

[a] Authority relationships between people and officers

Hebrews 13:7, 17 -- "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. . . . Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you."

[b] Responsibility of officers to carry out the threefold function of church government:

To preach and teach God's Word
 To conduct worship, including the ordinances
 To exercise church discipline

[c] The limits of church power are given in Scripture

[3] Authority relationships in the state

[a] Authority relationships between people and rulers

I Peter 2:13-15 -- "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men."

Romans 13:1-5 -- "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. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he 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."

[b] Since civil magistrates are ordained by God, resistance to them is resistance to God. Obedience is a matter of good conscience.

[c] The power of the state, since it is given by God, must be limited by God's Law. Thus in a decision whether to obey civil rulers (and disobey a clear command of God), or to obey God's clear commands (and disobey civil rulers), the people must obey God.

(6) The Sixth Commandment

Exodus 20:13 -- "You shall not murder."

Encyclopedia Judaica in its article on the Decalogue states: