

**General Topics :: Here's a legitimate case where I would ignore the government****Here's a legitimate case where I would ignore the government - posted by learjet, on: 2011/1/14 13:04**

I'm definitely not a anti-government type of person but I believe that this is a case where the Word tells us to ignore the law:

"City puts a stop to homeless outreach

Couple must have proper permit to continue feeding dozens each day

Bobby and Amanda Herring spent more than a year providing food to homeless people in downtown Houston every day. They fed them, left behind no trash and doled out warm meals peacefully without a single crime being committed, Bobby Herring said."

More here: <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/metropolitan/7381016.html>

Re: Here's a legitimate case where I would ignore the government - posted by ccchhrrriiiss (), on: 2011/1/14 13:32

I think that this is certainly a case where you could argue that you are following a FEDERAL law (the First Amendment's guarantee for religious freedom) that supersedes a lower law (in this case, a CITY policy).

Many people forget that America is made up of laws on different levels. There are federal laws, state laws, county laws, city laws, special district laws, etc... A lower law (anything below the federal) cannot contradict federal laws or protections.

If this couple were to sue the city, they could win due to the federal protection for their First Amendment constitutional right regarding religious expression.

Of course, there are underlying reasons behind public requirements for a permit.

A college might require a street preacher to have a visitor's permit only because they are trying to protect their students. A city might require a permit because of potential lawsuits. Remember, if a person were to get sick from the food that is being provided, a person could sue.

This couple wasn't just feeding a few homeless folks each night. They were feeding 60-120 people per night. This is, in effect, a non-profit restaurant. I don't know how difficult that it might be to obtain a permit, but it probably isn't difficult at all. It would probably be very easy to obtain a permit and continue their nightly endeavors.

Otherwise, they could always "appeal unto Caesar," err, a higher court.

Re: Here's a legitimate case where I would ignore the government - posted by learn (), on: 2011/1/14 17:35

I believe you are wrong in this case and here's why.

Actually the city has a very valid point. If food poisoning, deaths due to food poison were to occur or some other mishap were to occur, the city and perhaps the various parties who provided the food could get sued and will likely be found guilty. Just because it has not happened for the last year doesn't mean that it won't occur. It takes just 1 or 2 incidents and the whole thing can blow up. The city is protecting itself, the parties who generously provided the food and also the homeless people. The bad part is that it also deprives the homeless people of food.

What we should do in this circumstance is put our request to God, pray about it. Pray that God will make a way in which easier, cheaper permits or some other alternatives can be found etc. This may pave the way to a better solution for other parties who are interested to be involved. Bigger corporations etc may then be interested in being involved as they do not have to worry about being sued if there is food poisoning etc.

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Think about it. God may have bigger plans to get more food to feed a larger group. Cafes/Bakeries etc may not want to get involved if they could potentially be sued. But if they are protected by the law/permit, this may encourage them to be involved in donating their day's left overs. That's why a 'company' that has been acknowledged as a non-profit organization by the government tends to have more donations to one that has not have the status (assuming all else is the same).

Also, another point to bring up--each of us are going to have different opinions/views. Heck, we even interpret the bible differently. So, what happens if someone views another law as wrong and decide to go against it, another person decides another thing and so on. The world will be in greater chaos. That's why God ask us to obey the government. This is not the case where the government persecutes Christians which may then require us to go against the law as God's law take s 1st priority. This is a case, where a solution most likely can be worked out and I don't see anything at this point where it's against God's law. It just needs time and perseverance and maybe pave the way for better things.

Don't be hasty in one's decision--bring up your request to God and ask God to work a beautiful thing out of this adversity

Re: - posted by learjet, on: 2011/1/14 19:49

Quote:
-----This may pave the way to a better solution for other parties who are interested to be involved. Bigger corporations etc may then be interested in being involved as they do not have to worry about being sued if there is food poisoning etc.

I hear you learn and thanks for your post, and I was thinking along these lines after I posted this, it's reasonable. The likely outcome will be what you posted here, I lived in Houston and I can guarantee that the people there will respond in a positive manner.

However, I thought more about this and I still maintain my original opinion. Using the same reasoning we could justify not doing anything couldn't we? "Well there's a law against preaching the full council of God, because the Islamists were preaching hatred and inciting people to violence, that's reasonable, we should just be quiet and keep religion out of things". I'm using an extreme example that no true believer would submit to to make the point. If we don't stand up for what is the right thing to do, we will keep on this very slippery slope. Sin is reasonable, Eve looked at the apple, accepted the devils reasoning, and we are still dealing with the effects of it to this very day:

Quote:
-----When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. -Genesis 3:6

There has to be a line that we will not let the enemy cross, if I can reason away not feeding the hungry then I can reason away anything.

Here's another law that makes this one look even more ludicrous. Nearly every state in the union has a "Good Samaritan law" which basically protects a person who might have been the first on an accident scene and rendered aid to a victim (first aid, etc.), this protects the 'Good Samaritan' from lawsuits. In other words the injured person cannot come back on the person who acted in good faith to help them in a time of need. Now, if a person can render first aid in good faith, can he not give a person a sandwich to a hungry person in good faith?

On the flip side I think this tiny bit of persecution will bring churches together to organize a better thing though, I'm in total agreement with you there.

Please understand that I'm not trying in any way to be argumentative, just offering my second thoughts (seriously).

You my brothers and sisters are forcing me to get better at writing! It's hard to get my heart across in words but I'm taking the time to edit and reread what I'm writing to make sure that what I say is getting across in the spirit in which it was written. This is a good thing!

Thank you for listening!

In the Love of Christ,
Earl J.

Re: - posted by Lesserlight, on: 2011/1/14 21:46

This could be successfully argued because the preamble to the Texas State Constitution recognize the state of Texas as being under God. Therefore all of their laws must be subject to the laws of God or the state can be forced to either retract their recognition of the sovereignty of God..... or the permit law that denies this couple their right under God to feed the poor is against the state constitution

On the other hand it would be much easier for the couple to just take out a faith based permit that would give them legal status as a church..... there is a federal filing fee for this but somebody would probably step up to the plate and cover this

Personally I find that a church having to be legally recognized is repugnant and is paving the way for what someday will or will not become "state approved doctrine"

Blessings

Doug

Re: - posted by learn (), on: 2011/1/15 8:13

Yes, there has to be a line that we will not cross. The thing is each person (including genuine Christians) have various opinions and lines which they would not cross. There are some lines that all genuine Christians will not cross however--and that is denying Jesus. So the thing is, that line which you will not cross will be different from another. What makes you think that your line is the right one. The other person may feel that his line is right and yours wrong.

You said that if you can reason away not feeding the hungry, then you can reason away anything. Well, that's your view point and it may be incorrect base on this particular case. Others may not necessarily feel the same way as you do. For others, it may be other things. Eg: killing somebody in war. If they can justify killing in war, then they can reason away anything. Isn't killing someone even more dangerous than not feeding the hungry. Yet, you will find genuine Christians and pastors that believe killing in war is ok and they may very well be right.

You mentioned that 'using the same reasoning we could justify not doing anything couldn't we?' This argument works both ways. If using the same reasoning, we can justify doing anything too. And most professed Christians are false and even those that are genuine, they do sin--so what's to prevent them to take matters into their own hands against the law and using the argument that if they don't do what they believe is right by God, then they aren't doing anything--most of their actions are likely to be wrong and displeasing to God although in their minds its right. But hey, they can do many things with the reasons that you have used. Governments are far from perfect (though its so much better in industrialised countries), but they are put there/allowed by God for a reason and God does ask us to pray and obey them. And if you see the reasoning of justifying your views--that's what is happening in some Arab countries when people use their religion to justify killing/stoning others of other faith too. Now, you will say that they are following the wrong religion--but bear in mind most Christians are not even genuine Christians and even those that are, interpret the bible differently. So the very things that are happening elsewhere can happen here too although in much less severity.

Your contention is with regards to the food issue, many others will have different views with much worse consequences. It can get very ugly and there are pockets/situations where horrible things have happened because of them taking matters into their own hands against the law.

With regards to the Good Samaritan Law, its always possible to see whether this can be used to help them partially in 'discussing with the city on providing food for the people/gettin faster easier permits etc'.

If the people who are feeding the hungry right now feel very strongly that that is what God ask them to do, then I'm sure they will get on their knees asking God to make a way for them and meanwhile while a way is being paved, how do they go about providing food for these people. These are the type of prayers that one can feel confident of that God will hear and answer if they know specifically God has asked them to do so.

We should not be using our flesh to decide this is how we react, rather we should ask God to help us and show us the way. Remember--its not us that decide what we should do, rather we ask God what we need to do and then we go about doing it. Many times we think we can do this and that and this is what we should do/believe but in reality its not what God wants us to do.

Keith Daniels (I think its him) once shared the story where he felt that God asked him to preach to the people in the subway. Well, he did and he was promptly thrown out. Hurt, he asked God why did this happen. God's answer was that he didn't ask him to do so. Similarly, going against the government on this---is this something that God specifically in this situation ask you/the couple etc to do so or is it just our flesh wanting to take action. If its not God wanting the couple to do so, then the couple and others most likely will end up in jail. Then what happens--who is going to feed the homeless in the long run. This is something that is not impossible to work out--its just whether we are going to run with our flesh on this or are we going to let God work this out in his time.

Why don't we end this with a prayer instead.

Lord, your servants have been feeding the homeless and sharing the gospel with them. But now they are unable to do so. Will you make a way for them to be able to do so. Will you teach them how they should go about it in a manner that is pleasing to you and soften the hearts of the city. While this is being worked out, Lord, guide them and give them peace and hope on how they should handle those that are not getting the food now. Perhaps a temporary solution can be found. We do not know the answers to these questions Lord, only you know and we know that you care for the homeless, the hungry. We pray that you will use this adversity for your glory and that lives will turn to you. We believe that you allow challenges and difficulties and you use them to mold us and to conform us to your Son, Jesus. We believe that this setback is just temporary and there will be something more beautiful that will come out of it, no matter how long it takes or how dreary the path sometimes can be. We lift all this up to you and we give you praise. We pray all this in Jesus's most precious name. Amen.

Edit to add: Saw lesserlight's post. Maybe this can be used as another bargaining tool to soften the city's heart for it easier to get a permit/feed the poor etc. Working with the government for a solution on this, I believe is not impossible. No government wants to look uncaring especially on matters like this especially when it can raise the ire of the people.

God caused the prison warden to look favourably on Joseph. Similarly God caused the official to show favour and sympathy to Daniel which allow Daniel and his friends not to defile themselves with certain food. May God do likewise for the couple and those feeding the hungry.

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2011/1/15 10:41

I did not read all of the posts on this thread, so perhaps someone else wrote in detail about this thought.

Seems to me that once we allow the gov to tell us what we can or cannot do in regards to our obedience to the Holy Spirit, we are no longer submitting to God's authority in life. Peter said "we ought to obey God rather than men."

However, too many 'Christian' firebrands have taken this to the extreme. Too many people shout down their opponents which I suppose would even embarrass the LORD Jesus.

Can one not serve but still be courteous to their opponents? I do not see why not....

I have heard of people being arrested for preaching the WORD only to be thrown in jail. There they did not cease to

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preach and the end result was people came to the LORD! Their take on this was that this was the only way they could get there to reach these prisoners.

Quote:
-----We should not be using our flesh to decide this is how we react, rather we should ask God to help us and show us the way. Remember--its not us that decide what we should do, rather we ask God what we need to do and then we go about doing it. Many times we think we can do this and that and this is what we should do/believe but in reality its not what God wants us to do.

This demands a close walk with the LORD...how many are too busy going about serving and neglect this aspect of their spiritual life? The devil is delighted to keep one so busy, even in doing good if he can keep you away from your time with the LORD.

Challenges all, including me.

Re: - posted by learjet, on: 2011/1/15 14:47

Quote:
-----So the thing is, that line which you will not cross will be different from another. What makes you think that your line is the right one. The other person may feel that his line is right and yours wrong.

Precious Brother,

If you look at the top of this thread you will notice that it says 'I would', that's my conviction.

One thing that I have learned in my walk with the Lord is that people have a hard enough time walking in what God tells them to do let alone what the Lord would tell me to do.

The point of the thread is, here in the US 'reasonable people are making reasonable laws' that are going to hinder the work of the gospel. Reasonable people created a reasonable law that slavery was going to be ok in this country. Thanks be to God that Abraham Lincoln saw the wickedness in this oppression and used him to force change upon the South. He didn't pray for somebody to change things, he WAS the somebody.

Charles Finney was another man that WAS the somebody, at Oberlin College he told the administrators that he would not accept a position at their college unless they would allow blacks and women to be students. They agreed and Oberlin College was the first to accept minorities and women in the country.

These are my convictions, they may not be yours, I understand that. I'm not saying that God is 'with me' because of my convictions and not with you, we're not clones, we're called to different things but part of the same body. You could be an ear, and I could be a little toe but serving the same Lord.

Peace to you!

In Christ,
Earl J.

Re: - posted by learn (), on: 2011/1/15 15:38

I understand that this is your conviction and that there are people that change history like what you mention.

But bear in mind, unless its God specifically asking us to break the law on certain issues such as this, we don't do it. K.P . Yohannan ever mentioned that he receives well intentioned advise from people etc but he doesn't move until he hears from God.

God knows how to get through to us. For eg: he may put such a deep conviction/yearning in us that we will just do it despite the opposition. But its always important to check what our yearnings/convictions are and see whether they align with

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the bible and pray hard that this is really what he wants us to do and not our own desire.

I'm not angry/upset etc. But I do hope that you realize through my posts in this thread that its important to ask God first what does he want me to do in situations like this. (I know that if I was the one doing this feeding and facing this, the first thing I would do is pray to God asking him what I should do etc. And knowing that he is the one that will change and decide the situation. I'm merely the vessel that he choses to do it through.)

Re: , on: 2011/1/15 22:06

some of the responses on this thread, are like a nail thru my heart. and a textbook example of cold hearts.

this dear couple, wanting nothing other than to demonstrate the love of Christ by a simple food outreach to the homeless, and when the authorities get tipped off by the devil, such couple is criminalized.

within six months of Jesus taking mercy on me, He spoke to me and said "feed my sheep, those who do not have food"..when i would speak with Him on my knees...so i began...in my small community, there were two classes of homeless, who lived in the dry creekbed....white boys, ex-hippies in their 50's and 60's. yoked up by alcohol and drugs..ten of them..and the second class, Latino day laborer's, about 40, half of whom might get work in the day...the rest went hungry.....for the white boys, i had resource to boxes of food, canned goods, crackers, breakfast bars for their campsites.....for the Latino's, once a week i would make 24 huge burritos, rice, beans and meat...they were good, and i'd stock bi-lingual Bibles to those so hungry....they thought i was some crazy white boy until i said "Jesus es Dios"..pointed to Heaven and then to the good food.

i said all that not to boast, but to say this...to stop me...the authorities, they'd have to lock me up...and thats when the fun would begin.....but it never happened.

Matthew 25 is a calling, you always feed a hungry person if you can...non-negotiable, because you're doing it for Jesus. all else is just words and cold hearted backslidden sin.

Re: Here's a legitimate case where I would ignore the government - posted by mguldner (), on: 2011/1/15 22:25

Woah now wait a minute, the government that is suppose to serve the people is stopping these people from FEEDING other HUMAN BEINGS? That is pretty ludacris! Can the government stop a charitable effort that is costing them nothing? Don't we have the freedom to distribute our wealth as we see fit? That just seems crazy to me. I most certainly would be arrested in this case.

Re: - posted by learn (), on: 2011/1/15 22:47

I'm not going to discuss/argue with you N4J as I rather walk away from arguements/discussions that are fruitless. This is base on what I've seen of your postings in this forum, not just in this thread.

Re: , on: 2011/1/15 23:01

walk away then "learn". fore if you really werent going to "discuss/argue" with me, you would have stilled your keyboard.....my heart is clean as the Lord is my Witness, because NO WHERE in my posting, did i think of you, "learn"...nor was my posting directed at YOU....nor did i quote you or reference any of your postings in this thread.

who knows, maybe you just got convicted, and as well you should because what you finished off your post with is "accusation":

Quote:

-----This is base on what I've seen of your postings in this forum, not just in this thread.

what is another name for satan?...the accuser....and you just did his work, because my post was in no way directed or even thought of towards you.

nice witness.