



Story: Christians as Citizens

SUPPLIES NEEDED

You will need the following:

12 Sheets of [Cardstock](#) (8.5" x 11")

12 3 mil Laminating [Film](#)

DIRECTIONS

- Print pages 2-15 two-sided. Laminate the story pages.
- Print pages 16-25 two-sided. Cut the "letters" along the gray line. Laminate all the letters and cut them apart.
- As students arrive, give them a few letters and ask them to look up the verses and fill in the blanks using a transparency (wet erase) marker.
- During class, read the story while holding up the pictures. When you come to the verses in the lesson, have the students take turns reading their "letters." At the end of class, they should put their "letters" in the correct "mailbox" (see Epistles Mailbox Bulletin Board).

Clip Art: Laura Strickland

<http://www.whimsyclips.com/>

Illustrations: Free Bible Images

www.freebibleimages.org

Graphics: @Phillip Martin

www.religion.phillipmartin.info

Christians as Citizens



Before holding up picture:

What did we learn last time? *(New Testament worship: singing, praying, giving, preaching, Lord's Supper, first day of the week, etc)*

Hold up picture:

The NT Christians were excited to be members of God's kingdom, but they had some questions about how they should behave towards the kingdoms (or governments) on earth. Do we have to obey the police? Can we protest against the government? Are we allowed to join the military? Is breaking a law established by the government sinful? Which law is more important, the law of God or the law of the government? Before we can answer these questions, we need to see what the Bible says.



MARTIN

Hold up picture:

Today we will start with the letter to the Romans. Paul mostly likely wrote this letter from Corinth while he was on his 3rd missionary journey around 57 AD. The 13th chapter of Romans tells us how to be good citizens under the government.

Let the students take turns reading the “letters” (NKJV):

Rom. 13:1 – Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.

Rom. 13:2 - Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

Rom. 13:3 - For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same.

Rom. 13:7 - Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

Ask / Discuss:

What does it mean to “be subject to the governing authorities”? *(To obey, to submit)*

Who appointed governing authorities? *(God)*

If we resist the government, who are we also resisting? *(God)*

Why should we not fear the government? *(Because we should be doing good works, not evil)*

Do we have to pay taxes and show honor to government officials? *(Yes)*

1&2 TIMOTHY



Hold up picture:

Paul also wrote to Timothy about something he should do for those in government. Let's see what Paul says in 1 Timothy...

Let the students take turns reading the "letters" (NKJV):

1 Tim. 2:1-2 – Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

1 Tim. 2:3-4 - For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Ask / Discuss:

What should we be doing for our government officials? *(Praying for them, thanking them)*

Why should we pray for our leaders? *(To have a quiet, peaceful life; God wants all men to know the truth)*



1 & 2 PETER

Hold up picture:

Paul is not the only one who wrote about obeying the government. Peter also wrote to the churches in Asia Minor regarding the government. Let's see what he has to say:

Let the students take turns reading the "letters" (NKJV):

1 Peter 2:13-14 - Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.

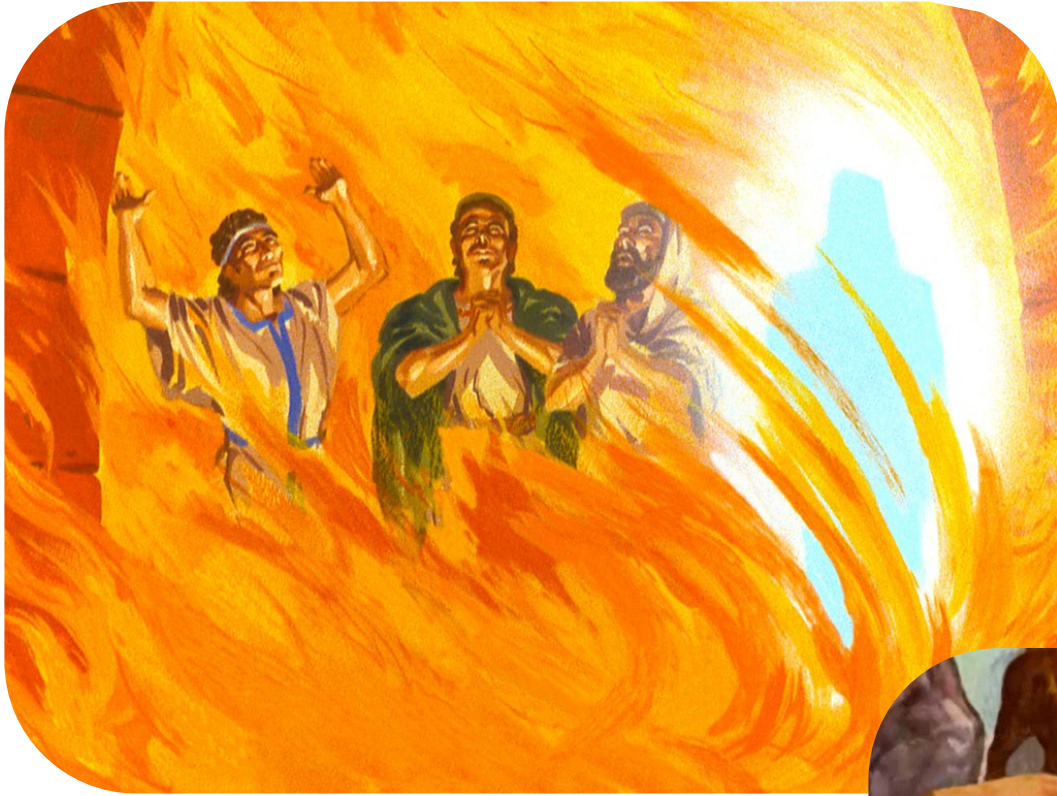
1 Peter 2:15 - For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.

1 Peter 2:17 - Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.

Ask / Discuss:

Is there a limit on who we are to submit to? *(No, submit to every ordinance [law or regulation], whether it's a king or a governor)* So it doesn't matter if it's the President, the governor, the mayor, or a policeman...we need to obey and submit.

Who are we to fear? *(God)* It is God's will that we obey our governing officials. Our fear [reverence] of God should be the basis of all of our relationships with others. God placed governments in positions of authority and for that reason alone we should show respect and honor to our government officials.



Before holding up picture:

As God's children we are to be law abiding citizens, but not to the point of disobeying God. Can you think of any examples in the Bible, where someone disobeyed the government because it went against God's law? I thought of four examples, 3 in the OT and 1 in the NT. *(Give students time to think of examples)*

Hold up picture:

In Daniel, we have two examples. First, King Nebuchadnezzar had ordered everyone to bow down and worship his statue. But who would not bow down? *(Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego)* When they were brought before King Nebuchadnezzar, do you remember what they said? They said, "...our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the furnace of blazing fire...But even if He does not, let it be known to you, O king, that we are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up." (Dan. 3:17-18) The King threw them into the fiery furnace, but who saved them? *(An angel or Jesus)*

Then later in Daniel chapter 6, King Darius issued a decree that nobody could pray except to the king. Did that stop Daniel from praying? *(No, he still prayed three times a day as was his custom)* Daniel was thrown into the lion's den for disobeying King Darius, but again we see God coming to the rescue.

Can you think of two more examples?



Hold up picture:

In Exodus, Pharaoh commanded the Israelite midwives to do what? *(Kill any baby boys that were born)* Exodus 1:17 says, “But the midwives feared God, and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the male children alive.”

Then in the NT, I thought of Peter and John when they were arrested in Acts 4. After they were arrested, the High Priest ordered Peter and John not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. Did Peter and John obey? *(No)* Let’s read Acts 4:19-20:

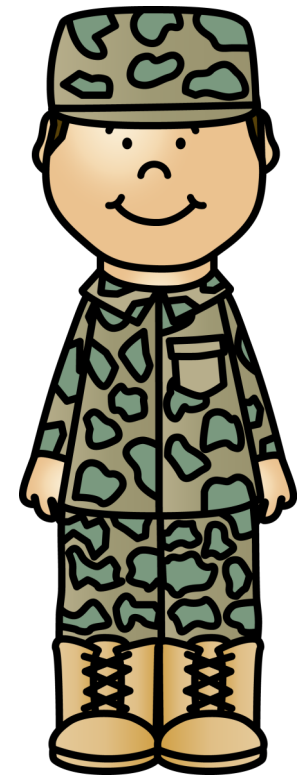
Read Verses (NASB):

Acts 4:19-20 - But Peter and John answered and said to them, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard.”

Ask / Discuss:

When is it okay to not obey the government? *(When it goes against God’s law)*

Christians as Citizens



Hold up picture:

Now that we've read what the Bible has to say about Christians as citizens, let's consider some of our earlier questions. I'm going to give you a worksheet and I want you to color the stoplight next to the question:

Red is for **Never / No**

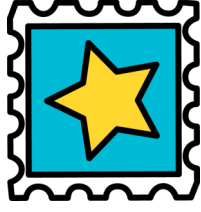
Yellow is for **Maybe / Depends**

Green is for **Always / Yes**

Then we will discuss them and see if we all agree.

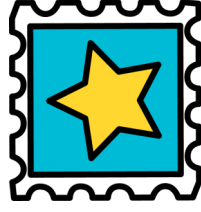
(After completing the worksheet, have the students put "The Epistles" in the correct mailboxes.)

From: Paul



To: The Romans

From: Paul



To: The Romans

Rom. 13:1

Yr 3 / Qtr 4 / Less 3a / #1

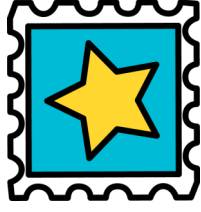
Let every soul be _____ to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from _____, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.

Rom. 13:2

Yr 3 / Qtr 4 / Less 3a / #2

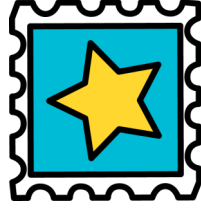
Therefore whoever _____ the authority resists the ordinance of _____, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.

From: Paul



To: The Romans

From: Paul



To: The Romans

Rom. 13:3

Yr 3 / Qtr 4 / Less 3a / #3

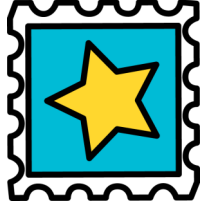
For rulers are not a terror to _____ works,
but to evil. Do you want to be _____ of
the authority? Do what is good, and you will have
praise from the same.

Rom. 13:7

Yr 3 / Qtr 4 / Less 3a / #4

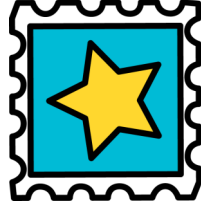
Render therefore to all their due: _____ to
whom taxes are due, customs to who customs, fear
to whom fear, _____ to whom honor.

From: Paul



To: Timothy

From: Paul



To: Timothy

1 Tim. 2:1-2

Yr 3 / Qtr 4 / Less 3a / #5

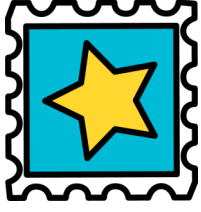
Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications,
_____, intercessions, and giving of thanks
be made for all men, for _____ and all who
are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and
peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

1 Tim. 2:3-4

Yr 3 / Qtr 4 / Less 3a / #6

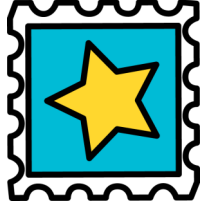
For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God
our Savior, who desires _____ men to be
saved and to come to the knowledge of the
_____.

From: Peter



To: The Christians in
Asia and Galatia

From: Peter



To: The Christians in
Asia and Galatia

1 Pet. 2:13-14

Yr 3 / Qtr 4 / Less 3a / #7

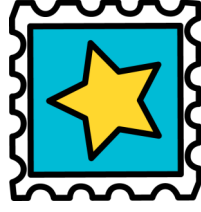
Therefore _____ yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the _____ as supreme, or to governors, as those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good.

1 Pet. 2:15

Yr 3 / Qtr 4 / Less 3a / #8

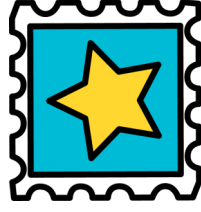
For this is the will of _____, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of _____ men.

From: Peter



To: The Christians in
Asia and Galatia

From:



To:

1 Pet. 2:17

Yr 3 / Qtr 4 / Less 3a / #9

_____ all people. Love the brotherhood.

_____ God. Honor the _____.