

Alignment (Week 11)

Small Group Lesson

What does being in alignment look like in a world that is out of alignment? It looks different. It stands out and is easily identified. It means a different walk and a different way of looking at things unswayed by a cultural opinion. Because of the politically charged atmosphere all around us, out of all of our lessons on alignment this one will require the most willingness to come into alignment. Remember we are kingdom citizens first obeying the laws of kingdom relationships.

“Law and order” (Rom. 13: 1-7)

“The governing authorities” (v. 1)

The “governing authorities” are “established by God.” Therefore we respect a government authority not because of who they are but because of the office they occupy. God gives us government to restrain lawlessness and anarchy. 1Tim. 2:1-2 instructs believers to pray for those who are in authority. The Bible doesn’t speak in terms of a political party. In fact Paul is speaking here at a time when Nero was Ruler, one of the most wicked and immoral men to lead the Roman empire.

Alignment Question: Why would the scriptures encourage believers to pray for those who are in authority? Is this a regular practice for you or is it something you need to increase?

“The sword and the conscience” (v. 3-5)

Human government and the power of “the sword” (capital punishment) was instituted in Genesis 9:5-6. In Romans 13 Paul states that if you do right, you have nothing to fear but if you do wrong you should be afraid. We also submit to authorities for “conscience sake” (Eccl. 8). We pay our taxes, (v. 6-7), give honor and respect to those officials out of respect for God (1 Pet. 2: 13-14 &17). We do this so that our conscience is not violated. I remind you that Nero was in power at this time. Believers are not responsible to obey anything that is immoral, illegal, or unscriptural.

“The Law of “Love” (Rom. 13: 8-10)

Paul said that the “Golden Rule” “Love your neighbor as yourself” is the key rule of all conduct. Let the law of love be your guide. Ask yourself the question; “How would I like to be treated in this case?” You don’t have to be told not to commit adultery or steal. Just put yourself in their shoes if it were done to you. Debt is not forbidden in Scripture. However, not paying your debts is. We must deal fairly and above board with everyone in regard to money due. Don’t contact a debtor and tell them you cannot pay this month and then go on a vacation. “Love does no wrong to a neighbor” (vs. 10)

Alignment Question: How does loving my neighbor as myself fulfill the law? How does this contrast with the way a nonbeliever treats others?

“Put on the Armor of Light” (Rom. 13: 11-14)

Darkness is presently ruling the world and mankind seems to always be inventing new ways to move deeper into that darkness. Christ will soon return to rule and reign with “light.” Because we are men who live in the light, anything that has to be hidden is wrong. Darkness is the cover of sin. We must “put on the armor of light.” Every practice and relationship must be examined in the light of, “Is this of the light?”, “Is this something I would like to be involved in when Jesus returns?” We were in the darkness but now live in the glorious revelation that Jesus could return any minute!

Alignment Application: Living in the light means it is possible to disagree with someone and not violate the law of love. Every person is a soul that is either lost or saved, loved by our Father God, and is therefore to be honored as such. Ask the Lord to give you his love for all men and refuse to walk in darkness in any area of your life!

Leader: Take time to pray for the men in your group in the areas they feel challenged and encourage them to step out in boldness and be a witness. Remember to pray for one to two men from each member for an opportunity to sow some seed this week. If any men in your group have yet to attend a Freedom Encounter encourage them to read the Family 02 book in preparation for the next opportunity.