she “is God’s servant.”

How then does one correlate that with this from the Massachusetts Provincial Congress in 1774: “Resistance to tyranny becomes the Christian and social duty of each individual. Continue steadfast, and with a proper sense of your dependence upon God, nobly defend those rights which Heaven gave, and no man [or woman] ought to take from us.”

In his sermon, Pastor Jamieson told his congregation that “the only conditions that justify disobedience to legitimate government authority, legitimate earthly authority, are when they either command something God forbids or forbid something God commands.”

Peter Green, writing at [LewRockwell.com](#) in 2010, provided a “totalitarian version” of Romans 13:

Totally submit to the government and all its officials, for there is no official that is not preordained by God to rule you. Therefore, any sign of resistance to any official is defying God and you will be destroyed.

But do whatever they decide — that is being good and God through His officials will reward you. But disobeying anything they say or decide, any rule they make, is bad and you should be afraid because the government’s agents have swords and guns with good reason — and they are specially ordained by God to violently punish those who disobey them in any way, because to do so is evil.

But don’t just obey them because they are threatening you, you should actually feel guilty if you disobey in any way. You should pay them whatever amount they ask without question because they are serving God by taking it from you and doing their very special work.

So give without question everything they ask: taxes are theirs, all your money is theirs, your respect is their right, your complete obedience is their right.

Pastor Chuck Baldwin, head of Liberty Fellowship in Kalispell, Montana, provides a better, more understandable version of Romans 13:

Let every soul be subject unto the [U.S. Constitution.] For there is no [Constitution] but of God: the [Constitution] that be ordained of God.

Whosoever therefore resisteth the [Constitution], resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

For [the Constitution is] not a terror to good works, but to the evil.

Wilt thou then not be afraid of the [Constitution]? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For [the Constitution] is the minister of God to thee for good.

But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for [the Constitution] beareth not the sword in vain: for [the Constitution] is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also: for [the Constitution is] God’s minister, attending continually upon this very thing.

Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom;



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fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.”

Would that more worshippers would take heed to the proper understanding of the role of civil government during this time of great temptation by tyrants to use the current virus “crisis” to expand their powers over sovereign citizens who are ignorant of what Romans 13 really means.



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