



HIGHER AUTHORITY

The basic principle is: "We must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).
When man's and God's will differ, follow higher authority.

1. God's Law takes precedence over all human laws (Acts 5:29).
2. No one has a right to command you to act contrary to God's Word (Acts 4:19–20).
3. Do everything you can to resolve the conflict before you disobey (Dan. 1:8–16).
4. State your innocence (Dan. 6:22) and give an explanation for your disobedience (3:16–18).
5. Be willing to suffer the consequences of your disobedience (Dan. 3:17–18).
6. God may protect you (Dan. 3:17–18, 28–29; 6:19–24).
7. God may bless you (Exod. 1:20–21; Dan. 3:28–30).
8. The following are some Biblical examples of disobeying authority:

a. Political Authority (Civil Disobedience)

- (1) The midwives disobeyed Pharaoh's command to murder Hebrew babies (Exod. 1:15–21).
- (2) Moses' parents disobeyed Pharaoh's command to murder their own baby (Exod. 1:22–2:3; Heb. 11:23).
- (3) Daniel refused to eat King Nebuchadnezzar's choice food and wine (Dan. 1:8–16).
The issue was keeping the dietary laws of Leviticus (11:1–47) and Deuteronomy (14:3–21).
- (4) Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego refused to worship Nebuchadnezzar's golden image (Dan. 3:4–30). The issue was idolatry: "We are not going to serve your gods or worship the golden image" (3:18).
- (5) Daniel disobeyed King Darius' injunction to cease praying for thirty days (Dan. 6:6–13).
Concerning his disobedience Daniel later told Darius, "I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime" (6:22).
- (6) The Magi disobeyed Herod the Great's command to report back (comp. Matt. 2:8 with 2:12).
The angelic message from God was higher authority.

b. Religious Authority

- (1) Peter and John disobeyed the Sanhedrin's order to stop teaching about Jesus (Acts 4:17–20).
- (2) Peter and the apostles disobeyed the Sanhedrin's order to stop teaching about Jesus (Acts 5:27–29; cf. 5:42).

c. Parental Authority

- (1) Jesus ignored the time of departure to stay for the half-holydays of Passover (Luke 2:41–51).
It seems Mary and Joseph left on the third day of the Feast as permitted by the rabbis but not by the Law.

d. Marital Authority

- (1) Abigail ignored her husband Nabal's wishes and took supplies to David and his men (compare 1 Sam. 25:10–12 with 25:18–19, 25, 27, 37). The issue was almsgiving.