



## CONCESSION SPEECH – An Unreasonable Authority

*By Dr. Stephen Phinney*

**Yes, this is my concession speech!** As many of my readers know, this was my third time running for President of the United States; and more accurately, the third time I have been a “write-in” candidate. Not only do I concede, but I transfer my commitment as a believer to our new President-elect, even though I consider this person to be an unreasonable authority. Allow me to explain.

**The day after a Presidential election day** is, for many, the toughest day. Many will be faced with having to live in a country being led by what they call an “unreasonable authority.”

**We live in one of the greatest countries in the world**, at least that is what most people claim. This “land of the free” is also host to the largest population of protesters and resisters of governmental authority. Freedom is interpreted by most as an open ticket to be disrespectful to existing governmental authority. Scripture is clear about how indwelt believers are to handle “unreasonable authority.”

**Servants, be submissive to your masters.**

1 Peter 2:18 tells us, *“Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.”* The Greek word for *servant* used here (οἰκέται οἰκεται) properly means “domestics” - those under authority of a domestic master, or living in the same house (from οἶκος οἶκος, “house.”) These persons may have been slaves, wives, or children. This word applies whether these individuals were hired, owned as slaves, or were blood relatives. The exhortation here was, and still is, strictly applicable to any person subservient as a domestic, even if voluntarily hiring oneself out as such. While remaining under a master’s authority, we would be wise (in Christian meekness), to perform our duties with faithfulness, loyalty, and reliability, as well as to endure all the wrongs we may suffer from those in authority.

Those under a need of “going out to serve” for a living are not always free from being mistreated. There are trials within this condition of life that cannot always be avoided. In many cases, it may be preferable to accept the master’s conditions of service, instead of attempting a change of situation, even though the servant would be entirely at liberty to do so.

### Harsh Authorities

In the above verse, the Greek word rendered “masters” (δеспόταις despotais) does not necessarily imply that those under them were slaves. This term is applicable to the head of a family, whatever the condition of those under him. *Note of interest:* this word is frequently applied to a Christian’s relationship with God and to Christ. Peter was not only addressing Christians; but also, people in general, who were under authority. It is certainly implied that they were pursuing a course inconsistent with real Godliness. In addition, these “heads of families” were disobedient to the Word (1 Peter 3:1). Peter was speaking directly to those under these “masters” who were suffering because of the grievous wrongs of their masters’ grievous wrongs.

*“Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed” (1 Tim. 6:1, NKJV).*

### **Count their own masters worthy of all honors**

We are called, by the Father, to treat unreasonable authority figures with all proper respect, and to manifest the right spirit in serving them. Despite what our masters have done, we are not to do anything that would dishonor the representation as children of the Father. The injunction here would seem to have particular reference to those whose masters are not Christians. The meaning here is that the slave (us) ought to show the Christian spirit toward our masters, so that our walk with Christ will not be dishonored. We ought not to give our masters occasion to say that the only effect of our Christian beliefs has been to make us restless, discontented, dissatisfied, and disobedient. In a humble, trying situation, and by being under the yoke of bondage, we ought to exhibit patience, kindness, and respect for our masters. As long as the relationship continues, we are to be obedient. This command, however, is by no means inconsistent with us desiring freedom and securing it, if the opportunity presents itself.

### **So that the name of God and his doctrine may not be blasphemed**

The power behind this statement is almost overwhelming. Our goal here should be that Christ not be dishonored and/or reproached, and that there may be no occasion to say that Christianity tends to produce discontentment, leading to uprising. If the effect of Christianity had been to teach all who were servants they should no longer obey their masters, they should resist them and assert their freedom by violence, or their masters were to be treated with humiliation because of their usurped rights over others, the effect would have been obvious – war. There would have been a loud and united outcry against the newfound “religion” (Christianity), which may not have made progress in the world. Instead, Christianity taught the necessity of patience, meekness, and forbearance in the endurance of all wrong - whether from private individuals (Matt. 5:39-41; 1 Cor. 6:7), the oppressions and exactions of government (Rom. 13:1-7) or, in the midst of, hardships and cruelties of slavery. Please keep in mind that these peaceful injunctions, however, did not demonstrate that Christ approved the act of harsh masters, or that Paul regarded the government of Nero as a good government; but they do demonstrate the power of submission.

*“Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart” (Eph. 6:5-6, KJV).*

### **Be obedient to your masters**

This is the uniform direction throughout the New Testament. The idea is that in our relationships with harsh authority, we are to show the excellence of Christianity that we profess. If we could be made free, we should prefer that condition to a state of bondage (1 Cor. 7:21). But while the relationship remains, as Christians, we are to be kind, gentle, and obedient. In the parallel passage, Colossians 3:22, it says that slaves were to obey their masters “in all things.” But evidently this is to be understood with the limitations implied in the case of wives and children. For example: a master or husband/father has no right to command that which is morally or illegally wrong.

## **According to the flesh**

Evidently, the Father gave us this design to limit the obligation to obedience. The meaning is that authority figures have control over “the body, the flesh.” They have the power to command the service, which the body can render; but they are not lords of the Spirit. This is a critical point for us to embrace, as it will assist us in maintaining the balance of submission to harsh authority. Our soul acknowledges God, as Lord. And to the Lord, we are to be subject in a higher sense than to our masters.

## **With fear and trembling**

The Greek definition here is “to do this with a dread of offending them.” Masters have authority and power over us, and we should be afraid to incur their displeasure. Whatever might be true about the correctness of slavery, and whatever might be the duty of the master, it would be *more* to the honor of our beliefs in Christ for us to perform our tasks with a willing mind, than to be disrespectful and rebellious. We could do more for the honor of Christ by patiently submitting, even with what we feel to be wrong, than by being punished for what would be regarded as rebellion. These directions are addressed to us, as servants, not to our masters.

## **In singleness of your heart**

With a simple, sincere desire to do what is right, as unto Christ, we are rendering proper service to our masters. In fact, we are serving the Lord and are doing that which will be well-pleasing to Christ (1 Cor. 7:22). Loyalty, in whatever situation we may be in life, is acceptable service to the Lord. A Christian may serve the Lord Jesus in the condition of a servant, as if a minister of the Gospel or a king on a throne. Besides, it will miraculously lighten the burdens of such a situation, and make the toils and sufferings of a humble/harsh condition easy, if we remember we are then “serving the Lord.”

## **Not with eyeservice**

This term means “not with service rendered only under the eye of the master, or when his eye is fixed on you.” When we, as slaves, are walking after the flesh, we will usually only obey when the eye of the master is upon us. This is impossible to avoid when we are “driven” by a master who tends to be harsh - except where true Christianity prevails. Christians who agree to labor for stipulated wages may be trusted when the master is out of sight, but this is not the case of a slave. As children of the Father, we are at liberty to serve with the heart of Christ. This commandment is one of great importance to all who are under the service of a master. A servant is bound to perform their duties with as much faithfulness as if the eye of their master was *always* upon him. Remember, the eye of man may be turned away, but that of God never is.

## **Christianity is filled with “men-pleasers”**

It is sad to see that most children of the Father purpose to please people, instead of pleasing and honoring God. When a person focuses on pleasing a master, instead of the Master directly, he places himself in the position of idol worship - their master becomes the god of their lives. What, or whom, we give our pleasure to is the one we are saying is our god. As you and I serve our harsh masters, we need to do it unto Christ (1 Cor. 7:22). If we do, we will be doing the will of God with a pure heart. When we render acceptable service to God from a pure heart, we are then able to perform the services demanded of us, however humble or harsh.

**As we move forward with our new President elect**, let each of us keep in mind that the sovereign God of the Universe is in full-control of all authorities in the world – past, present, and future. Our Father in Heaven wants to reveal His precious GRACE to this confused world through and by way of His Son; so that they, too, may have the Indwelling Jesus. He (Jesus) is not into “picking the right candidate,” nor is He interested in having a leader who provides the maximum level of comfort to those living in this country (or any other country) – that’s His job. He wants His Bride to continue to vote for a fellow, indwelt candidates who support and promote His constitution – the Holy Bible, even if they must write-in a candidate in every section of the ballot. And as expected, He never wants His Bride to vote for an antichrist who has a mission to revolt against His constitution.

**A not so funny thing to me** - Most countries have been living under unreasonable authority since the beginning of man’s timeline. God’s message of Truth has not only survived, but has flourished under harsh authority. I am not sure why the people of the United States think they deserve better treatment than that of other countries; but needless to say – we do. Welcome to the end-times!

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