

LESSON 192

Egermeier's Story:

Page 545 – Paul Is Taken Prisoner

Memory Verse: Galatians 5:22-23 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.”

Scripture: Acts 21:18-23:10

Teaching Resource:

Bible Study Guide for All Ages Lesson 363-365

Object Lesson:

The framework of the laws which guide our country can be found in the Constitution. The initial statement of the Constitution is the Preamble.

“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.” (Note: spelling errors are in the original.)

There are seven articles to the Constitution. The first article is the Legislative Branch which includes the House and the Senate. The second and third articles are the Executive Branch and the Judicial Branch. The fourth article is regarding the States. Article five focuses on the Amendment of the Constitution. The sixth article is regarding Debts, Supremacy, and Oaths. Lastly, the seventh article is regarding the Ratification and establishment of the Constitution.

The Amendments to the Constitution are the next section. The first ten Amendments are called the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights is stated below.

- Amendment 1 - Freedom of Religion, Press, Expression
- Amendment 2 - Right to Bear Arms
- Amendment 3 - Quartering of Soldiers
- Amendment 4 - Search and Seizure

- Amendment 5 - Trial and Punishment, Compensation for Takings
- Amendment 6 - Right to Speedy Trial, Confrontation of Witnesses
- Amendment 7 - Trial by Jury in Civil Cases
- Amendment 8 - Cruel and Unusual Punishment
- Amendment 9 - Construction of Constitution
- Amendment 10 - Powers of the States and People

In total, there have been 27 Amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

Doctrinal Emphasis: Legal and Civil Considerations Under God

Key Theme: *God appoints authority. We are to obey the laws of the land. As Christians, we are equally protected and entitled to the laws of our country.*

Governing authorities are established by God (Romans 13:1). God is the supreme ruler, and He decides who rules. There are multiple examples of this concept in the Bible. Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, was appointed by God. Scripture indicates men, beasts of the field, and the birds of the sky are given into the king's hand. God is the cause of Nebuchadnezzar's rule (Daniel 2:37-38). Pilate was informed by Christ, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above," (John 19:11). King Cyrus was aware that God had given him all the kingdoms of the earth (Ezra 1:2). God stirred the spirit of King Cyrus in Ezra 1:1a.

I Peter 2:13-17 gives us specific instructions regarding our attitude toward authority. We are to submit ourselves to human institutions, governors, and kings. The reason is simple. It is the will of God. Our correct actions can silence the ignorance of foolish men. There are consequences for resistance toward legal authority including condemnation upon oneself (Romans 13:2), wrath, and conscience (Romans 13:5).

Romans 13:6 instructs us to pay taxes. Jesus Himself taught to pay taxes. The Pharisees were attempting to trap Jesus in an argument regarding a poll-tax. The argument ultimately failed. "Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's (Matthew 22:21)."

During Paul's missionary journeys, he used his rights as a Roman citizen to his advantage. Paul played the citizenship card in Acts 22:25-30, informing the centurion that he was a Roman. The response of his captors (centurion and commander) was fear, and they let him go. Unlawful scourging was avoided.

Paul had protection and access to the legal system of his time. Likewise, we have access to legal rights under our system of law.