Public Servants?
1 Corinthians 3:5

Ministers, one who executes the commands of another, esp. of a master; a servant, attendant, minister. This includes those through whom God carries on his administration on earth, as magistrates, Ro. xiii.4; teachers of the Christian religion, 1 Co. iii.5; 2 Co. vi.4; 1 Th. iii.2.

The word minister, when used in connection with the church, even though at times appears to refer to a servant of man or of a group of people (local congregation) and involves serving men and churches, obviously means a servant of Christ; Christ as head of His Church. This Biblical minister is first and foremost, a servant of the Lord Christ. (Most ministers today are ministers, servants of the State.)

This leads us to conclude some things.

First, in the church. Paul here in this passage and in the next chapter (see below), points out that he is a minister of God, not of the church, nor of any man in any way, shape or form. This not only applies to him, but to all who are sent by the Lord to churches as pastors. The usage of this word in regard to others, such as Timothy and Epaphras, confirms this.

Many churches view the pastor as their minister, rather than the minister of Christ, which is unscriptural. They treat him as their employee rather than an 'employee' of the Lord.

Look at what this does. This leads to the despising of this office by the people. "After all, he is our minister isn't he?" This leads to the people exalting themselves against the office of minister. Was this not the problem Moses faced with Miriam (Numbers 12), and later, Korah (Numbers 16)? Both stood against Moses as though he were their servant or steward. In both instances, Moses told the rebels that they were standing against God, because he was God's servant, not theirs.

I realize that there has not been a man since that could hold a candle to Moses in his faithfulness over the house (congregation) of the Lord (Hebrews 3), except Paul. But we are clearly told that these men were faithful ministers of God. Both made it extremely clear that the Lord did not make them accountable to man, but to Himself. Those who sought to make them accountable to man were judged as being in rebellion against God.

Second, regarding the civil magistrate; those through whom "God carries on his administration on earth, as magistrates, Romans 13:4." The magistrate is a servant of God, not of man. God gives evil, covetous magistrates to an evil, covetous society; godly magistrates to a godly society, Isaiah chapter 24 (v. 2); 30:8-17; 50:1; Jeremiah 5:31; 8:10, and many more passages. Read some of the Old Testament prophets and note the reason that is given over and over for the destruction of the people of God, Jeremiah 13:10; 15:3-7.

Now, look at the implications. The democracy movement today leads to the idea that the civil magistrate is the servant of the electorate, thus our servant. This permits a rebellious attitude toward him, even in the hearts of God's people.

This is contrary to the word of God. He is God's servant just as is the minister of God's word, the pastor. (Cf. Daniel 4:17.) This means that when someone says that the civil magistrate is our servant, this is the same as saying that the minister of the Gospel of Christ is a servant of the people, not a servant of Christ. (Then we get upset that the people treat the office of minister with disrespect.)

This means that the same regard toward this office of minister (civil magistrate) is required by God, as is to be given to the office of minister (pastor) of a local church. In other words, he is a minister of God, not a minister of the people, even though he may carry the title of, "Civil Servant." Public opinion might regard him as a Public Servant, but God's word does not. Both the civil magistrate and the people must realize that he will be judged by God according to his faithfulness under God; the people will be judged according to their regard and submission toward this office, under God.

Let us be quick to add that any law which is not in conformity to the principles of God's law, is not a law. God does not require the people to obey unlawful leadership from either the civil authority or from the ecclesiastical...
authority, Acts 5:29. God says quite a bit about following unjust (God's standard of justice) laws over His laws, Isaiah 51:12, 13. (Mt. 10:28, is spoken with the context of the civil magistrate persecuting the Christian who fails to follow ungodly laws, v. 18.)

This thought presents something to consider. According to the word of God, the civil magistrate derives his power and authority from God, NOT FROM THE PEOPLE, John 19:11. If we say that he derives his power and authority from the people, this implies that all power and authority rests with the people, and that he must answer to the people and do their will. As long as he appeases the majority of the people, he is doing his job, even as he crucifies the Son of God again, John 18:40.

We are caught in this trap today. As the people become more corrupt, their representatives become corrupt with a clear conscience, because they are giving their 'masters' what they desire. After all, if they are Public Servants, why not give the public what they want?

Now, if we say that the civil magistrate gets his power and authority from God, then this implies that all power and authority lies with the Lord. This permits no way for him to justify corruption, because he must answer to the Lord, being judged according to righteous judgment. We believe that this is far more consistent with God's word than is the idea of "Public Servant."

Thus, the evil magistrate must be confronted with the fact that he is the Lord's servant, not the people's. If he is confronted with the humanistic argument that he is the people's servant, then majority rules and Christianity is finished. If he is confronted with God's word that he God's servant, this permits the Lord to work in the situation, 1 Corinthians 2:4.

An illustration of this would be the pagan king of Assyria, Isaiah 10:5-15, and the pagan king of Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar, Isaiah 46:11; Jeremiah 25:9; 27:5, 6; Lamentations 2:17; Ezekiel 7:24. In addition, the Lord called the armies of Rome, his armies, Matthew 22:7.

(Matt. 22:7, follows the parable of the vineyard point for point. "In these terrible words, the siege of Jerusalem, the massacre of the people, and the destruction of their capital are all described [C.H.S.]." Josephus gives us a record of this terrible destruction, which is beyond description and comprehension. Rome thought it was sending its armies against Jerusalem [because of its rebellion against Rome], yet Jesus clearly tells us that Rome was only a tool in the hand of an almighty God.)

The civil (and pastoral) authority is due honour and respect, even obedience, because he represents God in that realm of life. When he no longer represents God, then he loses any claim of authority over the people, and the people are wrong in yielding to such claim.

Before we read too much into this, let us be reminded that there is quite a difference between compulsion and noncompulsory. Ephraim was oppressed and broken in judgment, because he willingly walked after the commandments which were not according to the covenant-law, Hosea 5:11. The responsibility of mankind is always first of all, to the covenant-law, and all the inhabitants of the earth will be judged accordingly, Isaiah 24:1; 26:1.

(Notice 26:2, the Lord gives the people wicked rulers because the people are wicked. Thus, evil civil magistrates are given as judgment against evil people. These evil authorities will remain until the evil in the hearts of the people is dealt with. This is an unchangeable principle of God which all the wishful thinking of man will not change. There are no shortcuts, 1 Samuel 8.)

Therefore, even though the civil magistrate must be viewed as a servant of God, his power established by God and his authority derived from God's word, he is not to be obeyed in all that is required by him. His legitimate power and authority is clearly defined by God's law-word. Anything outside of that is illegitimate authority. As someone has said, "Roe v Wade is an illegitimate law, therefore, we are not bound by it." Rather we are bound to violate it.

"Civil Servant" is a term that may sound good to the human understanding and may present an appealing argument, but the Biblical term is, "God's servant." God's people must face this, and the civil magistrate must be confronted with this.

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The Servant of Mammon
The Misuse of Stewardship
1 Corinthians 4:1

Now the second word, minister. Rather than exalt men, Paul tells these folks who were so inclined, that the ones who they were exalting were no more than the ministers of Christ, who is also a Minister of God, a. an underrower, subordinate rower. b. any one who serves with his hands; a servant.

Thus we see here that this minister is one who is at the complete disposal of the one over him. Paul here makes it extremely clear that he and the others who were being highly regarded as party (schism) heads, were only subordinates of Christ, who Himself is
subordinate to God the Father. These people were trying to pass judgment upon Paul as not being the faithful minister they thought he should be. Paul points out that he is Christ's minister, not their's, or even his own. He answers only to Christ in the present and will answer only to Him in the future. (In fact, he rebukes them for trying to make him fit into what they feel a minister should be like, telling them that they, or others, or even himself, do not set the standards for this office, v. 3.)

The idea here in the word minister is of lowest class of subordinate servant of any kind.

Next is the word, steward:

the manager of a household or of household affairs; esp. a steward, manager, superintendent, (whether free-born, or, as was usually the case, a freed-man or slave) to whom the head of the house or proprietor has intrusted the management of his affairs, the care of receipts and expenditures, and the duty of dealing out the proper portion to every servant and even to the children not yet of age: Lk. xxi. 42; Co iv. 2; Gal. iv. 2; the manager of a farm or landed estate, an overseer: Lk. xvi, 1, 3, 8; ... the superintendent of the city's finances, the treasurer of the city: Ro xvi. 23 (of the treasurers or quaestors of kings, Esth. viii. 9.). Metaph. the apostles and other Christian teachers are called,... as those to whom the counsels of God have been committed to be made known to men: 1 Co. iv. 1; a bishop (or overseer) is called,... of God as the head and master of the Christian theocracy, Tit. i. 7; and any and every Christian who rightly uses the gifts intrusted to him by God for the good of his brethren, belongs to the class called,..., 1 Pet. iv. 10.

Some points:

1. Christian teachers are called stewards. They have had the counsels of God committed to them. They are responsible to make these counsels known to men. 2. But, so have all Christians. They have had the mysteries of God, particularly the mystery of the Gospel, committed to them. 3. Note, Christian theocracy. ISBE attributes the coinage of this word, theocracy, to Josephus. "he [God] set forth the national polity as a theocracy, referring to the rule and might to God" Continuing on with ISBE. "The notion of theocracy is that the constitution [of Israel] was so arranged that all the organs of government were without any independent power, and had simply to announce and execute the will of God as declared by priest and prophets, or reduced to writing as a code of laws." ... "Everything, even civil and criminal law, is looked at from the religious standpoint.""

Thus, the idea of a Christian theocracy is the direct rule of God over His people, the Church today. It is a theocracy, rule by God through His divine revelation, the word of God. But, actually, the whole world is required to be a theocracy, and will be judged according to its submission to its Creator, Isaiah 24:5. "Everything, even civil and criminal law, is looked at from the religious standpoint." To fail to do so is to fail to glorify God as God and is the first step down to total apostasy and judgment as an apostate.

Look at the implication here. Congregational rule of a church is not a Christian theocracy, rather it is a democracy which holds that, "the voice of the people is the voice of God."

So now what? The pastor is a minister of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is to rule the church under the divine revelation of God, the Scriptures. We also see that the office of the steward (of Christ) includes providing for the needs of the family (church) to which he is attached.

Paul's comparison goes on; stewards of the mysteries of God.

An illustration of this office is found in Luke 16:1-16.

1. It was totally under the master, with no authority in himself except what was given to him. 2. He was over his master's goods. He did not own them. 3. He gave out and received according to his master's instructions. 4. We see from Abraham's steward (and the story of Joseph), that this office might be held by one bought out of slavery, born in the household, or even taken captive in war.

In the Lord's parable, the steward knew he was going to lose his position because of his wicked activity with his master's goods. Therefore, this unjust steward made preparation for his dismissal by making crooked deals with his master's debtors. This steward was a thief: the goods were not his own, but his masters. He stole them for his own benefit.

Paul is pointing out that ministers, himself included, are stewards of the mysteries of God, not ministers of the Church at Corinth, or any other church. This would be in stark contrast to modern thinking that places the ministers under any authority other than Christ's, including that of the church congregation.

Many ministers have misused and are misusing the stewardship which they have been given by the Lord, for their own benefit.

As in the Lord's parable, many ministers have misused and are misusing the stewardship which they have been given by the Lord, for their own benefit.

A couple of answers for this problem: A. Unscriptural and false doctrine; run them off or flee from them as Paul instructed Timothy to do, 1 Timothy 6:5. B. If they are frauding the people, they are to be confronted with proper witnesses. If they...
refuse to repent and turn, then they are to be treated as a heathen and publican, even turned over to the civil authority for judgment. Our Lord identified the wicked steward who was using his masters goods for his own good, as one of the children of this world, Luke 16:8. (See 1 Cor. 4:7.) The Lord called the one who misused his stewardship, a servant of mammon, money.

The rest of Luke 16, deals with this servant of mammon. Vs. 13-18, the Pharisees, who were covetous, derided him, justifying their lustful appetites for money, power, sex and high esteem among men ("Gold, Glory and Gals"). But our Lord spoke right to the heart of the matter, vs. 19-31. All the effort which they were putting into gaining their heart's desire, was proof of their real heart. They had a god which was going to deliver them straight to hell.

Notice that the Lord tells them that the very ones they were misusing to serve their god, mammon, were going to gain what they were going to miss. The poor man which they defrauded was in paradise, the rich man was in torment. The ones the Lord spoke to devoted the homes of the defenseless, covering their lust for power, prosperity and pride, with long prayers and religious phrases, Matthew 23:14. (Observe the greater damnation of v. 14. Compare with Luke 16:13-18.)

**Confront these covetous false teachers!**

Any effort to confront these false teachers presents a problem which is addressed by some interesting OT statements. Their vanity draws the cart of iniquity along behind these evil doers, Isaiah 5:18. The people do not want to know what the Lord requires of them, Isaiah 30:8-11, rather they desire smooth things, decepts. These covetous teachers are giving the covetous people just what they desire, Jeremiah 5:31; 8:10.

Peter ties up the loose ends, 2 Peter 2. As we see these covetous preachers and teachers present their false doctrines, Peter assures us that their end has already been established, just as sure as has the angels that sinned. Notice Peter's warning, these covetous teachers and preachers are captive to their lusts, alluring others to follow them into the same captivity. At the same time that they are promising the hearer liberty in Christ, they are captive to corruption.

The Lord through His word, has warned us. These covetous men fill the pulpits of our day, giving the people just what they want. If we get caught in the trap, the latter end is worse than the first.

Our job is to be faithful with what the Lord has intrusted us with, IN EVERY AREA OF LIFE.

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**Minister of the State!**

(The following is taken from, Bible Law Course, Lesson 14, Page 4. Bill Strittmatter, Box 481, Lakemore, Ohio 44250.)

"Here God is the employer and the priest is the employee. God is free to violate "public policy" on "equal employment opportunities" and "affirmative action." Businesses are required to follow "public policy" because of Corporate status, licenses and permits. Specifically, in the case of a corporation, the government is the ultimate employer and therefore, that employer can set the standards of employment. The government does not violate our rights, we just voluntarily, perhaps unknowingly, waive them through incorporation, permit, license and so on. In Lesson 11 we said:

"If a church incorporates as a non-profit corporation, then it waives some of its Constitutional rights because the church now exists in contractual relationship under its new sovereign, the State. Unknown to most ministers, an incorporated church with a state licensed minister and I.R.S. permission to be tax-exempt is a "State" church. (Not state religion) This is the process whereby the State gets the authority to tell clergymen what they may not preach. (Bob Jones University tried to preach against interracial dating and lost their tax exempt status.) This corporate status is the course of authority to tell church schools that they must have State approved teachers. In addition, the marriage license and marriage before a State licensed clergyman make our children State property. Therefore, the State regulates the education of "its children." The legal term is "pares patriae." Here is, in part, the authority for that statement made in Lesson #11:

**Hale vs. Hinkle**

(Supreme Court Decision-201 U.S. 43)

In this case Mr. Hale, an employee of a corporation, was demanding for the corporation Constitutional rights due to an individual under the Bill of Rights. He did not want to show the corporate books to bureaucrat Hinkle. The Fourth Amendment read, "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized."

The Court held that Mr. Hale had no Fourth
Amendment right to privacy due to corporate status. Here is what the court said concerning individual rights vs corporate rights:

"Conceding that the witness was an officer of the corporation with respect to the production of its books and papers, we are of the opinion that there is a clear distinction between an individual and a corporation, and that the latter (the corporation) has no right to refuse to submit its books and papers at the suit of the State. The individual may stand on his rights as a citizen. He is entitled to carry on his private business in his own way. His power to contract is unlimited. He owes no duty to the State or to his neighbors to divulge his business, or open his doors to investigation, so far as it may tend to incriminate him. He owes no such duty to the State, since he receives nothing therefrom, beyond protection of his life and property. His rights are such as exist by law of the land long antecedent to the organization of the State, and can be taken from him by due process of law, and in accordance with the Constitution.

Upon the other hand, the corporation is a creature of the State. It is presumed to be incorporated for the benefit of the public. It receives certain privileges and franchises and holds them subject to the laws of the State and the limitations of its charter. Its powers are limited by law. It can make no contract not authorized by its charter. Its rights to act as a corporation are only preserved to it as long as it obeys its creator. There is a reserved right in the legislature to investigate its contracts and find out whether it has exceeded its powers. It would be a strange anomaly to hold that a State, having chartered a corporation to make use of certain franchises, could not in its sovereignty inquire how these franchises had been employed..."

Obviously, the body of Christ (universal), cannot be submitted to any other authority. Therefore, Paul and the other NT authors who deal with this principle of authority, would be speaking to the local assembly. When such are submitted to another authority, the lordship of Christ is compromised.

The question would be, "How is this done?" The answer is obvious; Whoever we regard as our primary responsibility to obey, that authority is our god. Through Incorporation, the local church agreed to obey the state first and primarily. They agreed to obey the word of God only as far as the state permits this obedience (the corporate charter).

The church (local assembly) of all things, should and must be subject only to Christ, and this is accomplished by making the word of God (OT & NT) its only rule of action. Also included here is not subject to a board of members (Congregational rule), or even to the whims of the pastor, although the pastor must present the word of God in such a way as to direct the church in the way it should go.

**Interesting!**

Here is something that I came across after I had already put together the studies in this mailing.

This is from Charles Bridges' commentary on Proverbs (8:16), which was first published in 1846. Reprint by Banner of Truth Trust.

*By my kings reign; not only by my permission, but by my appointment. They bear my name. They are stamped with my authority. (Exod. xxii. 28. Ps. lxix. 6. John, x. 35.) Proud anarchy disputes the prerogative, and traces the authority to the people; only that they may cast off the yoke of God, and "do that which is right in their own eyes." (Judg. xvii. 6. xix. 1. Hos. vii. 4. 2 Pet. ii. 10. Jude, 5.) Scripture politics lay down the offensive truth. "There is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. They are ministers of God," not servants of the people. (Rom. xiii. 1-6.) Government in all its administrations—kings, princes, nobles, judges—is a Divinely-consecrated ordinances. [His footnote here: Ps. ixxxv. 7. Jer. xxvii. 5-7. Dan. ii. 37, 38; iv. 25; v. 18. Comp. John, xix. 11.] It is interesting to trace this acknowledgment even in the darkness of Heathenism. Kings inherited their scepter from Jove; Magistracy was consecrated by Augustus, the Assessors and Counsellors of Jove.] Every kingdom is a province of the universal empire of the "King of kings." men may mix their own pride, folly, and self-will with this appointment. But God's providential counter-working preserves the substantial blessing. Yet, if "the power be exclusively of God," then is Wisdom, by whom kings reign, the very essence and person of God. And here is our rest, our anchor in this world's agitating storm. "The government of the world is on the shoulders" of "the Head of the Church." (Isa. ix. 6.) All things—all power in heaven and in earth—is delivered unto him of his Father: "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice." (Ps. xcvii. 1.)

**Interesting indeed! My, how we forget so soon the word of God.**

*Pastor Ovid Need, Jr.*

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**Added Note**

The annual ACUC meeting will be at the Indianapolis Baptist Temple, October 7-10. More information: Indianapolis Baptist Temple, P.O. Box 1224, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206 (317-787-2412)
Ministers of God

Page 6 of 5? How can that be?

We do operate on a 'shoe string!' Therefore, I am adding this to the back page without redoing the first 5 negatives. I realize that this mailing appears to be a capitulation to ungodly civil authority, so I want to make this point.

Let me be clear! I do not know where the line is which calls for resistance to tyranny; maybe even armed resistance, maybe even the overthrow of such. There are far greater men than I who have wrestled with this issue. It is obvious that we today in the United States of America are heirs to the blessings of God which resulted from proper resistance.

On the other hand, the Jewish nation was completely destroyed by Rome because, led by the "Nationalist crowd" (check Edersheim), they refused to pay the tribute to Rome and tried to regain their freedom. If you have a copy of Josephus (if you don't, you need to get his work), read King Agrippa's speech to the Jews, Wars, Book II, ch. xvi. Agrippa had their number when he told them that they were foolish to try to claim the aid of God when they had made the law of that same God of no effect by following the traditions of their fathers over the law of God. It would be well for every pastor and patriot to read his speech. And he knew what he was talking about, Acts 26:3.

In my opinion, the deciding factor between godly resistance and ungodly, would be that godly resistance is done under proper authority, and that authority first of all, from God through the finished work of Christ. If I understand correctly, the resistance to tyranny which our founding fathers exercised was led by the elected leaders of the people of the colonies. Thus, the resistance of the Calvinist South against the Unitarian North would have been a godly resistance.

As I said, far better people than I have wrestled with this problem, some to their own destruction, some with the blessings of God.