

## IS IT OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO CHANGE THE WORLD?

When a prominent religious leader was asked to react to what President Duterte said about God, he said that it is their MORAL obligation to oppose the evil of our leaders. He even said that they may be forced to organize rallies to make a stand and protect the name of God.

Do we need to protect the name of God? Can't God take care of Himself? Is it really our MORAL obligation to oppose evil leaders to the point of asking people to rally against them? Is this not violating what Paul said in Romans 13, that we should subject ourselves to the authority God had established over us?

When Jesus was on earth, He never enticed people to go against Rome. He would even hide from them when they wanted to make Him king. He even said, "Give to Ceasar what is Ceasar's but to God what is God's." Likewise, Paul commanded the followers of Jesus to submit to authority, otherwise, they will be opposing God Himself. Paul said this, in spite of the tyranny of Rome and even though Christians were being sent to die in their arenas. Paul never asked the Christians then to oppose Rome because he never heard Jesus give this command as well. Because he wanted the Christians to live in peace, he asked them to do what is right by respecting the leaders of the land.

Is it really our responsibility to protect the name of the Lord? Can He not protect Himself? When Nebuchadnezzar acted arrogantly, God removed him from being king and made him eat grass like a beast. When his son Belshazzar used the cup from the temple of Israel, God killed him that night. When Pilate was interrogating Jesus, Jesus said if He wants to, He can ask for a legion of angels to fight for Him. But since it was necessary for Him to die to fulfill His Father's will, He did not do so.

God can definitely take care of Himself and protect His name. So what is our obligation as His representative to the people? It is our MORAL obligation to teach people how to act according to God's righteousness so that the world may see how good and powerful He is. We should follow Paul and submit to authority, and then we should imitate David who did not lay his hands on King Saul even though Saul wanted him killed.

The only time we should not submit to authority is when they ask us to sin against God. When President Duterte called God stupid, that is his sin against Him. But if we entice people to rebel against the President, that will be our sin against the Lord. Often I feel that the reason why God cannot implement His plan for change is because we try to do the work of the Holy Spirit. Before God can work around us, we must first

allow Him to work in us. So let us seek to obey the Lord in every way, even if it is very difficult, so that we can encourage others to do the same and bring peace into our land. This is the message of 2 Chronicles 7:14.