

# Acts 5:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.

## Analysis

---

**We ought to obey God rather than men**—Peter states the principle of civil disobedience when human authority contradicts divine command. The Greek 'peitharchein' (obey) denotes submission to authority; 'dei' (ought) indicates moral necessity, not mere preference. This doesn't advocate anarchism but establishes God's ultimate sovereignty over all earthly powers. The apostles' defiance was specific and limited: they continued preaching Christ despite orders to stop, but didn't resist arrest or sentence. This principle later guided Christian martyrs refusing emperor worship while otherwise submitting to Roman law. Daniel 3 and 6 provide Old Testament parallels.

## Historical Context

---

Peter's response to the Sanhedrin's second prohibition against preaching (v.28). The high priest's accusation—"you intend to bring this man's blood upon us" (v.28)—shows the leaders' fear of being held accountable for Jesus' death. The apostles had been imprisoned, miraculously freed by an angel (v.19), and resumed teaching in the temple despite orders.

## Related Passages

---

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

## Study Questions

---

1. Where is the line between submitting to governing authorities and obeying God's higher law?
2. What contemporary issues might require Christians to say 'we ought to obey God rather than men'?

## Interlinear Text

---

ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Πέτρος καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι εἶπον,  
answered Then G3588 Peter and G3588 the other apostles and said  
G611 G1161 G4074 G2532 G652 G2036

Πειθαρχεῖν δεῖ θεῷ μᾶλλον ἢ ἀνθρώποις  
to obey We ought God rather than men  
G3980 G1163 G2316 G3123 G2228 G444

## Additional Cross-References

---

**1 Samuel 15:24** (Parallel theme): And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned: for I have transgressed the commandment of the LORD, and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.

**Acts 4:19** (References God): But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.

**Genesis 3:17** (Parallel theme): And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;