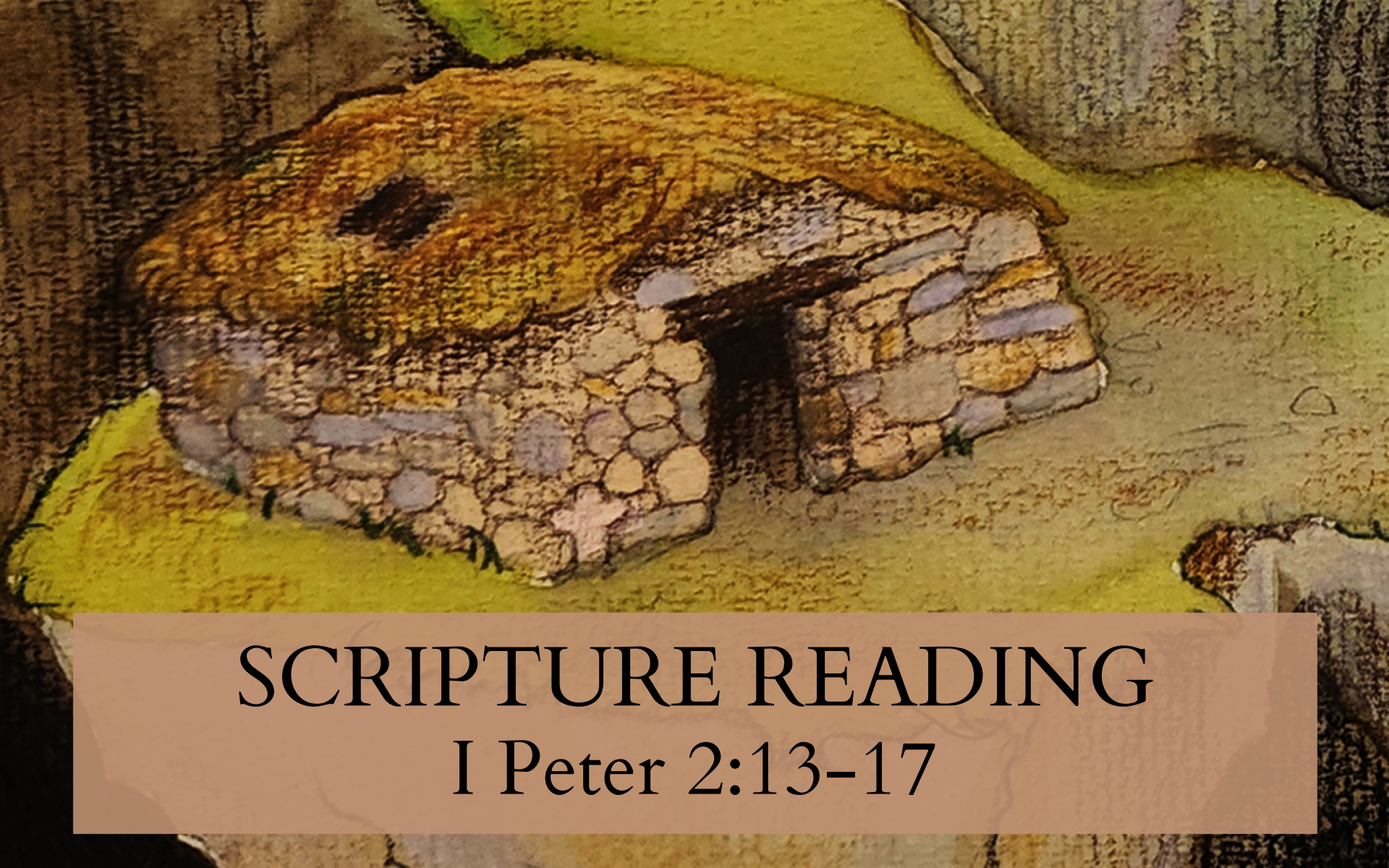




# 1 PETER

A LIVING STONE AND  
A HOLY PEOPLE





# SCRIPTURE READING


## I Peter 2:13-17



# The Bohemian Adamites

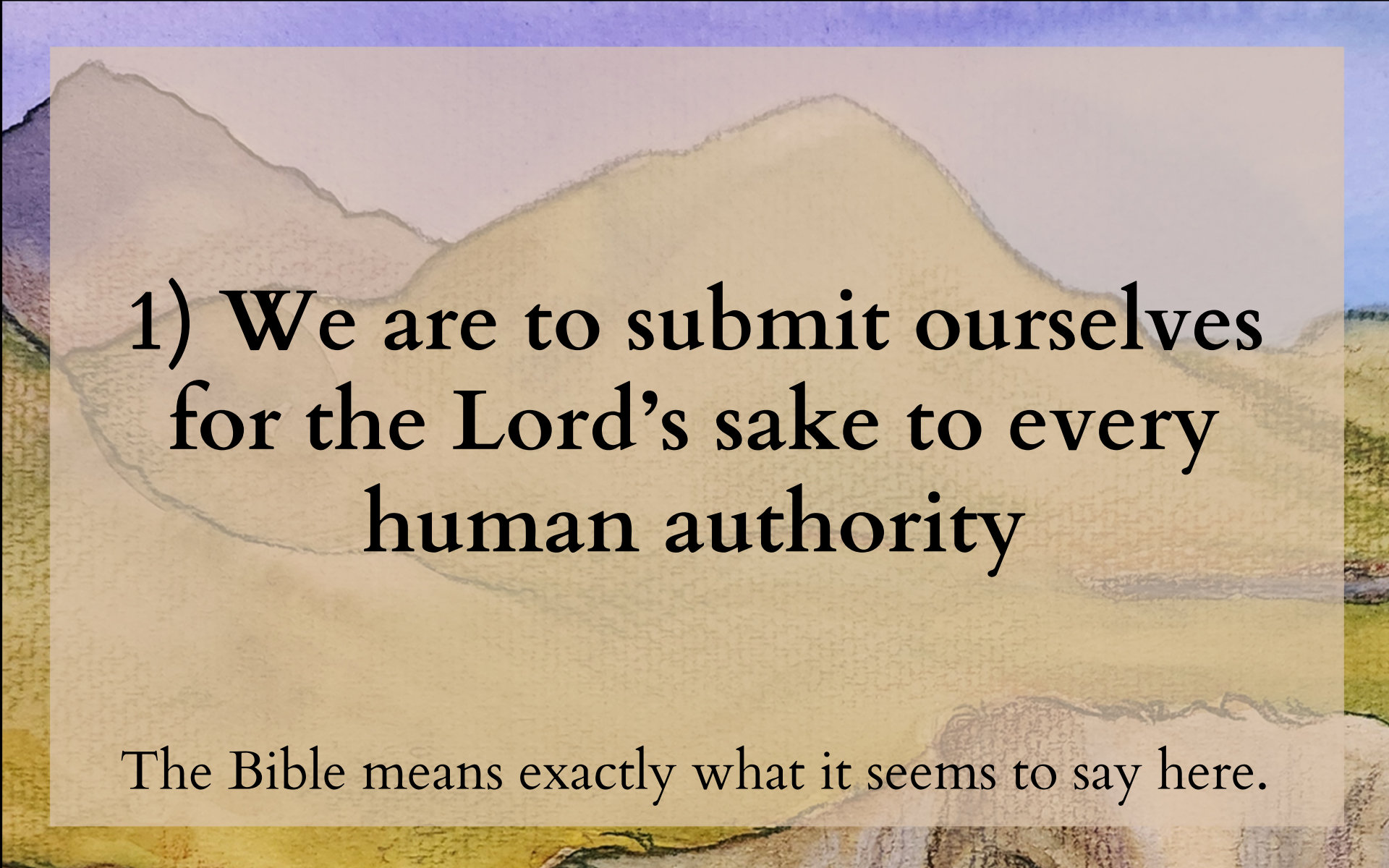






**Freely submit to human  
authorities for Christ's sake.**





**1) We are to submit ourselves  
for the Lord's sake to every  
human authority**

The Bible means exactly what it seems to say here.



# I Peter 2:13

ESV: Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution

NRSV: For the Lord's sake accept the authority of every human institution



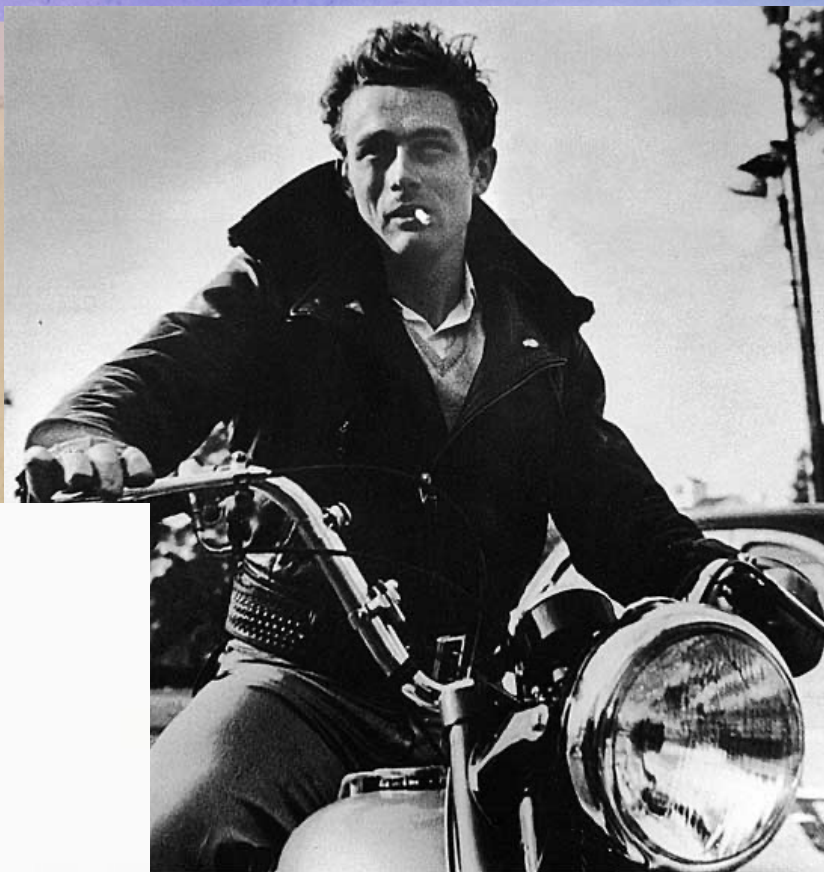
# Consider the Context: I Peter 2:9–12

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.

Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.”







# The Bible is clear and consistent.

**Titus 3:1-2** – “Remind the people to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready to do whatever is good, to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and always to be gentle toward everyone.”

**Romans 13:1-2** – “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.”



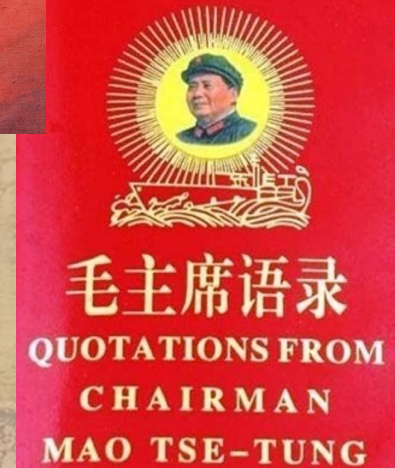
# What does it mean to submit to human authorities?

- 1) Obey the laws (e.g. paying taxes—c.f. Matthew 17).
- 2) Respecting human authorities (i.e. “honoring” them)
- 3) “Do good”/be good citizens
  - 1) Luke 6:35 - “Do good” even to our enemies
  - 2) Jeremiah 29:7 - Seek the peace and prosperity of our city. (This includes civic involvement.)



# Why does the Bible uphold governmental authority even when it is unjust?

- 1) The Gospel is freeing, but it is easy for our flesh to misuse this.
- 2) Hierarchy is natural and necessary in a fallen world.
- 3) Rebellion nearly always empowers the worst people.
- 4) Rebellions nearly always make things worse!





# Limiting Principle #1

We are not to submit if doing so leads to disobedience against God

**Acts 5: 27-29:** “The apostles were brought in and made to appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. ‘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.’ Peter and the other apostles replied: ‘We must obey God rather than human beings!’”

**Exodus 1:15-17.** “The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, whose names were Shiphrah and Puah, ‘When you are helping the Hebrew women during childbirth on the delivery stool, if you see that the baby is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live.’ The midwives, however, feared God and did not do what the king of Egypt had told them to do; they let the boys live.”

\*Check out Pastor Nic’s 9 March 2025 sermon and Engage & Equip episodes #382 & #385.\*



# Limiting Principle #2

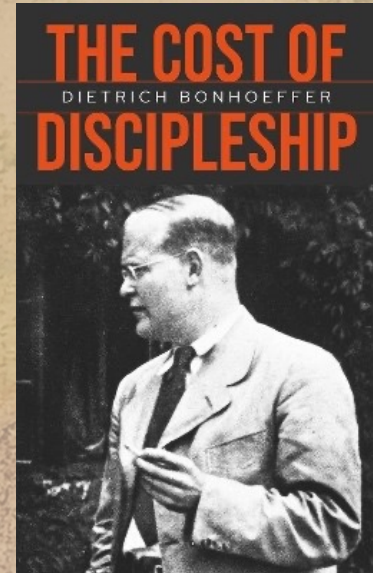
We are not to submit when a human authority claims a right that belongs to God.

The Arians were an early church heresy that denied Christ's full divinity.



**St. Ambrose:** What belongs to God is outside the emperor's power.

The Aryans were a quasi-mythical people from prehistoric times that the Nazis used to advance their hateful racial ideology.





# The fact that a human authority is evil is not a limiting principle

The purpose of government is to administer justice, but our obedience to government is not contingent on it acting perfectly just.





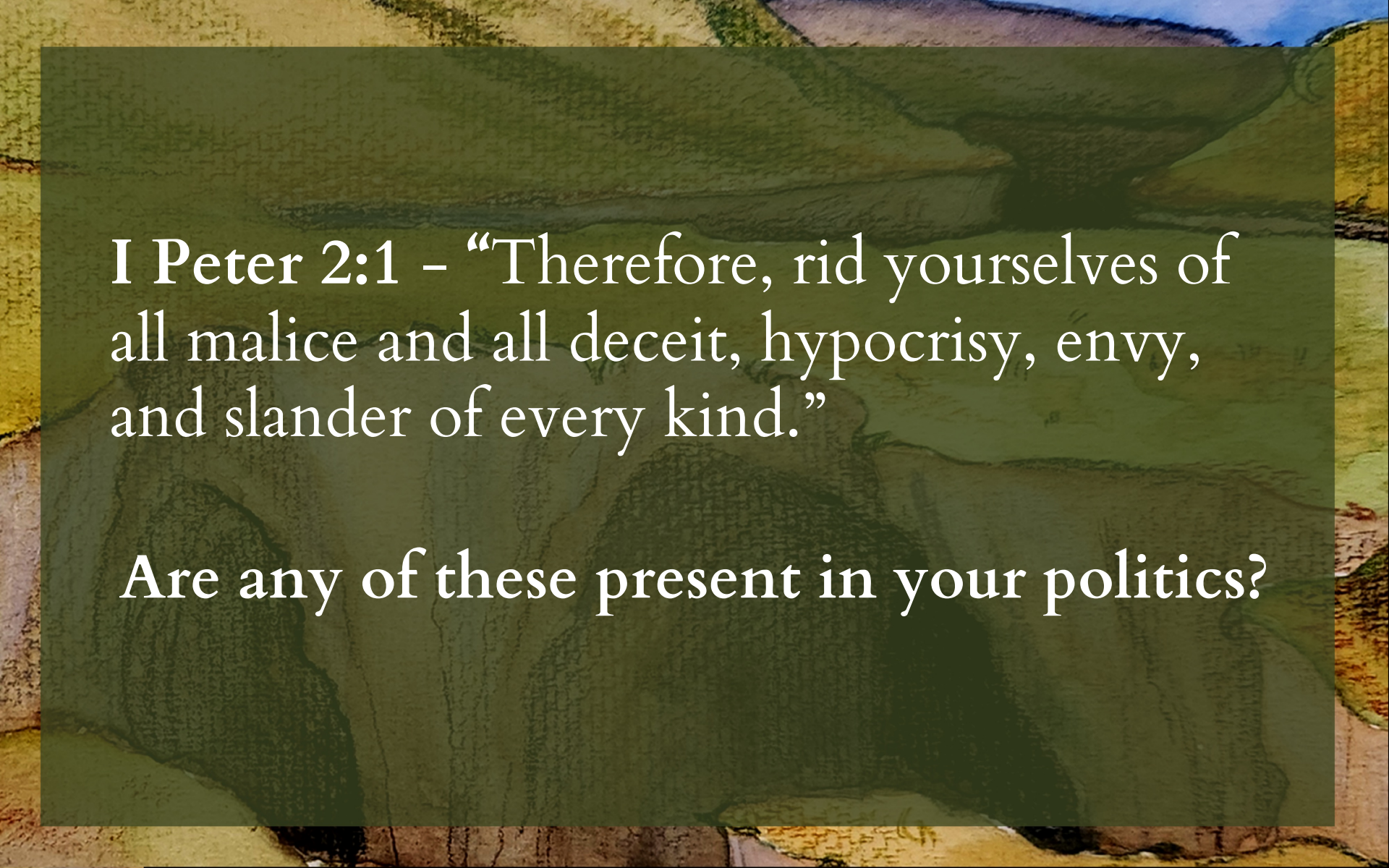
# Doesn't this look different in a democratic republic?

Yes, but how is beyond the purview of this sermon.

## Take home principle

How we Christians work through unclear issues with each other is often (though not always!) more important than the conclusions we come to—can we bear patiently with one another? Can we love one another in the midst of disagreement? Can we charitably assume the best in our opponents?





I Peter 2:1 – “Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind.”

Are any of these present in your politics?



## 2) Christian liberty changes how we relate to human authority

I Peter 2:16-17 – “Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God’s slaves. Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.”

Christian liberty is not license to do what we want. It rests not on escape from service, but on a change of masters. Living as free people entails living as God’s slaves.





Freedom is becoming who we  
were made to be.



Seeking to create our own purpose  
leads to failure and death.

\*Listen to Pastor Adam's sermon from 1 June 2025\*



# Philemon 8–21

“Therefore, although in Christ I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, yet I prefer to appeal to you on the basis of love. It is as none other than Paul—an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus—that I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains. Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me.

I am sending him—who is my very heart—back to you. I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel. But I did not want to do anything without your consent, so that any favor you do would not seem forced but would be voluntary. <sup>15</sup> Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back forever—no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother. He is very dear to me but even dearer to you, both as a fellow man and as a brother in the Lord.

So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. If he has done you any wrong or owes you anything, charge it to me. I, Paul, am writing this with my own hand. I will pay it back—not to mention that you owe me your very self. I do wish, brother, that I may have some benefit from you in the Lord; refresh my heart in Christ. Confident of your obedience, I write to you, knowing that you will do even more than I ask.”



# I Peter 2:17

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



# 3) Living as we Ought Will Lead to Suffering; we Need Christ to Endure it

I Peter 2:11-17 - “Dear friends, I urge you, as foreigners and exiles, to abstain from sinful desires, which wage war against your soul. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us. Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right. For it is God’s will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish people. Live as free people, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as God’s slaves. Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honor the emperor.”



# Christ's death and resurrection is a paradigm—He suffered before His resurrection and glory and so will we.

**I Peter 2:19-21** – “For it is commendable if someone bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because they are conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example that you should follow in His steps.”

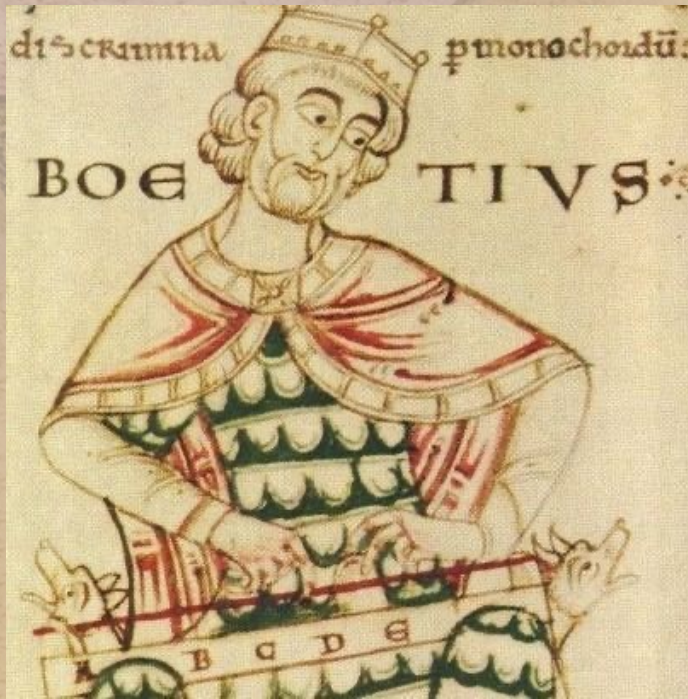
**I Peter 3:14(a)** – “But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed.”

**I Peter 4:1(a)** – “Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude.”

**I Peter 4:12-13** – “Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come on you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.”



# History shows that people that live justly always suffer.



“It may be thou knowest not of the banishment of Anaxagoras, of the poison draught of Socrates, nor of Zeno’s torturing, because these things happened in a distant country; yet mightest thou have learnt the fate of Arrius, of Seneca, of Soranus, whose stories are neither old nor unknown to fame. These men were brought to destruction for no other reason than that, settled as they were in wisdom’s principles, their lives were a manifest contrast to the ways of the wicked. So there is nothing thou shouldst wonder at, if on the seas of life we are tossed by storm-blasts, seeing that we have made it our cheifest aim to refuse compliance with evildoers.”



# A fear of suffering is one of the primary reasons we fail to submit to human authority.

**Peter:** submit yourselves to human authority.



What human authority did to Peter.

**Paul:** be subject to the governing authorities.



What human authority did to Paul.



# The solution to our fear is not “winning,” but believing the Gospel!

**I Peter 2:23** – “When they hurled their insults at Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly.”

We can submit to bad government and have peace only if we trust Christ as the true and everlasting Sovereign.

If we don't see human authority and our relationship to it through the lens of the Gospel, we will get it wrong. Every time. If Christ is not our King, even if we succeed, we will fail!



A watercolor illustration of a mountainous landscape. In the foreground, there is a small, rustic stone building with a thatched roof, possibly a chapel or a hermit's cell. The middle ground shows rolling hills and valleys, with a body of water visible in the distance. The background features more rugged mountains under a blue sky. The overall style is soft and painterly, with visible brushstrokes and a rich color palette of greens, yellows, browns, and blues.

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