

First, I can sing! Silence is not singing. When the song is being led, participate fully! Raise your voice to God's glory and to the edification of those around you (cf., Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). You need not worry about tone or tune, the primary concern in congregational singing is the message. Read the book and sing the words.

Second, I can follow the leader! The leader is the man standing before the crowd – follow him. When he starts, you start. When he speeds up, you speed up. When he slows down, you slow down. Follow him.

Third, I can encourage him! Tell him of his good work. Tell him that you appreciate him and his efforts. Even though not everyone is perfect in tone and tune, those who are willing to lead are worthy of our encouragement.

– Tim Smith
Deceased

THAT YOU MAY KNOW...

Let us pray for...

- Alice Haddon – fighting cancer (Sheri's friend)
- Ann Henderson – fighting cancer (Sheri's aunt)
- Lester Kamp – fighting prostate cancer
- Mike Mallett – fighting leukemia (brother in Evant, TX)
- Judy Reid – continued recovery auto accident (sister in MS, planning to move here)
- Llewelyn Reid – Judy's husband (that he will be restored)
- Jeffrey Reid – Judy's son, with whom Dub hopes to be studying
- Brian Ritter – fighting rare autoimmune disease (son of Rick Ritter, Gospel preacher)
- Don Smith – faithful brother in Ohio prison who is teaching fellow inmates daily
- Joshua Aidoo – Gospel preacher in Ghana we support
- Samuel Bagsangi – Gospel preacher in Philippines we support

Records you helped make last week...

Bible Classes	17
Sunday AM Worship	17
Sunday PM Worship	17
Wednesday PM Bible Class/Worship	10
Contribution	\$675.00
Contribution average (2015)	\$922.46

Internet Sermon broadcasts...

Both sermons each Sunday are broadcast, beginning at approximately 10:45–10:50 a.m. and 1:12–1:15 p.m., via Internet through our Website, www.northpointcoc.com.

Preacher, *The Lighthouse* editor

Dub McClish



The Northpoint Lighthouse

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ON Civil Disobedience

Only two spheres/sources of authority exist – human and Divine: “Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s” (Mat. 22:21; cf. 21:25). Divine authority is supreme – whether or not men acknowledge it – and He will eventually exercise it utterly (Mat. 25:31–46). Since the incarnation of the pre-incarnate Word in the Person of Jesus Christ, Deity has exercised Divine authority through Him. Jesus possesses “all authority...in heaven and on earth” and He is “far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come” (Mat. 28:18; Eph. 1:21; cf. 1 Tim. 6:15; Rev. 1:5).

Civil authority as an entity exists with God’s sanction: “The powers that be are ordained of God...” (Rom. 13:1; cf. 1 Pet. 2:13–15), and rulers are to be “ministers of God” (Rom. 13:4, 6) to reward/protect good works and to punish evil works (v. 3; cf. 1 Pet. 2:13). Generally, Inspiration charges us to obey civil authorities: “Let every soul be in subjection to the higher powers,” and disobedience is equal to withstanding God’s will (Rom. 13:1–2; cf. Tit. 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13). Thus Paul commands us to pray “for kings and all that are in high place” (1 Tim. 2:1–2).

In light of the foregoing, can a Christian, with the Lord’s approval, ever resist the laws of his government? The Bible clearly answers that he not only **can**, but in certain circumstances, he **must** refuse to obey them – thus engaging in “civil disobedience.” Consider some Biblical examples of such God-approved behavior:

- The midwives’ ignoring of Pharaoh’s order to slay the Hebrew newborn boys
- Moses’ resisting Pharaoh’s refusal to allow the Israelites to leave Egypt
- David’s fleeing and hiding from Saul – protracted civil disobedience
- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego’s refusal to bow to Nebuchadnezzar’s idol
- Daniel’s refusal to stop praying, although prohibited by law to do so
- The Magis’ defiance of Herod’s order concerning the infant Jesus

Northpoint Church of Christ

Greenway Plaza, 4224 N. I-35
Denton, Texas 76207
940.220.9931
northpointcoc@hotmail.com
www.northpointcoc.com
www.thescripturecache.com

Sunday

Bible Class 9:30 AM
Worship 10:30 AM
Worship 1:00 PM

Wednesday

B.C./Worship 7:00 PM

The case involving the apostles and the Sanhedrin court is particularly illustrative. Jesus had ordered them to preach the Gospel in Jerusalem (Acts 1:8), but the court ordered Peter and John, under threat of physical harm, to cease preaching (4:18). When all of the apostles were arrested for resuming their preaching the court reminded them of its earlier order. Peter responded with words for the ages whenever servants of God are faced with human/Divine law conflicts: "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

As then, so always: civil government is no better than the **persons** who sit in seats of power and make laws, as our founding fathers well recognized. John Adams summed up this recognition: "We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion...." *Morality* and *religion* undeniably referred to those imposed by the Bible.

Consummately evil autocrats who neither fear God nor regard man (Luke 18:2) have for some time controlled our nation's levers of power. The ruling of five such unelected amoral despots imposed their will upon 300+ million citizens on June 26, 2015, usurping the authority of Almighty God regarding the meaning of *marriage*—God's oldest institution, predating all civil governments. This new edict places all servants of God **on the wrong side of the law**, portending grievous, far-reaching effects for those who refuse to bow down before it.

Let us pray that evil people in power will be deposed and that people who have Biblically moral values will gain influence. Let us obey civil government in every way that does not violate God's Word, but let us steel ourselves to resist any and every law that contradicts God's Word—whatever the cost (Rev. 2:10).

—Dub McClish
Denton, TX

TOTALITARIANISM?

The citizens of Sodom said of Lot:

This fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door (Gen. 19:9).

Winston Churchill once said that a **totalitarian** society seeks to "liquidate its opponents" (*Webster's Illustrated Dictionary*). Totalitarian societies (North Korea, Iran, et al.) seek to silence all opposition to their oppressive rule and then try to eliminate them physically. But we do not live in such a society—or do we? For a generation **homosexuals** in our land have waged a very effective media and legal campaign for acceptance of their decadent, depraved, and degrading life choice.

Through persistent and moneyed influence they have nearly won the battle. The **majority opinion** in our fickle country now is that theirs is an acceptable lifestyle, and as such they have "rights" (yea, special rights).

Now the next phase of this nefarious **agenda** is to isolate and persecute those who disagree with them. Already in some states "Human Rights Commissions"

have fined businesses that will not cater to these deviants' demands. Churches, such as the **Ridgeway Church of Christ** in Chattanooga, Tennessee, have been harassed and ridiculed because they dared to privately rebuke members who publicly supported a lesbian relative in her quest for spousal benefits for her newly "wed" partner.

If you write a letter to the editor of a newspaper or comment on the Internet about homosexuality in a negative way, homosexuals and their allies will give you an electronic thrashing. I believe that these are all symptoms of an increasing **totalitarian** society.

We may be past the point in which we can "vote the rascals out" of office and change things. Our culture has gone beyond all that. **What can we do as Christians?** The same thing Christians have done for 2,000 years. First of all we must pray for our nation and its leaders (1 Tim. 2:1-2). You and I may not be able to change our political leaders' attitude toward homosexuality, but God's hand can (Dan. 2:21).

Second, we must live in such a manner that others will perhaps listen to us and give weight to our warnings (Mat. 5:13-14; 1 Pet. 2:12-15). Third, we must expect persecution (Luke 6:22-23; 2 Tim. 3:12). Some of us may lose a job or even our freedom over opposition to homosexuality.

Finally, we must seek to lovingly proclaim the Gospel (publicly and privately) so that **all** may have the opportunity to obey it and to enjoy salvation for eternity (Jude 22-23). This last point is perhaps the most important. Men and women can be set free from the **bondage of sin**—however depraved and vile: "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11).

— Roelf L. Ruffner
Columbia, TN

[Ed. Note: Brother Ruffner wrote this article quite some time ago. The recent ruling of the Supreme Court, forcing upon our nation the legal status of same-sex "marriage," underscores how perilously near political correctness has brought us to the brink of absolute totalitarianism. DM]

SONG Leader Help

What can I do to help my song leader? Most song leaders are not paid by the congregation for which they lead singing, and indeed, most congregations of the Lord's people have more than one man who will lead. While they are performing their duties to the Lord by using their talents in His service and to His glory, we still should appreciate the service they provide Him and us enough to wish to help them in every way we can. Let us notice a few of the ways in which we can help him.