

CHRISTIAN SUBMISSION TO CIVIL AUTHORITIES (ROMANS 13:1-7) AND HIJAB CONTROVERSIES IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The concept of Christian submission to civil authorities is a topic that has been debated and discussed for centuries, with many different interpretations and viewpoints. One of the key passages in the Bible that addresses this issue is Romans 13:1-7, which states that Christians should be subject to the governing authorities, as they are appointed by God to maintain order and justice in society. However, this passage has often been used to justify the submission of Christians to oppressive or unjust authorities, and has been the subject of controversy in many different contexts. One such context is the controversy surrounding the wearing of hijab, or head covering, by Muslim female student particularly women in Christian Schools. Recently, the government of Kwara state enacted a law enforcing the use of hijab in public schools. The law was extended to cover mission school established by churches in identification with their own religious belief which is at variance with Islamic injunction. But while the government argues that since those schools are being grant aided by government they must fall under the category of public schools. The Christians are however reading a political undertone here in favour of Muslim faith. These policies have sparked controversy and debate among Christian communities, with the argument that the hijab is a form of oppression and goes against Christian beliefs, since it is a traditional Islamic head covering. The writer adopts historical, descriptive and analytical methods. Findings reveal that the concept of Christian submission to civil authorities, as outlined in Romans 13:1-7, plays a big role in the ongoing debate surrounding hijab controversies. While Christians are called to respect and follow the laws and rules set by their authorities, they must also remember to prioritize their allegiance to God above all else. The paper concludes that hijab injunction is a peculiar religion issue exclusively reserved for Muslim adherent, with recommendation that for sustainable peaceful co-existence, successive government should face the business of governance in order to enhance socio-economic development for all citizens irrespective of religious affiliation.

Keywords: Christian Submission, Civil authorities, Hijab Controversies, Civil Disobedience, Romans 13:1-7.

Introduction

Civil authority refers to the government or governing body that has the power to make and enforce laws within a particular geographic region or jurisdiction. This can include local, state, and federal governments, as well as international organizations that have the authority to govern and regulate certain activities within their jurisdiction. Civil authorities are responsible for maintaining order in society (Brand, 307) and upholding the rule of law within

their jurisdiction, and they have the power to enforce laws and regulations through various means, including fines, imprisonment, and other forms of punishment. Civil authority is an important component of any society, as it helps to ensure that individuals and groups are able to live and work together in a safe and orderly manner.

Civil Authority is the moral power of command, supported (when need be) by physical coercion, which the State exercises over its members. Authority is as great a necessity to mankind as sobriety, and is natural. By "natural" here is meant, not what accrues to man without any effort of his own (teeth, for example), but what man must secure, even with an effort, because without it he cannot be man enough. It is natural to man to live in civil society; and where there is civil society, there must be authority. Civil authority is of God, not by any revelation or positive institution, but by the mere fact that God is the Author of Nature, and Nature imperatively requires civil authority to be set up and obeyed. Nature cannot tolerate intemperance or anarchy either. And what Nature absolutely requires, or absolutely refuses as incompatible with her well-being, God commands, or God forbids. God then forbids anarchy; and in forbidding anarchy, he enjoins submission to authority. In this sense, God is at the back of every State, binding men in conscience to observe the behests of the State within the sphere of its competence.

Civil Disobedience in other hand is the deliberate and public refusal to obey a law. Some persons use civil disobedience as a form of protests to attract attention to what they consider unjust or unconstitutional laws or policies. They hope their actions will move other people to correct the injustices. Other persons regard civil disobedience as a matter of individual religious or moral conviction. They refuse to obey laws that they believe violate their personal principles. Many lawbreakers do not hesitate to use violence. But most acts of civil disobedience are nonviolent. Civil disobedience is usually distinguished from riot, rebellion, revolution, and other types of violent opposition to law and authority (The World Book Encyclopedia, 466)

The stories of human governments and government leaders have been a weary story of power, pride, politics and problems for a prolonged period of time. Two thousand years ago, Jesus commented on the government officials of his days by saying: 'the kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors' (LK. 22:25). In other words, government leaders in his days used their positions of power to abuse, oppress and take advantage of those under their control. Publicly, they portrayed themselves as those who blessed and benefited their people, but in reality they were selfish and (morally) corrupt. This is an accurate description of the way many high government officials have acted down through history, and also of the way many government officials act in modern Africa (O'Donovan, 167).

Karl W. Deutsch asserts that, "every aspect of human behaviour is embedded in politics for politics is a characteristic of life (3). This becomes imperative because every aspect of basic needs in the society be it, health and the likes have direct bearing upon certain decisions being made by government (Davies, 65). Politics can be described as the process of administration of the affairs of a particular society or country by democratically elected candidates. It can also refer to how democratic leaders provide responsible governance for nations and countries. As

such, it is expected that all such elected individuals would be true representatives of the people and have legitimate authority to perform administrative (legislative, executive and judicial) functions. These leaders are expected to make and execute only laws that would protect the citizens' rights and improve upon the entire welfare of the society. Therefore, it can be considered reasonable to suggest that all citizens of a country or nation have the moral right to participate actively in the socio-economic and political affairs of their societies (Akintola, 88). Anthony A. Akinwale, observed that:

Politics, as envisioned and practiced today, is the art of attaining and maintaining power at all costs. Plato and Aristotle would have differed from such a notion of politics. For them, far from being the art of attaining and maintaining power at all costs, politics is the intelligent ordering of common life for the sake of common good. It is the organization of the state in view of the attainment of the good. By virtue of this noble objective of politics, it is wrong to describe politics as a dirty game. It is however correct to say that this objective, noble as it is, remains and will remain a mission impossible for as long as the morality of the citizens is not a preoccupation (119-120).

A State that is not an association of virtuous citizens is a failed state. The state does not exist for the passions of its leaders and the led. The state neither exists for the aversion nor desires of its citizens, nor for the political and financial fortunes of the politician. Instead, the activity of the politician must be dictated by the imperatives of morality which is the very reason for which the state has been created. The prosperity of the state depends on the morality of the state, and, since the state is an association of citizens, the morality of the state is itself dependent on the morality of its citizens. That is why the ethical project is the political project, and the political project is the ethical project (Akinwale, 120). Group morality develops from shared concepts and beliefs and is often codified to regulate behavior within a culture or community (Zubairu, 358). Chomsky opines that: If we adopt the principle of universality: if an action is right (or wrong) for others, it is right (or wrong) for us. Those who do not rise to the minimal moral level of applying to themselves the standards they apply to others- more stringent ones, in fact plainly cannot be taken seriously when they speak of appropriateness of response; or of right and wrong, good and evil. In fact, one of these elementary of moral principles is that of universality, that is, if something's right for me, it's right for you; if it's wrong for you, it's wrong for me.

God energizes and empowers people to take a moral decision when they are in dilemma or passing through some good or bad circumstances of life. The revelation of religious ethics has its place in the Biblical and Qur'anic concept of predestination. For example, the Bible reports stories about prophets whom God sent to his people from time to time about what is right or wrong. These prophets played the role of mediators of God's word and ethical injunctions to their respective societies. Ayantayo asserts that:

In concrete terms, the Bible emphasizes the importance of revelation on moral matter, especially as God interacted with individuals or groups of individuals as evident in Isaiah 56:1, which says my righteousness, is to be revealed. In Islam, revelation to all humanity is the point of reference for distinguishing

right from wrong. For example, the criterion (furgan: Surah 25) says “blessed is He who sent down the criterion of right and wrong, i.e. this Quran to his slave (Muhammad) that he may be a Warning to the mankind and spirit (Surah 25:1). In other words, God (Allah) reveals to mankind what constitutes desirable and undesirable actions. Therefore, God bestows on every person what is known as conscience, which reveals to him/her what is right or wrong action. In Yoruba orature, the conscience is known as “*Ifa Aya*,” which is the oracle of heart. Man is a conscientious being; his conscience reveals to him what decision to make or the course of action to take.(25-6).

To crown it all Chiroma opines democratic citizens do not infringe on other’s rights to freedom of expression and being. In other words, they do not coerce others into agreeing with them. They are willing to work alongside others without having to be forced to do so. And they communicate their beliefs in language that is readily understood by other members of the community (73).

Politics and Religion in Nigeria

Nigeria is a country where religion thrives in the form of Christianity, Islam and African indigenous religion; both the government and the governed claim to be an adherent of one religion and the other. Since most public officers claim to be either Muslims or Christianity they usually sworn with the Holy Quran or the Holy Bible as they subscribe to the Oaths of Office and Allegiance. In view of this, it is expected that the public officers and political office holders will be guided by a high ethical conduct and prudence in the management of state affairs (Sarafa, 242).

Politics and religion are two significant aspects of Nigerian society and culture. Both have played significant roles in shaping the country's history and continue to influence its political and social landscape. In Nigeria, religion is a major factor in shaping individual and collective identity. The country is home to a diverse array of religious beliefs, with the majority of the population adhering to either Islam or Christianity. These two religions have a long history in the country and have often intersected with political and social issues. Abogunrin opines that religion and politics are two inseparable institutions in the human social psyche and structure. He equally asserts that earthly governments are mere agents of God’s theocratic governance of the physical and the spiritual world (118). Afolabi, while corroborating Abogunrin observes that “Political power affects economic prosperity, social relation, educational advancement, and the psyche of the society” (43).

There is an incontrovertible connection between religion and politics. While the actual role that religion plays in politics has remained debatable, the nexus between the two concepts has been established for long. Religion does not make people good or bad. On the contrary, it is being used as an instrument of oppression and deceit in Nigeria (Afolabi, 42). A major interest in the Nigerian polity is the relationship between religion and politics. The Nigerian society is religiously pluralized and this significantly influences political decisions and policies of the nation. On the other hand, there are people who hold the strong opinion that this relationship should not be stressed and that religion and politics should be allowed to operate separately

without one interfering with the other (Zubairu & Audu, 89). In his own contribution Sarafa asserts that:

Nigeria, undoubtedly, has paraded at all levels of governance corrigible, avarice, kleptomaniac and non-responsive leadership since her political independence in 1960 (sic). All these are reasons, not only for failure of governance but also evidence that Nigeria is a morally bankrupt society'' citing Omoregbe who raised a fundamental question that is yet to be satisfactorily answered- How come we have those three things: religious devotion, moral corruption and bad governments simultaneously in Africa? The pervasiveness of religion in Nigeria's national political life has made some scholars to argue that religion has subsumed and subordinated other primordial and class contradictions. Therefore, rather than been a socio-political asset, religion has become a millstone, a potential source of conflicts and instabilities (242).

The Pervasiveness of religion in Nigeria's national political life has made some scholars to argue rather than been a socio-political asset; religion has become a millstone, a potential source of conflicts and instabilities. Political actors have turned religious terrain into battle grounds for contesting perceived marginalisation and to gain political recognition, ascendance and support from their communities but never as instrument of service. The politicisation of religion for group and individual gain has been a careful and calculated means of survival for some opportunistic politically ambitious elite (Sarafa, 242). Religion, ought to therefore, bind people together and supply the means through which their lives can be lived with truth and purpose. Religions, therefore, have achieved a great deal. That is why they are so dangerous. People will die (and kill) for their religion. That is why religions are involved in most of the bloody and intransigent disputes around us (Bowker,8-10). Anthony equally said that "Religion can be both an integrative and divisive factor in any society. When the divisive elements of religion are not properly handled and brought under strict control, they create tensions and unrest in a society" (15). Often, these manifest themselves in form of religious riots and intolerance which have always been very disastrous, involving loss of many lives, destruction of many valuable properties. However, in Nigeria, the government and her citizens are yet to accept fully both in theory and practice the stark realities of pluralism of religious beliefs and practices. The waves of religious crises and violence in recent and present times seem to confirm this observation. They spill over the political, economic and social spheres of the country's machinery (Ekwue,40). Usually, there are three ways in which religion can influence politics, namely, by the direct involvement of religious men in politics, by fusing the two (religion and politics) as one and by subjecting politics or government to the doctrine or laws of religion, thereby carrying out politics or governance along the line of religious doctrine, ideals or laws (Omoregbe, 309). All these are obvious in Nigerian politics and this makes religion and politics inseparable.

The Islam and the use of Hijab

Islam is a monotheistic religion founded in the 7th century by the prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.) It is the second-largest religion in the world, with over 1.8 billion followers. Islam teaches that there is only one God (Allah in Arabic) and that Muhammed (S.A.W) is his prophet. Muslims believe that the teachings of Islam, as revealed to Prophet Muhammed in the Quran, provide guidance for how to live a good and meaningful life in accordance with

the will of God. *Hijab* is an Arabic (حجاب) word meaning barrier or partition. In Islam, however, it has a broader meaning, generally refers to head coverings worn by Muslim women (Juergensmeyer, 516). It is the principle of modesty and includes behavior as well as dress for both males and females. A Muslim woman must be covered from neck to ankle, including her arms up to her wrists. Her hair must also be covered. The cloths must be very loose fitting. Islam has introduced *hijab* as essential for decency and modesty in interaction between members of the opposite sex (Abdul-Haliq, 31).

Wearing hijab and other garments—such as the *niqab*, *chador*, or *burka*—is often mistaken as required Islamic convention. Yet the practice of so-called veiling is not one of the five pillars of Islam, and both the Qur'an (the holy book of Islam) and Hadith (the traditions or sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) are somewhat ambiguous on proper attire. There is consensus among Muslim scholars that both women and men should dress modestly, but they continue to debate the extent of women's covering and whether it includes the head, face, or entire body. Some advocate the practice of so-called veiling, while others argue that the Sharia—Islamic law—requires nothing more than conservative clothing. Indeed, whether a woman wears hijab depends on interpretations of Islamic law, geographic location, civil law, and personal choice. The practice of veiling long preceded the rise of Islam in the 7th century, and it continues to be observed by some Christians and Jews the 21st century. Islam thus did not invent the convention of veiling but probably incorporated local customs as it spreads throughout the Arabian Peninsula and to Southeastern Asia, Northern Africa, and Southern Europe over the centuries. As a result, many women wear hijab and other forms of veiling because of tradition. Some women are required by law to wear hijab, as is the case in Iran since the Islamic Revolution (1978–79). Moreover, a woman may veil depending on the circumstances. She may or may not wear hijab if she is at home, at work, running errands, or attending a social event. The practice of veiling thus is not simply a religious custom but is sometimes a civil requirement or a personal and cultural choice.

Hijab Crisis in Kwara Schools and the Christian Response

German sociologist and economic theorist, Karl Marx was absolutely right when he said that religion is the opium of the people. At least we have seen how individuals who thrive in crisis have, with religion as weapon, created rifts between otherwise united peoples in Nigeria as well as all over the world. The ongoing hijab crisis in schools in Kwara State, is ill-timed and in fact, the least of issues that the State should lose sleep over at the moment. Nigeria's unity is at the brink with religious bigotry, agitations for secession springing up from several ethnic groups, etc, and so, does not need the current hijab crisis which could snowball into a more catastrophic situation if poorly handled (Prisca Sam-Duru np). Uprising over the freedom to wear hijab, or not, is ugly enough in a modern society. But having schoolchildren endlessly embroiled in such inanities to the point of shutting down schools is uglier and disgraceful.

As it is currently the case in Kwara State, the unsavory development makes a mockery of both education and the core virtue of tolerance that religion preaches. Clearly, stakeholders in Kwara should be clear-headed in their choices and play less politics with children and their education. Just when the country thought it had heard the last of the hijab crisis in Kwara schools, another bloody conflict broke at Oyun Baptist High School (OBHS), Ijagbo. According to reports, the school allegedly turned back some female Muslim students over their refusal

to remove their hijab on Monday, January 17, 2022. The action elicited another rivalry between Muslim society and the leadership of the Kwara State chapter of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). Apparently displeased by the turn of events, some parents and their wards decided to go fisticuffs, creating a bizarre scene in which one person was killed and several others injured. The government and police waded in and shut down the school to avoid more casualties (Guardian Editorial Board).

The earliest schools (and hospitals) in the area according to an indigene of the state, Farooq Kperogi, were established not by the government but by American Southern Baptist Christian missionaries who first appeared in his hometown in 1948 (Prisca Sam-Duru) "No doubt, the schools were started by missionaries in Kwara State but in 1974, Yakubu Gowon's government passed a decree taking over all the schools in the country, so, the missionaries therefore lost schools to states. Kwara State took over the schools but out of sentiment, did not change the names of the schools like most other states did. So when the Hijab issue came up in some states, the Kwara State Government went to court and it was ruled that the students who wish to wear the hijab, could do so. Any private school can have their own uniform and insist on what their students must wear but female students in government school can wear their hijab, that's what the court said", Governor Abdulrasak Abdulrahman who said he had the privilege of attending some of these schools said his father's Muslim school was also taken over by the government. To ensure a peaceful resolve of the issue, Governor Abdul Razaq who was said to have spoken with CAN, told the organization that they should know better now that the schools are no longer Christian schools, He noted that he has nothing against Christians, but that the state is only obeying the court's ruling. It's also important to state that the schools are no longer owned by the missionaries although they retained their names.

The Christian response to the use of hijab, was straight forward and sharp. In his report on the Cable News, **Abdulganiyu Abdulrahman Akanbi cited a Telephone conversation with** Olawuyi James, a senior pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Ilorin, and a member of the Kwara chapter of CAN, on the Christian response on the use of Hijab in Christian Schools, thus:

"We are not objecting to Muslims using their hijab in full government schools, but not in Christian schools. There would continue to be resistance and civil disobedience by the Christians because we also have our fundamental rights and faith that we will not compromise," he said. "This is not just about fundamental rights of women. You can't talk about fundamental rights of a Muslim in a Christian school but you're not considering that same thing as fundamental rights for a Christian in a Muslim school. "They (the government) are only talking about hijab and Muslim practice in Christian schools; they are not talking about Christian practices in Muslim schools (np).

Meanwhile, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) has said that Kwara State Governor, Abdul Rahman Abdul Razaq, should be "held responsible if the crisis over hijab wearing in schools degenerates." The umbrella Christian body said this while reacting to the alleged vandalisation of churches and mission schools by hoodlums who were reportedly enforcing the policy in the State. In a statement CAN's General Secretary Barr. Joseph Daramola called

on the Federal Government and the Inspector General of Police to intervene in the ongoing violence. Blaming the governor for the Hijab crisis, Daramola explained that it was his pronouncement on the Hijab controversy, reportedly made in violation of a court directive for the status quo to be maintained until the matter was resolved by the judiciary that led to the trouble. He said, "The Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) today calls on the Federal Government and the Inspector General of Police to intervene in the ongoing violence over the hijab policy that has led to violence and bloodletting in Kwara State. "We learnt that the State government has ordered the reopening of the closed schools without resolving the crisis and consequently, churches and mission schools are being vandalized with impunity by the hoodlums banking on the state government's support in the pretext of enforcing the policy. Some innocent Christians are being violently abused and attacked under the watch of the Governor who is playing ostrich (Luminous, np).

The exegetical Analysis and Explanation of the Romans 13:1-7

It is the New Testament's clear teaching that the Christians have an obligation toward the state (Eckman, 51). Paul writes to the Christians in Rome, the capital of the Roman Empire, about their relationship to the government. This issue is important because we sometimes tend to think that since we are Christians, and therefore belong to the kingdom of God, we have nothing to do with civil authority. The Christians in Rome may have felt the same way; after all, Christ had been crucified by Roman authorities, and believers were often accused and persecuted by civil authorities. In spite of this, Paul insists that believers must submit to the governing authorities (Tokunboh, 1370). Rome was the imperial capital, the seat of the empire's civil government. As residents in Rome, Paul's initial readers were aware of both the glory and the shame of that city in the days of Nero, who reigned from A.D. 54 – 68. But they were also citizen of Christ's kingdom (Phil. 3:20; Col. 1:13). Appropriately, therefore, Paul discussed a Christian's relationship to his government and civil rulers. Both in its length and specific details this discussion is the key New Testament passage on the subject (cf. 1 Timothy 2:1-4; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-17) (Walvoord&Zuck, 490).

Rom 13:1 The apostle's basic exhortation is Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἐξουσίαις ὑπερέχουσιν ὑποτασσέσθω. οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἐξουσία εἰ μὴ ὑπὸ θεοῦ, αἱ δὲ οὐσαι ὑπὸ θεοῦ τεταγμέναι εἰσὶν (Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.). The rationale for this basic exhortation is clear; political authority is from God. Here Paul enunciates no new principle; on the contrary, it was one which was familiar in Jewish wisdom. More to the point, it was a principle to which prophet and apocalypticist clung to when confronted by the overwhelming might of a Nebuchadnezzar. In Daniel's repeated declaration, "The Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will" (Daniel 4:17, 25, 32). Such assertions must have been particularly meaningful for Jews living in the diaspora, as aliens living under a foreign power, and often as slaves and dispossessed. The only God recognize by the Jews in their own God. All rules and authorities must have come from that one God, their God. The comfort of such a belief was not that it made them any less vulnerable to the whims of such rulers-the Maccaben crisis had been proof enough of that. The comfort was rather that such rulers were by definition responsible before God, and so were under the constraint of God's final judgment. That particularly Jewish belief would, of course, have little impact on the rulers themselves, but at least it gave their oppressed Jewish subjects the assurance that rulers who flouted their responsibility before

God would come under his judgment sooner or later-as Nebuchadnezzar had found to his cost in the Daniel story (4:13-25; 5:20-21). So, too, the whole point of the assertion of Wisdom of Solomon that kings receive their dominion from the Lord was to warn them that the Most High would inflict severe judgment on those who “did not rule rightly, nor keep the law, nor walk according to the purpose of God” (6:4) (Dunn, 1988: 770).

Rom 13:2 ὥστε ὁ ἀντιτασσόμενος τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τῇ τοῦ θεοῦ διαταγῇ ἀνθέστηκεν, “So then, he who opposes the authority has resisted the ordinance of God.” The clear implication is of a state of affairs, a structure of society that cannot be changed, so that resistance is not only against God’s ordering of society, but wasteful of time and energy. οἱ δὲ ἀνθεστηκότες ἑαυτοῖς κρίμα λήμψονται. “And they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.” The perfect participle indicates a determined and established policy: “those who have set themselves to resist.” The words are directed more against anarchy than single-issue protest (Dunn, 762). It is important to note that this submission does not mean that we must blindly obey an order from the state that is evil or goes against Christ’s command to love our neighbors. While the citizen is to obey the authorities, those authorities must also obey God. Thus, if they stop rewarding good and punishing evil, and, instead, order the opposite they lose the moral right to expect obedience (Tokunboh, 1372). Those who believe in Christ give themselves to others in self-sacrificing love. Indeed, this is the new group act of worship that fulfills the old group acts of sacrifice (12:1–21). Believers in Christ are to be obedient to civil authorities (13:1–7), to follow the core of the Torah by loving others as themselves (13:8–10), to lead moral, upright lives in view of their coming salvation (13:11–14), and to refrain from passing judgment or doing things that offend others (14:1–15:6) (Ehrman, 265).

Rom 13:3-5 οἱ γὰρ ἄρχοντες οὐκ εἰσὶν φόβος τῷ ἀγαθῷ ἔργῳ ἀλλὰ τῷ κακῷ for rulers are not causes of fear for good behavior, but for evil. θέλεις δὲ μὴ φοβεῖσθαι τὴν ἐξουσίαν· do you want to be without fear of the authority? τὸ ἀγαθὸν ποιεῖ, καὶ ἔξεις ἔπαινον ἐξ αὐτῆς· Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same; 4. θεοῦ γὰρ διάκονός ἐστιν σοὶ εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν. For it is a minister of God to you for good. ἐὰν δὲ τὸ κακὸν ποιῆς, φοβοῦ· οὐ γὰρ εἰκὴ τὴν μάχαιραν φορεῖ· θεοῦ γὰρ διάκονός ἐστιν ἐκδικτικὸς εἰς ὀργὴν τῷ τὸ κακὸν πράσσοντι. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil. 5. διὸ ἀνάγκη ὑποτάσσεσθαι, Wherefore it is necessary to be in subjection, οὐ μόνον διὰ τὴν ὀργὴν ἀλλὰ καὶ διὰ τὴν συνείδησιν not only because of wrath, but also for conscience ' sake). From the above verses the logic of this basic statement of Jewish wisdom is pressed home in what might be termed a theology of the orderly state, of good government. The principle is simple and would have commanded wide assent: regularity in nature and orderliness in society is something provided for by nature and commanded by divine reason; a society needs constraints in order to ensure “the good”; and it is one of the chief roles of a ruler that he is responsible for administering such constraints, for commending the “good” and punishing the “bad” (vv 3-4) (Dunn, 771).

In theological terms, the corollary of asserting that God gives dominion to kings and rulers is that he does so for the good of his creatures. In the matter of exercising political authority, rulers are “servants of God.” Their power is not their own; it comes from God. To resist them, therefore, in the exercise of their God-given responsibility is to resist God and so to incur his

judgment and wrath (vv 4-5). Hence Paul can even say that submission to political authority should be motivated not simply by fear of retribution but by concern for a good conscience—not simply a matter of accepting the harsh realities which cannot be changed, but a matter of theological principle. Such orderliness is part of the creative purpose of God. To cooperate in and submit to its working is all of piece with the creature’s acknowledgment of the creator (771). No wonder, Akinwale postulates that the quest for God and the quest for the good governance of the state can and should go together (117).

However, it should be noted here too that this is not a specifically Christian line of reasoning. There is no implication here that Christ has overcome the “authorities” or anything like that. The argument does not depend on the assumption that a new state of affairs exists by virtues of Christ’s ministry. These are rather the conditions under which the people of God have operated for centuries. Indeed, since the theology of good government applied also to the Jewish state during its years of independence (as in 2 Samuel 12:8), it can be said that this is the condition under which the people of God always exists. In other words, the argument is theological, not Christological; it is expressed in terms of the normal circumstances of social order, not in terms of salvation-history. Nor is it particularly eschatological, as indicating a state of affairs which is temporary and from which the people of God will soon be delivered. It is always will, but given a crucially theological and moral dimension by repeating the Jewish affirmation that God has so ordered it for the good of humankind in society and with the corollary that both ruler and ruled are responsible to God in consequence (Dunn, 772).

Rom 13:6-7 *διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ καὶ φόρους τελεῖτε*, “for that is why you also pay tribute.” This is evidently the climax of the discussion and not just an illustration or third argument. It was not simply that taxation is the point at which the power of the state most rudely impinges on daily life (as then, so now). Nor was it simply that taxes and tax collectors were a constant source of injustice and embitterment. Paul must have been aware that the subject was a particular sensitive matter in Rome itself. *Λειτουργοὶ γὰρ θεοῦ εἰσιν εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο προσκαρτεροῦντες*, “for they are ministers of God engaged in this very task.” Despite the strong cultic background of the verb *λειτουργέω* and of the noun *λειτουργία* in the LXX (both technical terms for the priestly cult), it is generally agreed that the context here is that of the secular technical usage in Hellenistic society, where *λειτουργίην* and *λειτουργία* refer to the rendering of public services to the body politic, of the community. With *λειτουργός* itself the case is even stronger more or less equivalent to “public servant.” In the present context where the obligations of good citizenship are at the heart of Paul’s parenthesis, this is most naturally the sense which stands at the forefront of Paul’s mind. 7. **Ἀπόδοτε πᾶσιν τὰς ὀφειλάς**, “render to everyone their dues.” *ὀφειλάς* occurs elsewhere in the New Testament only in Matthew 18:32 and 1 Corinthians 7:3. Such a sweeping injunction indicates not only the moral recognition that obligations should be paid (or repaid), but also the attitude of the social inferior or powerless minority who are only too aware that an obligation not honored can quickly become an occasion for scrutiny or retribution on the part of a suspicious or watchful officialdom. *τῷ τὸν φόρον τὸν φόρον, τῷ τὸ τέλος τὸ τέλος*, “tribute to whom tribute is due, tax to whom tax is due.” *τῷ τὸν φόβον τὸν φόβον, τῷ τὴν τιμὴν τὴν τιμὴν*, “fear to whom fear is due, respect to whom respect is due.” A distinction between “fear” and (the weaker) “respect, honor” may be intended, as 1 Peter 2:17 (“fear God; honor the emperor”) (Dunn, 766-768).

A Christian's responsibility to civil authorities involves more than obedience. It also includes support by paying taxes (cf. Matthew 22:21). This is because the leaders, as God's servants (cf. Romans 14:4), are supposed to give their full time to governing and need support through taxes from citizens, Christians included. So a Christian ought to give everyone what he owes him (repay everyone his due), whether substance (taxes and revenue) or respect and honor (Walvoord & Zuck 490). It is the New Testament's clear teaching that the Christian does have an obligation towards the state. This is the central point of Jesus' teaching in Mark 12:13-17, where, when questioned about paying taxes to Rome, he answers that we "render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." we owe obligation obviously to God and His Kingdom but also to the state because he (God) created it and it serves His Purpose (Colson, 109).

Conclusion

It is important to remember that Christians are called to love and respect all people, regardless of their religious beliefs or cultural practices. This includes being sensitive and understanding towards the beliefs and practices of others, while also being able to openly express and live out one's own beliefs. Christians can approach the issue of hijab by seeking to understand the motivations behind its use and engaging in respectful dialogue with those who choose to wear it. It is also important to recognize that the decision to wear hijab is a personal one, and Christians should not seek to impose their beliefs or practices on others and the same also goes for Islam. Bird opines that, the ethics of Christians should benefit the fabric of society (70), and believers should submit themselves to governing authorities. Government authority is appointed by God, preserves order, and thwarts lawlessness. For this reason, believers pay their taxes and show respect for political leaders (Brand et' al, 1414).

The believers owes the state, its agents, and its duly enacted laws obedience (Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13-17; Romans 13:1-7). The New Testament mandate is neither slavish nor absolute; we see Peter and John defying the Sanhedrin's order to stop preaching, the issue apparently to them was clear: We obey the state until it is a sin to obey the state. Here civil disobedience was not merely permitted by God's Spirit; it was demanded (Acts 4:19ff; 5:29). If the Government therefore commands something that God forbids or forbids something that God commands, we must disobey, that disobedience cannot involve violence nor vandalism, actions that contradict prudence and civil order (Eckman, 52).

Thus, disobedience should never be taken lightly or with undue haste. Christians do have a higher law than that of human government. But God gives human governments in the main his seal of approval and disobedience to them should be considered with great caution. Eckman citing Lynn Buzzard offers seven questions that believer should ask when facing the possibility of disobedience to the state:

1. How directly and immediately does the opposed government policy contradict an unequivocal biblical teaching?
2. What is the counsel of the Christian community about this policy? Where do godly leaders rank it among threats to the faith that must be addressed? What do they say about what the faithful person's response ought to be? To what extent have legal, alternative protests been exhausted?

3. What harms to society and order are likely to result from the considered act of civil disobedience and how do these harms compare with the desired benefits?
4. Will the form of civil disobedience be one which will evidence moral consistency and further proper respect for principled law and moral society?
5. To what extent will the “witness” be heard and understood by the public and by government authorities?
6. To what extent are the acts central to maintaining my integrity as a person? To what extent may they reflect personal frustration and anger rather than a principled response?
7. To what extent does the idea for the act of civil disobedience issue from thought-source alien to a biblical worldview? Is it based upon biblical principles about the uses of power and coercion, the witness of the cross, and the sovereignty of God, or is it based upon purely naturalistic, humanistic principles? (Eckman cit. Buzzard, 19-25).

The believer must pray for those in authority (1Timothy 2:1ff). Such praying for civil authorities is an essential part of the debt owed, whether the official is pagan or Christian, religiously indifferent or anti-religious, just or unjust. God can use praying to effect righteousness in the state’s laws or in bringing an unbelieving governmental official to Jesus Christ. Constructive criticism and calling the state to accountability need to be balanced with fervent, persevering prayer. Christians walk a careful balance between understanding the Christian obligation toward the state and seeking to influence that state for righteousness and justice. The two spheres of the Christian’s life-the church and the state must be kept in balance. Each has a divine job to do; neither encroach upon the responsibility of the other (Eckman, 56).

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