

# Individual Responsibility To God

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ROMANS 14:12 "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

Worship is "the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it."

Liberty is "the state of being exempt from the domination of others." Therefore true religious liberty is freedom from the domination of others, in his duty to his Creator. Since God created man, our first duty is to God.

MATTHEW 22:37,38 "Jesus said unto him, Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all they soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment."

Our first and foremost individual responsibility is to God. He made us. Therefore our first duty is to God. As God created us free - free to recognize this duty or to reject it. Therefore we have the statement of Holy Writ.

JOSHUA 24:15 "Choose you this day whom ye will serve." Our God wants only volunteers. He does not want conscripts. Our God will not accept pressured service. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Thus freedom is the gift of God. When man by sin separated himself from God he lost that freedom and became the slave of sin and Satan, sin's originator. But Christ came to restore to him that freedom.

JOHN 8:36 "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed."

Thus in the very nature of our God there can be no room for the domination of other individuals. This is solely in the hands of the Lord, our Maker. Christ gave clear instruction in His word.

MATTHEW 20:25 "The princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you."

This was spoken to Christians and church leaders. Is it not clear that in the Lord's plan there must be no exercise of authority? None at all. There can be no place for domination. Men love power. They love authority. We see it in politics. We see it in business and at times we see it in the church. "But" said Jesus to His followers "it shall not be so among you." Note it is "the princes of the Gentiles" that exercise authority and dominion. If this is seen in the church, is it not clear that those that exercise that authority are still "princes of the Gentiles" who do it? Christ's followers do not do it. "It shall not be so among you."

All history testifies to the truthfulness of Jesus' statement. From Nimrod to Nebuchadnezzar and from Nebuchadnezzar until today the aim of the Gentiles has been power, prestige, and ruler ship. "It shall not be so among you" declared Jesus. We see Christ's statement fulfilled in Joseph, Moses, Daniel, Paul, Wycliffe, Huss, Jerome, Militz, Wesley, Luther and many others who stood alone with their God. They were accountable to God and to Him alone.

## BABYLON

Babylon's empire embraced the civilized world. Nebuchadnezzar was king and absolute ruler of that great and golden empire. His authority was absolute. His word was power. It was the law. He assumed authority over the bodies and souls of all. He was king and he was ruler in religion and he would prove it.

DANIEL 3:4-6 All were assembled before the great glittering, golden image. All were to "fall down and worship" the golden image of Babylon. Here was the situation. The Lord God of Heaven had brought all nations into subjection to the king of Babylon. They were to "serve the king of Babylon". But there was a limit and God had set that limit and that limit was worship. Here a mere man, even the king must stop. The Creator makes it perfectly plain that God alone is to be worshipped. This is every persons' individual, personal responsibility.

#### MEDO--PERSIA.

The mighty monarchy of Babylon passed away and the power and empire of Medo-Persia followed. Here again we have an absolute monarchy. Again the word of the king was law, but with this difference. In Medo-Persia when once the word of the king had gone forth as law, that law could not be changed nor reversed even by the king himself. But God's truth again triumphs.

DANIEL 6:21,22 "Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live forever. My God hath sent his angel, and has shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocence was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt."

Here our God clearly demonstrated the perfect right of an individual in the matter of worship or religion. It demonstrates that no government should pass a law relating to religion. God has given to all created beings freedom in worship and with it individual responsibility before God alone.

#### THE CHRISTIAN ERA

ACTS 4:17-20 "But that it spread no further among the people, let us straightly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. 18 And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. 20 For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

How God regarded it, was the supreme question. Will it please God, was the apostles one question. So they went right ahead regardless of all that the religious council might say or do. Plainly in the view of the council such a course could mean only one thing, and that was that the followers of Jesus believed in individual freedom and independence.

ROMANS 14:5 "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."

Every person is entirely responsible for his worship and service to Christ and will be judged accordingly. We will be held accountable to God and to God alone.

MATTHEW 16:27 "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."

ROMANS 2:6 "Who will render to every man according to his deeds."

REVELATION 20:12 "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."

The Spirit of Prophecy confirms the Scriptures on this vital subject. Has carelessness caused you to overlook this plain but solemn truth? Notice carefully these plain statements:

### SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

"We must search the scriptures carefully with a heart open to the reception of light and the evidences of truth. We cannot trust the salvation of our souls to ministers, to idle 'traditions, to human authorities or to pretentions. We must know for ourselves what God has said." SDA Review, March 8, 1887.

"Every soul must look to God with contrition and humility, that He may guide and lead and bless. We must not trust to others to search the scriptures for us. Some of our leading brethren have frequently taken their position on the wrong side; and if God would send a message and wait for these older brethren to open the way for its advancement, it would never reach the people." Gospel Workers, page 303.

### THE SCRIPTURES MUST BE STUDIED FOR OURSELVES

"What can I say to arouse our people? I tell you not a few ministers who stand before the people to explain the scriptures are defiled." 5 Testimonies, page 78.

"Many will stand in our pulpits with the torch of false prophecy in their hands, kindled from the hellish torch of Satan." Testimonies to Ministers, page 409.

"Study the message that God has sent to His people for the last sixty years through the Spirit of Prophecy. Do not seek the counsel of men, but by earnest prayer seek the wisdom of God." Unpublished Manuscript Testimonies, page 395.

There will be a removal of the landmarks and an attempt to tear down the pillars of our faith." 3 Selected Messages, page 406.

### THE TRUTH OF GOD IS CERTAIN

It is as certain that we have the truth as that God lives, and Satan with all his arts and hellish power, cannot change the truth of God into a lie." Testimonies, Volume 4, page 595.

Says the apostle, 'the foundation of God stands sure'.

"The faith and feelings of men may change; but the truth of God, never. The third angel's message is sounding; it is infallible." Testimonies, Volume 4, page 595.

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