

Limits of Submission to Government 12

Resistance to Tyrants

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Like a slave with a master which is more of the circumstances during the time of Rome.

Here on page 1, I have culled some of the quotes and arguments from the church forefathers, in particular from the Reformation onwards. That's where most of the work has been done on this topic, before it was given in summary fashion in little pieces here and there, and Augustine talked a little bit by some of the other leaders, and up until the time of Aquinas where he gives a more systematic presentation in his book, but again, not very indepth as such, and that's the nature of development in Christian life and society. They're busy with lots of other things, there are lots of other things you can talk about. Society was small, smaller back then. A lot of these things are able to be dug in by experts, people have lots of time and lots of training, and we, ourselves, are able to go even further because we stand on their shoulders and how much work they had done.

So here I give Ponet, "A Short Treatise on Political Power." 1A. Does everyone have a copy? There are 18 sheets out there. "By this ordinance," that is the one given by Noah, which one is that? Pardon? To Noah? Yeah, if any man shed bloods, his blood shall be shed. That's a classic text about the government, about civil law in the government.

"By this ordinance and law, God instituted political power and gave authority to men to make more laws." And his argument, I believe, runs along the lines of that they are given the greater authority to kill someone's life with the sword than they are given lesser authority to give lesser punishments for lesser crimes.

2. He highlights in that essay, that work decisions to flee or to die. He didn't mention fighting but we could throw that in there, are issues of conscience. If you are convinced by God this is a good thing for his glory, to stand and die as a martyr, then do it. If not, then flee. Even Christ said it's okay to flee, or we would add, and if you believe it's a good thing to fight, then fight.

B. "How Superior Powers Ought to be Obeyed." This is Goodman. A lot of the Englishmen were dealing with this issue. You ought to obey God rather than man. He makes that as a major premise and he doesn't explicate nor defend the minor premise,

God commands you to follow his commandments first, and of course in the case of a man giving you a contrary commandment, then you should disobey it. He doesn't believe that in every instance so that's really what the debate comes down to, where do we draw the line, how much should we submit and give up our rights and the likes. He doesn't get into those details but he is pointing out, again, the historical argument what they're arguing against, there's a rise during the Reformation and Renaissance period of kings asserting more and more power, and King James of the famous King James Version of the Bible, is one of those who just wanted to be this kind of dictator who, "Hey, my word is the law and the like." And people were making these arguments, whatever he does, pretty much, you just have to listen to and follow. So these people are arguing against that and pointing out in this case in Acts 5, right, when Peter says we ought to obey God rather than man. He's obviously saying that's not just true in the case of Gospel preaching for apostles, but that's true for anything else that's significant enough that you must make a stand.

He gives a moral argument. This is a classical reasoning and logic, what they call a *fortiori*, or from the lesser to the greater, or from the greater to the lesser. We are to help the ox in the ditch. Yes? A Christian doesn't believe you're supposed to help even on the Sabbath day, right? How much more are you supposed to help a man who is being tyrannized and his life threatened? Right? If you're going to help a dumb animal, how much more are you going to help a person made in the image of God? You'd better. It's a simple argument from the lesser to the greater, it's called. It's very much like the argument, in this case I guess it would be from the greater to the lesser, this tow truck can pull 5,000 tons max so it can pull 2,000 tons, something a little less and the like. So that kind of reasoning where there's nothing explicit but you realize there's a greater connection there, it's perfectly valid biblically and we make arguments like that. In fact, Paul makes arguments like that and I've highlighted that elsewhere in these lectures.

Then the next book, point C, we don't really know who wrote the book. Monet is given the name but we think it's a pen name. He argues essentially, his major argument in that whole work is there are two types of covenants, one between God, the magistrate and the people; and then one between the people and the magistrate, and he gives two additional texts there. You'll see clearly in the Old Testament that to make a vow or renew the covenants between the king and themselves and it's before God, and the implication is, and he brings it out and so do other writers, if this is a covenant, covenants can be broken. That is, if one party breaks the covenant, you're free as the innocent party, and the implications are clear, then, if we have a social covenant. There's another word for that. That's right, the social contract. You see, what he brought up in the late 1600s is nothing new. It had several hundred years of predecessor before him. Locke, it wasn't him. No, he gave a different variation. His was more individualistic than the Puritans and Reformers. Nevertheless, his was nothing new. It's part of the Christian tradition. A social contract is what this is. The king breaks it, and then people are free.

Now that sounds really good in the abstract but it always comes down to the details of, "Can I convince the people that he broke it? Did he break it enough? How much can we put up with? How much should we put up with?" And again, I would contend, the Bible

contends you should put up with a lot, walk an extra mile, give the man your cloak and turn your cheek.

Next one, D, "On the Rights of Magistrates." Beza. This is not as well-known, neither were some of the other treaties. This is a famous quote, "peoples were not created for the sake of rulers, but on the contrary the rulers for the sake of the people." It wasn't Benjamin Franklin or somebody who said that, right? Early America. It predated early America. This was Theodore Beza, the one who came after Calvin. They were very close friends.

So that's his reasoning, that's how he thinks and it wasn't just him, that kind of reasoning is also in the other essays by implication, or they even say it explicitly, that the people create the king and the people can survive without a king, so it's not the end of the world if we have to overthrow our king and make a new king. That's one of the arguments the royalists were making, "Hey, you can't lose a king. You lose the head, you lose the body." Like, no, no, no, the body gave birth to the head, as it were, and the body predated the head. We're the ones that existed, the people existed before the king.

He also continues, "If in lesser contractual law, one violating the contract can be repulsed to save one's life, how much more if there's tyranny and you have to save many people's lives?" Again, he's arguing from the lesser to the greater. If it's true on a small, what seems an insignificant thing compared to whole entire nations being slaughtered by a king, that is personal contract law and you're going to have to violate it to protect your life, just make up any kind of scenario. In other words, contract law is not absolute. It doesn't just last forever and it's true, it doesn't. Even marriage, the cornerstone of social and society and the like, that too can be broken and legitimately. We don't say, "Oh, you can never have a divorce." No, no, no, of course you can. There are grounds for it and how much more in society which, itself, is but just built on the idea of individuals and families covenanting together.

Then he gives some ground rules. He doesn't explicate a lot that, just resistance is when there is overt tyranny, "thoroughly obvious." You just can't miss it is one condition in which you can resist the tyrant. Another condition is that there's no recourse save by arms. You've tried everything you can. Now you're stuck in a corner. You've even fled but you're literally and figuratively stuck in a corner, then go to arms. Don't just go readily to arms. We should not readily go to arms because that's a terrible thing to go under. War, itself, is a form of judgment. Our forefathers in early America, you see the Continental Congress when they make the days of declarations of fasting and prayer. They even say in a couple of them I read, this is a terrible woe from God but it's something we have to persevere through. So those aren't mutually exclusive that you're being judged through the actions that's occurring. That is the effects of something else but you still have to, what? Persevere and suffer through it anyways. You don't just give up and say, "Eh, oh well."

Then thirdly, you must carefully think through the consequences, future consequences lest you make it worse. Lest you make the solution worse than the problem which, again,

could happen if you end up with, what? Like anarchy, every person going for himself. That's why it's very important and Theodore Beza did not believe that the people themselves could ever resist. They always had to have some kind of magistrate. He never defined how you make a magistrate. I'll give you a scenario how you can make a magistrate: what can a sheriff do? He can deputize. Oh, all of a sudden you have magistrates, you have lots of magistrates. So in one sense, it's not very hard to make a magistrate, is it? If it gets down to it, you can grab a sheriff. Militia? Yeah, they have authority as well and the National Guard and what-not that is at the state level and everything else. So there are ways around it. We have to be clever. We have to be aware. We have to be as, what? Wise as serpents as Christ says.

Lex Rex. That's a famous work. That's a very extensive work that covers a lot of things in particular, but he does, of course under the subcategory of law, he was saying the law is over the king, the king doesn't make a law. That seems so obvious to us today, doesn't it, being Americans, right, or in Western civilization? Apparently it wasn't obvious and he had to write a whole book on it, the longest and greatest treatise that I'm aware of at the time, putting that kind of effort into it, and certainly, it was shot through with talking about the specific issue, resisting the king, and he goes through a lot, a lot of stuff, and you can read that if you ever felt compelled to but we're not there yet.

He argues, for instance, "What is warranted by the direction of nature's light is warranted by the law of nature, and consequently by a divine law; for who can deny the law of nature to be a divine law?" I give that quote for our brothers who think you can only go to the Bible to make arguments about things in society, in this case, resisting the government. He's saying you can make natural law arguments and they're just as binding as divine law because they're not contrary to divine law. And I would agree with that, although I might disagree over the details. That's traditional Christian and Protestant and Roman Catholic dogma.

He argues, and I think a clever argument, clever in a good sense of the word, "Not defending oneself is a form of suicide," and suicide is forbidden, therefore, not defending yourself is forbidden. I mean, you stand out in front of the road on the highway and a truck comes after you, you get wiped out, what did that man just do? He committed suicide even if he didn't take the sword or the gun and bring it upon himself. He let someone else do it. What do we call that in Oregon? Assisted suicide. So in this case, you just sit there and say, "Oh, I'll let the government kill me, the tyrant kill me because it's a real godly thing to do." It's like, no, that's suicide, and I agree with him.

Prophets, he argues another interesting, you go through these texts, the prophets complained about the lack of help, that the people aren't, that is the magistrates in particular, aren't defending the poor and the like and so he says, "They expressly cry out against the sin of non-resistance." And you can imagine his opponents are the ones saying, "You're not supposed to resist. You're not supposed to resist the king, you're supposed to just put up with it." And he argues that Jeremiah and Isaiah actually are arguing those cases. You are supposed to resist the evil magistrates who are trampling on the rights of the poor and the widow and the like, and he's crying out saying, "You

haven't done anything. You're passive. You're not resisting. That's wrong. You should stand up for the poor and the downtrodden." And that's certainly common sense to us, it seems today, and certainly can be applied to greater issues. Not just the widows being ripped off or poor people or old people, like we know when telemarketers perhaps try to steal from them and the like. We say that's wrong, we make a law against it, we'll go after them. How much more if you have a tyrant slaughtering his own people? That's the argument again from the lesser to the greater.

So those are the arguments from the forefathers that we went over. We spent two days going over, of course, a lot more of what they covered and I tried to highlight it through here. Any questions so far? Yes?

Yeah. Hiding the Jews and the like in WWII. Of course that was a good thing. You're protecting somebody. You have to count the cost, though.

Well, you added that, not me. We haven't talked about the scenario because it's not directly relevant, per se. That's a question of lying to protect life and I think you just don't have to say anything or as someone else has pointed out, "What are you asking for? Who are you asking for?" I think there are other ways than just outright just lying.

But let's go on to the arguments from the Bible. Romans 13:1-7 would be one of the classic texts and we went over that, first as a passage that's primary focus is on submission and the importance of submitting to whom? Do you recall? Yes, but what kind of magistrate? Does he describe the magistrate? Ah, yes, a lawful magistrate and that is very significant. He does not say, "Just submit to any guy willy-nilly." He says, "Submit to the magistrate, and this is what the magistrate is supposed to be, this is the guy I'm talking about, the one who punishes evil, rewards good." We call that a lawful magistrate. He's saying submit to lawful magistrates. Once you slow down and look at those texts and you see that, "Oh," then everything falls into place. He is not talking about unlawful tyrants, as such, that is, those who, what? Reward the evil and punish the good. It doesn't say that in that text.

So sometimes you have to look at a text and pay very careful what he's pointing out and what he's describing and what he's not even saying. He's not talking about that, and I think however we can go a little beyond that. The magistrate is directed to reward the good and punish the evil only. This is the backside, point 1, page 2.

Are there any more copies of this behind you? Okay, excellent.

Nothing is stated about resisting magistrates, as such, so therefore resistance is only forbidden against lawful authority. If resistance is absolutely forbidden, do you guys know what I mean by absolutely? In all cases. Period. You can never resist. Some people are arguing that instead of relatively, you shouldn't in general resist or particularly against lawful authority.

Then when a magistrate becomes like a devil, he cannot be resisted, right? Think of the worst case scenario of grabbing the women, some of the kings used to do that, murdering people. "Ah, nope, can't do a thing. We're all just going to die. Can't resist him." But James 4:7 commands resistance to the devil, and we went through that text and I pointed out very clearly, it should be obvious he's not saying only resist the devil when you see the man manifested in front of your house. He's saying resist the works of the devil, the influence of the devil, or even the agents of the devil. It's shorthand. We talk that way. There's a word for that, it's a figure of speech like when you say, "That's a wonderful set of wheels." You're not talking about the wheels, as such, are you? You're talking about the car. And he's not talking about the devil, as such, but all that's related to the devil. We have to remember these kinds of things when we read even in English. Therefore some resistance is allowed according to the James 4:7 and Romans 12 is talking about a relative resistance, not an absolute forbidding of all resistance.

Then a relative argument, similar argument in Galatians 2:11 because it's the same word in Greek. If one can resist the righteous man, then one can resist the wicked man. 1 Peter 2 has similar reasoning as this as well. He points out in verse 14 very clearly again, he defines the magistrates, the rulers and the governors as those who punish evildoers and reward the good. So again, he's giving us the definition of a lawful magistrate, not just anybody out there that willy-nilly you have to submit to, although you might find yourself, you're going to have to submit like he says in 1 Peter because you've got nowhere else to go like a slave, he's being buffeted. It actually says striking, being struck in the face, smacked in the face. I don't believe, however, he's saying just roll over and die. Struck in the face is not the same thing as being slit in the throat. But the point there, and that's why I like to point out it says "buffet," is you're supposed to submit as the default position and put up with a lot.

So don't come to this class or whoever else is watching this, thinking that we're encouraging people just to find excuses to overthrow the government or ignore laws. No. No. No. No. We can put up with a lot and we should put up with a lot.

Luke 22:36 is another argument. These are all summary and I refer people to more extensive work earlier in the lectures. Christ commands his disciples to purchase a sword. Remember that. That's very fascinating and they had two of them and he said, "That's enough." So Peter has the sword and we know, of course, he used the sword wrongly to defend Christ because Christ had, what? A particular function that would be uniquely done historically. No one is ever going to do what Christ did again. He would offer himself up so he's not going to try to defend his kingdom by a sword, and he even says that. The kingdom of God does not come by the power of the sword.

But the reasoning here is this, this is the syllogism: if an instrument of violence is allowed, then the purpose of the instrument is allowed. An instrument of violence is allowed, the sword, therefore the purpose of the sword is allowed, killing. We talked about the sword being particularly designed for killing. It's not designed for taking out rabbits or deer. You use a bow and arrow or a spear for that. You have to remember that. That's all the function of a sword. You don't use it to cut onions. That's not the kind of

sword they had back then, it was for fighting. This is significant because lots of things are tools and Christ is saying it's okay to use a sword. They thankfully didn't have to use it apparently, but he did command it when he passed all his disciples on to do his bidding.

Hebrews 11:33-34 is also very powerful text. Again, the point of the text, as we know the hall of faith, is to point to the works that showed forth the faith of the faithful in the Old Testament. It is not to argue about faith, as such, in the abstract but faith that has fruits, right? This is significant. Everything he goes through there shows an example of faith working out in doing something, not just, "Well, Moses believed. Abraham believed. Isaiah believed." No, their faith was such that Moses was willing to be reproached for the sake of Jesus Christ, he says. And Abraham's faith was such that he was willing to wander around and never have a place to settle down. So it was faith that worked itself out by the power of God through acts of obedience.

Who through faith subdued kingdoms? Who through faith became valiant in battle? Turned to flight the armies of the aliens? This is warfare and this is how the syllogism works. That's why I was highlighting this. That act which is from faith is pleasing to God. Catch that? He's not saying faith itself is pleasing to God, although that's part of it. He's saying also the acts that come from the root of faith, the fruit that comes from the root of faith is also pleasing to God, brothers and sisters. He says one of the fruits that came from faith was fighting. We don't think of it that way today. Maybe you do, but I don't, but now I do now that I study the issue more and meditate upon it. It makes sense. If you believe you're called to do something and you do it, that's an act of faith, isn't it? Faith has to be informed by the word of God, presumably they were informed by the word of God that fighting is acceptable under certain conditions. That's completely independent of whether or not, as we have in some Reformed circles, a view of the Mosaic law as being something that's only there for Christological purposes of finding pictures of Christ. Not a lot of moral application. This is more than that because he's saying these are examples of faith, faith in action.

Abraham does the same thing, of course, he fights and we see that in the next section in the Old Testament. Defensive war is in Genesis 14:12 and the like. Abraham went to war. He had 318 fighting soldiers. 1 Samuel 14:44, Jonathan protected by his army from Saul who made a rash vow to kill anybody who would eat anything before they killed the Philistines and he had a little taste of honey, as you recall.

The arguments get stronger here. Nehemiah 4:8, again similar to Hebrews 11 where Nehemiah says, "We will trust in God while we build the wall." And what are they doing while trusting in God? Making sure they have a sword nearby or a spear. Now in charismatic circles that I grew up in, that wouldn't be called trusting God, okay? But we believe God uses ordinary means and a sword is an ordinary means to protect yourself from your enemy. We're not expecting fire from heaven. There are no prophets today.

Then Esther 9 where the Jews defend themselves and slaughter their enemies.

Deuteronomy 20:10-20, of course, is the case laws on the war. Lex Rex, Rutherford believes, yes, not everything in the Old Testament is applicable but these are clearly natural laws applied to the situation of Israel and, therefore, applicable to us today, is his reasoning which is, again, a common reasoning back then.

Proverbs 24:6 talks about having wisdom and counsel before war.

Ecclesiastes 3:3 says there's a time and place for everything. There's a time and a place to kill, it says.

Proverbs 24:11-12 is a very strong and good passage, "Deliver those who are drawn toward death and hold back those stumbling to the slaughter." It is not enough to be passive and let people die and say, "Well, I didn't kill them." But again, that's circumstantial. It depends on your position in society and what you can do, and what are the consequences of doing it. If you're going to have your family slaughtered by trying to save someone else and you've done nothing but have two families slaughtered, that's significant. We have to realize that. It's not just every case you must go out there and die to save somebody.

Then lastly, the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," which also means thou shalt preserve life. Again, this is significant. The 10 Commandments, many, I think many, at least maybe many or not, we're not trained with this. I have an example of that talking to a lady about this commandment and the like and I said there's two sides to every commandment, the positive and the negative. She said, "I have never heard that in my life." And she asked the gentleman in front of her, "Have you ever heard that before?" And her pastor said, "No." I mean, if you're not taught this and you're taught a very truncated view of the law of God, therefore, your faith will be weak because you don't know what to do anymore. Faith must be informed, it must be informed by the word of God. Then, of course, it can be informed, it should be informed by natural revelation which is not contrary to the word of God because there are lots of things in natural revelation that aren't talked about in the Bible. But it must be informed. That's why it's good to have that kind of training and instruction. I hope you've learned from this.

Larger Catechism Question 99 tells you how to use the law of God and in particular I point out 7 and 8, the last two sections which is principles 7 and 8 says whatever responsibility you have before God, you need to help other people with their responsibilities before God as well. We all have a mutual obligation to help one another. Period. There is none of this live on an island, let everyone do their own thing and the like.

Larger Catechism Question 99.5, what is forbidden is always forbidden. For example, suicide. But what is commanded does not always have to be done all the time. You're supposed to work but I hope you don't work all the time. I hope you spend time with your family. I hope you sleep. I hope you go to church. I hope you relax. The positive commands aren't always to be done at all times, but they are always our duty, of course.

So what that means, then, when you get down to the nitty-gritty, is that when to fight, when to die, and when to flee are circumstantial in the Christian sense of the word, not in the relativistic sense of some forms of humanism where everything goes depending on what works for you, your advantage. Circumstantial insofar as the people involved. There's an old person who's handicapped or there's a young person with strength and vitality, their ability and their ability also socially, not only physically but mentally. The opportunities given them and the potential outcome of whatever action they do. Those are the categories in light of the word of God that your conscience must be informed beforehand. I cannot give you every answer for every scenario other than simply what the Bible tells you: don't kill and do what you can with the opportunity given to you. Be good to all men, it says in Galatians, and what's a good thing but to preserve life?

So that's all I have to say. This is the summary of over 12 week's worth, in particular the last five weeks. Any questions? Anymore gotcha scenarios? Yes, sir?

What kind of thinking? Well, I don't have the text before me right now. I wouldn't be surprised given lots of those Proverbs. I'll tell you right off the bat, it's like a Proverb because we know lots of people who, as it were, live by the sword but die a nice old age. That's the nature of a proverb, right? It's kind of a general saying to remind you of important truth, an axiom, as it were. Then I would suspect in that context he's talking about those, he's warning people that's a dangerous place to be in if this is your heart's desire, is to lust and try to kill people.

But again, I don't have a text before me. It's just simply, again, quoting a text is enough, anyone that says, "Turn the other cheek." If you take that text absolutely and we talked about that in Matthew, turn the other cheek absolutely, then why did Paul not turn the other cheek at least in two instances? One when he was in prison and he said, "Oh no, I'm not leaving until the leader and the magistrate, I'm going to embarrass him, and he's going to come to me and take me out because I'm a Roman." Remember that in Acts 20, thereabouts? Then he actually finally appealed to Rome. That's not turning the other cheek. He's not saying, "Hey, beat me up again, please." Because it's a relative category and in case of, again, Christ, I believe he's talking to the average private Christian citizen. It doesn't apply, again, for another counter example, to magistrates because he just said magistrates are supposed to use the sword. He's supposed to say, "Oh, we just got invaded by Greece. Please kill the rest of my citizens here because I'm supposed to turn the other cheek as a Christian magistrate." *Reductio absurdum* it's called.

Yes, ma'am? That wasn't a question, it was an observation about Lot wanting comfort in spite of the terrible environment that he was in. I hope it doesn't get so bad we have to leave America and go to India. I hear the water is not always clean but...

Anybody else? Did I answer your questions about possible scenarios by giving such vague wishy-washy, wasn't the word wishy-washy used on me, Timothy, one time? Yes, sir?

Instructing the people. That's one. The role of the pastor with respect to resisting government is the question and that's a complicated scenario I haven't delved in very deeply. There was a lot of other things I was delving in here. Off the top of my head, which isn't very much off the top of the head because I've obviously thought about it, my answer is going to be and I think you're going to know this, it depends. It's like when people ask me a yes or no question, I used to do that to someone and he would say, he would ask a yes or no question and he would say yes and no. The question is too imprecise. You know, your question is precise enough. It depends because part of it is what I have to balance as a pastor, what a pastor has to balance is his witness as a public officer in the church of God. At the same time, he's still a human being and a citizen in the nation and he has a right to defend himself and his family and his church and his country.

Part of the example I go by perhaps would be the likes of Witherspoon who says in his sermon on God's terrible providence that he gave 1775 or 1776, several months before the Continental Congress and he actually called and said it's a good thing to fight in this just war. He said, "I hadn't talked about political issues, I hadn't preached about political issues until this sermon." He had been a minister for many many years by then. So it came a point that he was, at it were, forced by circumstances to finally make a stand, as it were, and I think that's pretty much the way to go. Don't jump the gun too early as a pastor. Run around saying it's the end of the world, the sky is falling, the sky is falling. No, you can be calmly instructing people like I hope I have instructed you and you can instruct your children with the handouts I gave you so that they are prepared because, again, if we go the way we're going right now, it's going to get worse legally for Christians. We're going to be restricted in 15-20 years, very much so.

So it would depend on where they are, what kind of influence they can give and the like so I can't give you anything more than that, sir. I would say, another way to say that is I could never say, "No, don't ever get involved," and at the same time I can never say always get involved.

Yes, sir? Down in Littleton? What about him? What can or what should we do to help the Christian baker? Buy lots of cakes? Get lots of marriages? We can certainly pray for him, reinforce him, write him a letter, buy a cake, instruct people about what he did. There was an interview on Kelly and Company in the afternoon on 7/10, get the interview and give it to people who disagree with him and have them listen and see how rational he is, that he just says it's a disagreement and we shouldn't have this big legal dispute over disagreements. So it just depends. I heard some of the interview and he said he had homosexuals supporting him which you don't hear on the news media, of course. That wouldn't be newsworthy enough, apparently.

So you can do a lot, but at the same time don't get caught up and try to do a lot because there's a lot that can be done and you still have a life, you still have families, you still have your church. Localism is what I strongly believe in. You start here first. Yourself, your family, your church and friends. Then if you have, as it were, leftover, then you can do other things and try to help or influence people in the world to have a better view of

liberty. You know, at this stage in the game, this is where you feel you really want to be a Libertarian, you know, defend these Christians because did you all hear about the polygamy law? Yeah, it just came out Friday. The judge in Utah, I don't know if it was Federal or the state judge, technically struck down the anti-polygamy law in Utah.

Of course it is. I mean, a lot of this stuff, people don't realize if you have no anchor and absolute morality and it's just kind of whatever generation wants and whoever votes or whatever you feel like or people have more, as it were, sophisticated games if they're well educated and go to college but it all comes down to relative truth, then who's to say in 50 years from now that, hey, the Klu Klux Klan is not going to win and outvote you guys and pass laws that are going to tear you guys down. Nothing. Nothing says that. It's just that now we're in the minority and, again, I believe it's a good thing from God to help purify the church and make us stronger and to prioritize. There are a lot of Americans out there saying, "Oh, woe is us! It's the end of America! It's the end of the world! What are we going to do?" We're going to pass better laws. We're going to show Christians how terrible unbelievers have been and how evilly influenced we've been. The influence has been out there and has always been out there from the world but I think the greatest problem we've always had in the church, the biggest blind-spot was in the church. The problem is in the church, the liberalism that ate us up for many generations within the church before people like Mark Twain or whoever else came along and gave us bad literature, as some people think. So it's the church first. Judgment begins in the house of the Lord. Revival begins in the house of the Lord where promises and curses, where curses but there on the flipside is the promise. So pray for that. Pray for revival and that churches would wake up and people would go back to the simplicity of the law and the Gospel.

Okay, we have five minutes. I'm going to keep preaching. No, you definitely don't want to hear me sing. My daughter can sing for you. Yes, Judy?

Pray for them. We can help them, we can give them money if they want, but... I don't know. My take would be they would have a tendency to take it in an absolute sense. Look, it just says turn the other cheek and they would take that as always turn the other cheek. You notice when you read English, forget the Bible just when you read English, you can always be more precise than you speak sometimes and Christ never used the word "always" did he? He didn't. So when you look at a text sometimes, you've got to slow down and go, "Did he say always? He didn't say always." And always doesn't always mean always anyway, anymore than always means all and we all know that by now, I think. I just said all, I mean most of us or the bulk of us, anymore than all of Judea came to see Jesus. Really? Every single one of them, every little baby and every little infant? No, he meant a lot of them. You just have to be aware of how language works. That's how language works. What's the intent in that? You have to start digging into the exegesis and the like and other texts. Clearly Paul in civil magistrates proved that you cannot take those texts absolutely for submission. They're relative. Besides, it's a command and the command isn't always to be accomplished.

Yes? Oh, I see. Okay. [unintelligible] in the military. Yeah, that's a legal question and that's just the nature of the law. It's not built-in that way, just sometimes people haven't worked out various scenarios. That's why it's important for our magistrates, our leaders in making laws, to have enough of a legal background and a moral background to be able to think in those categories to avoid those things at the head off. So he's saying for himself he wouldn't be a conscientious objector, although he could be a conscientious objector depending on the war, and that's true. We don't have a category for that and part of that is because the way we've designed the military. I don't necessarily think it's wrong, per se, but it would be a little stronger if we had a military designed for defense primarily, not to run around defending everybody but defending us, so that you would have less of an option like that. The odds of you not wanting to defend your country because you're being invaded is pretty pretty small, in which case you wouldn't have been in the military to begin with.

At the same time, allow people to leave before war starts, like even Old Testament Israel did that. "Hey, if you're not prepared to fight, you don't want to fight," not necessarily conscientious objector, you just don't want to fight, you're scared, whatever the reason. They didn't care in Deuteronomy, "We don't want you there because you're going to hamper and slow us down," and that's true. But we don't think that way as a nation because we've been watered down into humanism of various sorts and the like, and they'd rather just force you to fight and then court-martial you if you don't. You might have to stand up and get court-martialled, or depending on the war situation, you just won't shoot very much. I mean, in the chaos of war, no one is going to watch you and find out how many bullets you shoot. I mean, if you are getting shot at, I think you probably would shoot back.

We have a couple more minutes. Something short, please, or I'll just go to prayer.
Luanne? Yeah, they were given non-combat roles.

Timothy? Yeah, and then it comes back to, again, the mindset in the military. Are we such a small military that we can't just say, "Fine"? Or just ask them to leave and pay us back for all the time that you wasted our money. That would give a little incentive for people not to willy-nilly say, "I don't feel like fighting now." There are ways around it. Yeah, [unintelligible] and ours is. We believe it's just war and the Larger Catechism Question on the sixth commandment. It's there. At the same time, you also have a chapter on Christian liberty so if you believe we have both. Again, we might have to make it more explicit in the future like I was mentioning with homosexuality and marriage, so legally we can say, "This is part of what we've always believed." In fact, this is what a lot of our founders believed because 1/3 of the people went to Presbyterian churches in 1776, you know?

So that's the end right there. I gave you guys two Sundays of questions. You still have more questions. I can always answer them offline, of course.

So let's go ahead and pray.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, glorious God above, magnificent God who has made us in your image and gave us a mind and given us a heart and given us an intuitive recognition and reaction in our lives, defend ourselves, to protect our lives, to protect our families and our loved ones, Lord, and that is good, right and natural. Then God, may we learn how to exercise that and use that aright in the future to train ourselves to think in those categories, that it is acceptable, that there are times to have a just war, a godly war in the sense that it's done for a right reason even if not done perfectly, Lord. So may we examine our hearts and lives, especially Lord, first of all to learn more and more about submission and not seek out ways and manners to avoid the laws that we have right now, but to learn from the Bible, to learn from Christ who gave the type when he told them, "You are children of the free God. You are free but lest we offend them." So may we think in those terms, Lord, of our witness before you. In your name we pray, precious God. Amen.

I. Arguments from Forefathers

A. A Short Treatise on Political Power, Ponet

1. "By this ordinance [given to Noah] and law He instituted political power and gave authority to men to make more laws."
2. Decisions to die, flee or fight are issues of the conscience.

B. How Superior Powers Ought to be Obeyed, Goodman

1. You ought to obey God rather than man. God commands you to follow His commandments first.
2. We are to help the ox in the ditch, how much more our neighbors being oppressed by tyrants?

C. Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos

1. Two types of covenants: between God, magistrate and people; and between the magistrate and the people. [cp. 2 Sam. 5:3; 2 kg. 11:17; 2 Chr. 23:16]"

D. On the Rights of Magistrates, Beza: "peoples were not created for the sake of rulers, but on the contrary the rulers for the sake of the people"

1. If in lesser contractual law, the one violating the contract can be repulsed to save one's life, how much more against a nation?
2. Just resistance when: overt tyranny "thoroughly obvious"; if no recourse save arms; carefully thought through to avoid making things worse.

E. Lex, Rex, Rutherford: "Every man by nature is a freeborn man..."

1. "What is warranted by the direction of nature's light is warranted by the law of nature, and consequently by a divine law; for who can deny the law of nature to be a divine law?"
2. Not defending oneself can be a form of suicide
3. Prophets complained about the lack of help: "they expressly cry out against the sin of non-resistance [Jer. 22:2, 3; 5:31; Is. 58:6]"

II. Arguments from Bible

A. Romans 13:1-7: Only describes lawful authority (not tyrants)

1. The magistrate is directed to reward good and punish evil only; nothing is stated about resisting magistrates who do *not* punish evil; therefore, “resist” is only forbidden against lawful authority

2. If “resistance” is absolutely forbidden (instead of relatively), then when a magistrate becomes like a devil, he cannot be resisted. But James 4:7 commands resistance to the devil (his works not his person as such); therefore, some resistance is allowed and submission is relative not absolute.

3. If one can “resist” a righteous man (Gal. 2:11), then one can resist a wicked man on certain occasions (like tyranny)

B. 1 Peter 2:11-17: similar reasoning as Romans

1. Submission is the default position; much can be bore (see Matt. 5)

2. v.14 (like Romans 13) gives the definition of the magistrate as an office for punishing evildoers.

C. Luke 22:36: Christ commands disciples to purchase a sword. If an instrument of violence is allowed, then the purpose of the instrument is allowed: violence.

D. Hebrew 11:33, 34: “who through faith subdued kingdoms... became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens.” [That act which is from faith is pleasing to God; war was from faith; therefore it is pleasing]

E. Old Testament

1. Defensive: Gen. 14:12 1 Sam. 14:44: Jonathan protected by army from Saul; Neh. 4:8-14: Jews defend wall while trusting God; Est. 9: Jews defend themselves

2. Deut. 20:10-20 (war laws); Prov. 24:6; Ecc. 3:3; Proverbs 24:11-12 “Deliver those who are drawn toward death, And hold back those stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, ‘Surely we did not know this,’ Does not He who weighs the hearts consider it? He who keeps your soul, does He not know it? And will He not render to each man according to his deeds?”

F. Sixth Commandment: Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt preserve life

1. Large Catechism Question 99: How to apply the Law. Especially 99:7, 8.

2. LCQ 99.5: what is forbidden is always forbidden (suicide, even by indirect means); what is commanded is not always done all the time: when to fight and die and flee is circumstantial: the people, their ability, opportunity and potential outcomes.