HOW TO RESPOND TO SOCIAL STRUCTURES

1 Peter 2:13-17 "13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, 14 or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. 15 For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. 16 Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves. 17 Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor." (NIV)

1. Christians are to SUBMIT to the authorities.

1 Peter 2:13-14 "13 Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, 14 or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right." (NIV)

Romans 13:1-7 "1 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. 2 Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. 3 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 one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. 4 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. 5 Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment, but also a matter of conscience. 6 This is why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. 7 Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor." (NIV)

Isaiah 45:1 "This is what the Lord says to **His anointed**, to **Cyrus**, whose right hand I take hold of to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their armor, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut." (NIV)

Jeremiah 25:9 "I will summon all the peoples of the north and **my servant Nebuchadnezzar** king of Babylon," declares the Lord, "and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations. I will completely destroy them and make them an object of horror and scorn, and an everlasting ruin." (NIV)

Acts 4:19-20 *"19 But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to Him? You be the judges! 20 As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard." (NIV)*

Acts 5:27-29 *"27 The apostles were brought in and made to appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. 28 "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name," he said. "Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood." 29 Peter and the other apostles replied, "We must obey God rather than human beings!" (NIV)*

2. Christians are to SERVE their communities.

1 Peter 2:15 "For it is God's will that by **doing good** you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people." (NIV)

Jeremiah 29:7 "Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper." (NIV)

3. Christians are to SANCTIFY their activities.

1 Peter 2:16 "Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God's slaves."

Romans 6:1-4 "1 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? 3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raise from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life." (NIV)

Galatians 5:13-14 "13 You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another

humbly in love. 14 For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."" (NIV)

HOW TO LIVE AS CITIZENS

1 Peter 2:17 "Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor." (NIV)

1. Treat all people with DIGNITY.

   1 Peter 2:17 "Show proper respect to everyone …".

2. Love fellow believers with SENSITIVITY.

   1 Peter 2:17 "… love the family of believers …".

3. Fear God with INTENSITY.

   1 Peter 2:17 "… fear God …"

4. Honor those in authority to the best of your ABILITY.

   1 Peter 2:17 "… honor the emperor."

BOTTOM LINE: Christian CIVILIANS are to be CIVIL.

Romans 12:18-21 "18 **If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.** 19 Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. 20 On the contrary: "If you enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (NIV)

1 Timothy 2:1-6a "1 I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—2 **for kings and all those in authority**, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. 3 This is good, and pleases God our Savior, 4 who wants all people to

be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. [5] For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave Himself as a ransom for all people …" (NIV)