

What Would the Apostle Paul Say to the Occupy Movement?

Romans 13 for the Twenty-First Century

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Introduction

The Occupy Movement has made headline news over the last few years. It started as a response to a call in the Canadian magazine *Adbusters* to occupy Wall Street on 17 September 2011 in order to protest against corporate influence on the political process. On that date some 2,000 people gathered but were prevented by the police from entering Wall Street so ended up in Zuccotti Park, several blocks north of the New York Stock Exchange. They immediately renamed this “Liberty Square” as a deliberate echo of the Egyptian uprising which began in Tahrir Square in January 2011. Hundreds stayed every night for more than two months, creating an encampment in the park and the movement spread to over 500 cities. Its declared aims are as follows:

Occupy wants to end the relationship built on money and donations between our elected officials and corporate interests. We believe this relationship has led to rampant corruption and criminal activities that undermine our economic and political system. We simply want a system that operates in the interest of the people and to empower people to be a part of the process.¹

Occupy seeks to achieve its goals by a strategy of civil disobedience—taking to the streets to protest corporate greed, abuse of power and growing economic disparity. Some in the movement have been heavily influenced by a particular reading of the Cleansing of the Temple incident in the Gospels (Matt 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-17; Luke 19:45-46; John 2:14-22). In the contemporary reading advocated by Occupy, the money changers are the greedy, unethical corporations, their partners, the bankers, the corrupt politicians, lobbyists and advisors. The tables are the Global

¹ <http://www.occupytogether.org/aboutoccupy/#background> <accessed on 12 April 2013>.

Banking Cartel such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the Stock Markets manipulated by corporate machines, and Wall Street. The benches represent seats of the corporation heads: Government advisory places held by corporates and the head of the Global Banking System. The selling of doves represents the ever expanding military budget and advocacy of unnecessary wars and aggression to keep feeding the industrial military complex, thus selling “peace” at the price of blood. Finally, the den of robbers represents the system which bails out the banks who steal money from the poor, and taxes honest, hard-working people to pay bonuses to greedy bankers.²

However, the emphasis on civil disobedience and the critique of taxation policies appear to fly in the face of the apostle Paul’s exhortation in Romans 13:1-7. The Occupy reading of the gospels does not take this text into account at all it seems.

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you wish to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive its approval; for it is God’s servant for your good. But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid, for the authority does not bear the sword in vain! It is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer. Therefore one must be subject, not only because of wrath but also because of conscience. For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are God’s servants, busy with this very thing. Pay to all what is due them—taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honour to whom honour is due.

Traditional Interpretation

The received wisdom concerning Rom 13:1-7 is that here, in his most systematic and theological letter, Paul clearly articulates his “theology of the state.” In Romans 1-8 Paul outlines his mature theological reflection on his central theme: justification by faith. After a parenthetical discussion

² See “Spiritual Message of the Occupy Wall Street Movement: Driving out the Money Changers, Once Again,” n.p. <accessed on 25 February 2012>. Online: <http://www.zimbio.com/Occupy+Wall+Street/articles/trNzboae2jE/Spiritual+Message+Occupy+Wall+Street+Movement.htm>.

concerning the fate of Israel in Romans 9-11, Paul turns to the practical application of his theology in chapters 12-16. Included in this practical section is his exhortation in chapter 13 that believers are to be good citizens, subject to the ruling authorities and ready to pay all taxes demanded. This chapter has been used throughout Christendom to justify Christian acquiescence to the state. One particular example will suffice to illustrate this:

The weekend after George W. Bush ordered the bombing and military invasion of Iraq in what is customarily called the Second Iraq War, I walked through down town Hannibal, Missouri, a town that relies for tourism on its fame as the home town of American author and humorist Mark Twain. Like many town centers across the United States, the Hannibal main street was decked out in U.S. flags, yellow ribbons, and placards urging passersby to “Support Our Troops.” One solitary sign of dissent hung in a coffee shop window, a single typed page inviting citizens to an evening “discussion” of the war.

The woman who had posted the modest invitation told me that neighbors had already challenged her “anti-Americanism.” “It’s hard to question the war in Hannibal,” she said. When I asked how that squared with the town’s public celebration of the best known member of the Anti-Imperialist League, she answered, “that would be news here. Most people in Hannibal don’t know anything about Mark Twain beyond *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* and *Huckleberry Finn*.”

A tour of the local museums bore out her point. An exhibit dedicated to Mark Twain’s literary career focused almost exclusively on his humorous writings. I found two references to Twain’s literary tours of Europe, but not a hint that he had spoken regularly and often in Europe, as well as in the United States, on behalf of the Anti-Imperialist League. On one wall, a turn-of-the-century newspaper cartoon depicted Twain seated upon a throne, being paid court by the “Crowned Heads of Europe”; behind his throne, a single figure labeled “Leopold” sat dejected, his head on his fist. The museum caption described Twain’s fame in Europe but offered no explanation of Leopold. No one would learn in this museum of the horrific atrocities carried out in the Congo by King Leopold of Belgium, or of Twain’s fervent efforts, alongside other activists in Europe and the United States, to make those atrocities an international cause célèbre.

Newspaper advertisements and hastily erected signs around town invited residents and visitors to attend “prayer services for our troops” at any of a number of local churches. In most other American cities, the signs might have been unexceptional, but they struck an ironic note in Hannibal, where every gift shop and museum store sold several different editions of Mark Twain’s short, bitterly satirical essay, *War Prayer*. The essay tells of a mysterious stranger who interrupts the eloquent prayers of a local pastor on a Sunday morning and points out to the congregation that an unspoken prayer has accompanied their spoken words to heaven. Their prayer for victory is also a prayer for the God of love to blight the land and the homes of the enemy, to leave widows and orphans desolate and without hope.

I saw no invitations from churches to discuss the *War Prayer*. Except for that single conversation in a coffee shop, there was no indication that anyone in Mark Twain’s home town was the least troubled by invitations to join in prayers (in the phrasing of a ubiquitous bumper sticker) to “Support Our Troops.” Indeed, the only literary allusion informing the cultural discourse of Hannibal, Missouri, accompanied one local pastor’s letter in the local newspaper. He wrote, “It is the duty of all Christians to stand with their president in a time of war (Rom 13:1–7).”

If Hannibal were exceptional, I would not recount the experience. My point is that even in one town where one might have expected the flicker of a thoroughly American anti-war sentiment to be visible, discussion could be managed, and dissent largely precluded (in public as well as in the churches), by an appeal to Paul’s letter to the Romans.³

Certainly a straightforward reading of our text would appear to support the Hannibal pastor’s contention that Christians should stand with their president. The text suggests that the authorities are appointed by God and so to resist the God-appointed authority is to resist God resulting in duly deserved punishment. But is it really as straightforward as this? Does Paul really provide here a theology of the state? Or should we see that even Romans should first be understood in its first-century, contingent context before appropriating its message for today?

³ Neil Elliott, *The Arrogance of Nations: Reading Romans in the Shadow of Empire* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008), 5-6.

Another look at Romans

“[A] fully contextualized reading of the New Testament texts must address ‘the reality of empire’ as ‘an omnipresent, inescapable, and overwhelming sociopolitical reality.’”⁴ An increasing number of New Testament scholars are recognising that the language of the New Testament regularly subverts imperial claims. Romans begins with a declaration of the “good news” that Jesus is the royal and powerful “son of God” to whom “the whole world” owes loyal allegiance (1:3-5) and continues with the assertion that this “good news” involves “salvation” and “justice” (1:16-17). It was standard imperial rhetoric from Augustus onwards that the emperor was “son of a god,” that his accession to the throne was “good news,” that the *Pax Romana* brought universal “salvation” and “justice,” and that consequently the whole world owed Caesar its allegiance. The opening declaration of Romans then, written to believers in the capital city of the Roman Empire, should be understood in the context that “to proclaim Jesus as Son of God was deliberately denying Caesar his highest title and that to announce Jesus as Lord and Savior was calculated treason.”⁵

Furthermore, Paul elsewhere describes how he was beaten three times with rods (2 Cor 11:25)—this was a Roman punishment inflicted at the hands of civic magistrates by lictors (their attendants). So Paul himself knew from personal experience that it simply was not the case that the governing authorities were only a cause for fear for wrong-doers! So why does Paul in this particular letter provide such a seemingly glowing account of the governing authorities?

Taxes

The key to understanding this lies in Paul’s specific mention of taxation. The subject comes out of the blue, even within the context of this passage, and Paul nowhere else mentions taxes. Here he mentions two types: *phoros* (translated as “taxes” by the NRSV)—tribute tax; and *telos* (translated as “revenue” by the NRSV)—indirect taxes. Paul wrote Romans from Corinth in 56 or 57 CE. The Roman historian, Tacitus, speaks of such unrest in 58 CE concerning taxation that

4 Neil Elliott, *Arrogance*, 7 citing Fernando F. Segovia, “Biblical Criticism and Postcolonial Studies: Toward a Postcolonial Optic,” in *The Postcolonial Bible*, ed. R. S. Sugirtharajah (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 48–65 (56).

5 J. D. Crossan and J. L. Reed, *In Search of Paul: How Jesus’ Apostle Opposed Rome’s Empire with God’s Kingdom* (London: SPCK, 2005), 11.

Nero considered abolishing all indirect taxation but was dissuaded by his advisors on the grounds that this would soon lead to the demand to abolish direct taxation too which would be disastrous for the empire (*Ann.* 13.50-51). Paul was writing in the period when concern over taxation was beginning to raise its head. Although tribute taxes were not paid by the general population of Rome itself we now know that Nero compelled immigrants to Rome to pay tribute levied by the provinces in which they resided at the previous census in 53/54 CE. As Jews were expelled from Rome under an edict from Claudius in 49 CE, and did not return to the city until after Nero's accession in late 54, they would have been forced to pay direct taxes on the basis of the province in which they resided during their expulsion.⁶ This would, therefore, be true of Jewish Christians who would recently have returned to Rome just prior to Paul's letter. The specific circumstances Paul is addressing here, therefore, concern the possibility of Jewish Christians becoming embroiled in the unrest over taxation and once again facing the wrath of the authorities. Following the expulsion of Jews from Rome in 49 the church at Rome would have been exclusively Gentile and Jewish Christians would have found themselves significantly in the minority on returning to Rome. Paul is concerned about their "weak" status and does not want any further distress to fall upon them. The "weak" of Romans 14-15 are almost certainly Jewish Christians who would have to abstain from meat and wine to avoid any association with idolatry and thus maintain *kashrut*. The "strong" are effectively powerful Gentile Christians who are "powerful" (not "strong in faith") due to their relative social status in Rome compared to returning Jewish Christian immigrants. On this reading Romans 9-11 is no parenthesis but forms the climax of Paul's argument. Although the Roman congregations are undoubtedly mixed, Paul addresses the majority of the letter to Gentile Christians (Rom 1:5-6) who, from their position of strength in Rome, are tempted to despise their Jewish Christian brothers and sisters. Paul has strong words to say to them in Romans 11:13-24:

¹³Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I glorify my ministry ¹⁴in order to make my own people jealous, and thus save some of them. ¹⁵For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead! ¹⁶If the part of the dough offered as first

⁶ See Thomas M. Coleman, "Binding Obligations in Romans 13:7: A Semantic Field and Social Context," *TynBul* 48, no. 2 (1997)

fruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy; and if the root is holy, then the branches also are holy.

¹⁷But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, a wild olive shoot, were grafted in their place to share the rich root of the olive tree, ¹⁸do not boast over the branches. If you do boast, remember that it is not you that support the root, but the root that supports you. ¹⁹You will say, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” ²⁰That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand only through faith. So do not become proud, but stand in awe. ²¹For if God did not spare the natural branches, perhaps he will not spare you. ²²Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God’s kindness toward you, provided you continue in his kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. ²³And even those of Israel, if they do not persist in unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. ²⁴For if you have been cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these natural branches be grafted back into their own olive tree.

We can only speculate but it could well be that Paul heard of the plight of Jewish Christians who had returned to Rome from Prisca and Aquila whom he greets in Rom 16:3 and who, according to Acts 18:2, had been expelled from Rome under Claudius’ edict. Paul’s concerns here in Romans 13 are intensely pastoral. He urges believers in Rome to submit to the governing authorities and, in particular, he reminds them that they pay their taxes in order for the state to function effectively in its appropriate role of upholding the good and punishing wrong-doing. Any negative action on the part of Christians in the context of the increasing unease in Rome about the burden of taxation would be likely to be crushed, especially if the blame should be laid on Jews given that they had already experienced expulsion from Rome twice within 30 years. Earlier, in 19 CE, following an incident in which a high placed Roman woman was swindled out of considerable funds by some Jewish embezzlers who claimed the money was for the temple in Jerusalem, the emperor Tiberius drafted 4,000 Jews of military age into service in Sardinia and expelled all other Jews unless they repudiated their faith.

The problem for interpreters though is that, despite this contextual indicator concerning taxes, the opening exhortation appears to be timeless and universal. But, in fact, the earliest interpreters of Paul did not read this text in this way. Instead, early Christian martyrs both

insisted that they were exhorted to submit to the governing authorities and yet at the same time refused to comply with their commands to worship the emperor. For example, *Mart. Pol.* 10 states:

But as [the proconsul] continued to insist, saying, “Swear by the Genius of Caesar,” [Polycarp] answered: “If you vainly suppose that I will swear by the Genius of Caesar, as you request, and pretend not to know who I am, listen carefully: I am a Christian. Now if you want to learn the doctrine of Christianity, name a day and give me a hearing.” The proconsul said: “Persuade the people.” But Polycarp said: “You I might have considered worthy of a reply, for we have been taught to pay proper respect to rulers and authorities appointed by God, *as long as it does us no harm*; but as for these, I do not think they are worthy, that I should have to defend myself before them.”

Notice how Polycarp adds the rider “as long as it does us no harm” to Paul’s injunction to submit to the authorities.

Irony

Furthermore, there is a degree of irony in this text. Not only, as I have already stated, did Paul himself know that the governing authorities were not always the steadfast upholders of the good as he claims here but also within a few years of writing the letter Nero would persecute the Christians in Rome ruthlessly and Paul himself would eventually be executed by him! In addition, believers are encouraged in verse 3 to do good so that they will have no fear of the authorities but cryptically Paul states in verse 7 that believers should fear those to whom fear is due (NRSV translates this as “respect”). It seems there is a coded message here for those who have ears to hear. Yes, believers are urged to do good, as they have already been exhorted to in Rom 12:21. This should result in not fearing the authorities who are supposed to uphold the good, but Paul knows from experience that, in fact, fear is still owed given that the authorities can ruthlessly punish those they perceive to be a threat. One last hint of irony is to be found in Paul’s comment that the authorities do not “bear the sword in vain.” For Nero’s boast was that, unlike his predecessors, he had no need to resort to the sword.

Calpurnius Siculus presented a prophecy that described Nero's accession as the dawning of a golden age in which no one could remember the use of the sword. The goddess of war would turn upon herself the weapons that had previously been deployed in warfare; "fair peace" would come; "clemency ... has broken every maddened sword-blade.... Peace in her fullness shall come; knowing not the drawn sword, she shall renew once more the reign of Saturn in Latium" (Eclogue 1.45–60).

The first Einsiedeln Eclogue⁷ described a paradise inaugurated by Nero: "We reap with no sword, nor do towns in fast-closed walls prepare unutterable war." No woman anywhere gave birth to a future enemy of Rome; "unarmed, our youth can dig the fields, and the boy, trained to the slow-moving plow, marvels at the sword hanging in the abode of his fathers" (25–31).

In the speech he presented to Nero, Seneca put into the emperor's mouth the boast that he had surpassed even his ancestor Augustus, who had come to power only through warfare: "With all things at my disposal, I have been moved neither by anger nor youthful impulse to unjust punishment.... With me the sword is hidden, nay, is sheathed; I am sparing to the utmost of even the meanest blood; no man fails to find favor at my hands though he lack all else but the name of man" (Clem. 1.2–4).

Seneca continued by flattering the emperor that his gift to the world was "a state unstained by blood, and your prideful boast that in the whole world you have shed not a drop of human blood is the more significant and wonderful because no one ever had the sword put into his hands at an earlier age" (11.3). Nero would so excel among the Caesars that he would need no bodyguard for his protection; "the arms he wears are for adornment only" (13.5).⁸

To discern ironic traces in this passage is not to say that Paul intends the entire passage to be read ironically as a subversion of imperial claims⁹ but neither, given the comments above, can it be

7 Einsiedeln Eclogue: bucolic poem from the period of Nero comparing Nero with Jupiter and Apollo.

8 Neil Elliott, *Arrogance*, 155-6.

9 This is the claim of T. L. Carter, "The Irony of Romans 13," *NovT* 46, no. 3 (2004)

read as a straightforward endorsement of power. Instead, we should view Paul's approach here as exemplifying what the political scientist James C. Scott calls the "voice under domination."¹⁰

Voice under Domination

Scott's work documents the strategies employed by subordinate groups in their interactions with the dominant elites. He notes that public discourse cannot straightforwardly indicate what subordinates actually believe—it represents the view of the dominant. What Scott discovers is that subordinates do not normally engage in either complete compliance or in overt collective defiance of the authorities. Instead the *public* utterances of subordinates will inevitably be shaped to appeal to the expectations of the powerful. What needs to be attended to are the "hidden transcripts" that reveal the true perspectives of subordinates. Romans 13:1-7 reveals glimpses of such a hidden transcript.¹¹ First, as Yoder points out, Paul does not state that God ordains the ruling authorities but rather that he puts them in order (*tetagmenai* 13:1).

Nor is it that by ordering this realm God specifically, morally approves of what a government does. The sergeant does not produce the soldiers he drills; the librarian does not create nor approve of the book she or he catalogs and shelves. Likewise God does not take the responsibility for the existence of the rebellious "powers that be" or for their shape or identity; they already are.¹²

Second, as already stated, Paul's statement concerning both the sword and the fear owed to the authorities flies in the face of his earlier comment that authority will reward good behaviour and punish bad. Cicero, for example, held that fear and the threat of force were necessary only for insubordinate and uncivilized peoples. Citizens would consent naturally and willingly (*Resp.* 5.6, 3.41). "Clearly Paul has a different view. The Roman sword is still wielded, provoking terror (*phobos*, 13:4). Thus one's posture must be one of 'subjection' or 'subordination' rather

10 See James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1990)

11 For this section I am indebted to Neil Elliott, "Strategies of Resistance and Hidden Transcripts in the Pauline Communities," in *Hidden Transcripts and the Arts of Resistance: Applying the Work of James C. Scott to Jesus and Paul* (ed. Horsley; Atlanta: SBL, 2004).

12 John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus: Vicit Agnus Noster* (Grand Rapids/Carlisle: Eerdmans/Paternoster, 1994), 201.

than revolt (13:2).”¹³ Finally, although Paul talks of returning what they “owe” to others, whether tribute taxes, indirect taxes, fear or honour (13:7), in the very next verse he exhorts believers to “owe no one anything except love.”

It would appear that Paul’s stance here is similar to that of his Jewish contemporary, Philo. By using allegorical interpretation Philo can disguise a hidden transcript of defiance. For example, in *Somn.* 2.90, he states, concerning Abraham’s obeisance to the Hittites (Gen 23:7):

For it was not out of any feeling of respect for those who by nature and race and custom were the enemies of reason ... that he brought himself to do obeisance. Rather it was just because he feared their power at the time and their formidable strength and cared to give no provocation.

Just so, as Philo reveals his true stance via his allegorical interpretation of Gen 23:7 so Paul likewise in Rom 13:1-7 exercises caution and cares “to give no provocation.”

Romans 13 in its Immediate Context

In the previous chapter, Paul has urged his readers in Rome, as far as possible, “to live peaceably with all” and not to take vengeance on themselves. He then goes on to speak of “enemies” and the appropriate response to them, urging his readers to “overcome evil with good” (Rom 12:18-21). Our passage follows on immediately from this and echoes the language of not taking vengeance in counselling against resistance (*anthistēmi*) and repeats the language of “good” (*agathos*) and “evil” (*kakos*) in 13:3, 4. The clear links with what precedes argue against this text being an interpolation as some scholars have previously argued. Indeed, the language of “enemies” immediately preceding our text suggests, following Scott, that Paul is finding a voice under domination in this passage and that, despite the public transcript of “submission” contained therein, the hidden transcript suggests that the authorities envisaged should be regarded in some way as “enemies.” In 12:2 Paul exhorts believers not to be conformed to this world but to be transformed by the renewing of their minds. Christians are to live transformed lives which do not conform to Graeco-Roman ideals of honour and shame; instead they are to

¹³ Neil Elliott, "Strategies," 120.

“outdo one another in showing honour” (12:10). In 12:14 believers are exhorted to bless those who persecute them and in 12:16 to show solidarity with the oppressed (NRSV translates *tapeinos* as “lowly” but in the LXX it has the connotations of low social status and being downtrodden). Finally, the vices outlined in 13:13 are associated particularly in Graeco-Roman literature with *symposia* or drinking parties and the last pair with “the political and social factions and infighting characteristic of Rome, at this period no less than others.”¹⁴ Paul ends this section with a clear critique of the society that he does not expect his readers to conform to.

Conclusion

Paul’s exhortation to show solidarity with the oppressed coincides with the Occupy Movement’s protest against corrupt and disempowering practices by those in power. Although, in his day, any overt protest was unthinkable, the hidden transcript unveiled by the above reading of Romans 13 informed by the work of James C. Scott, suggests that Paul would have been quite at home with the contemporary movement and, with them, would be a passionate advocate of mutuality and economic sharing. However, unlike Occupy, he would also insist that true transformation and non-conformity to the values of the world can only come about through the agency of the Spirit and allegiance to Jesus Christ.

For us here today, committed to the cause of peace and justice, we too must stand with those earliest interpreters of Paul and state clearly that we will respect the governing authorities “as long as it does us no harm” and by that phrase we mean that we cannot simply obey at all costs. Just as the earliest Christian martyrs refused to worship Caesar, knowing that such refusal was an act of treason, so we refuse to worship Mars, the god of war, Mammon, the god of wealth and Technē, the goddess of technology. Or, in twenty-first century terms, we will not worship at the shrine of the military-industrial complex that drives so much of the world’s economies.

In our contemporary scene Mars, the god of war, is very much alive and well, as he has been through the centuries. The military requires increasingly sophisticated weaponry with which to wage war. In this particularly military discourse the name of God is absent. It is a question of weighing up one’s own military capability against

14 J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16* (WBC; vol. 38B; Dallas: Word, 1988), 790.

those of the “enemy.” Furthermore, within Christendom, the church has generally accepted this discourse! ... There is a battle taking place and it is deadly. Conventional wisdom states that military might is necessary for national security. As a result there are far too many human sacrifices to the god of war.

But, in to the military sphere, the church is called to proclaim the biblical vision of universal *shalom* (Ps 96:10-13; Isa 2:1-4; Mic 4:1-4). This vision has to be appropriated in faithful, nonviolent discipleship. This requires communities of believers to be actively involved in reconciliation, modelling forgiveness, and peace-making (Matt 5:9). It requires narratives of nonviolent victories won to subvert the dominant narrative that only military might guarantees national security. It requires fully trained peace-makers with the same dedication to duty as professional soldiers. This ... is mission! [Mars] is very real and must be taken seriously but then so too must the eschatological vision of universal *shalom*.¹⁵

At the end of the day, with Peter and the apostles, our last word has to be: “we must obey God rather than any human authority” (Acts 5:29) and we stand, announcing in word and deed that “there is another king named Jesus” (Acts 17:7) and that this Jesus is the Prince of Peace.

15 Lloyd Pietersen, *Reading the Bible After Christendom* (Harrisonburg: Herald, 2012), 221-2.