

Henry David Thoreau

From Civil Disobedience

Define Paradox (look in glossary):

Examples:

“Government is best which governs least”

“Government is best which governs not at all.”

| Good Citizens | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|-----------|-------|
| | Always | Sometimes | Never |
| Vote in an election | | | |
| Conform to majority opinion | | | |
| Participate in protest marches | | | |
| Obey laws | | | |

Ways to Serve the State

| 1. bodies | 2. mind | 3. conscience |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Army, soldier, militia, jailers, (police) posse comitatus• Should use your judgment but don't | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make moral decisions | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Only obligation is to do what is right.• Heroes, patriots, reformers• A jailed person with a clear conscience is freer than someone blindly serving an unjust system. |

1. Restate Thoreau's attitude towards government:
2. What position does Thoreau take on majority rule versus individual conscience?
3. What can be the consequence of having too much respect for the law?
4. What does Thoreau feel is more important than obeying the law?

5. For which people in his society does Thoreau have little respect?
6. What types of people does Thoreau respect?
7. Thoreau compares the injustice in the government to what? Metaphor – Machine – injustice is part of the friction of the machine. Let your life be a counter-friction to stop the machine.
8. Paradox: A jailed person with a clear conscience is freer than someone blindly serving an unjust system.
9. Why is Thoreau unhappy with the tax collector? Why does he not want to pay his taxes?
10. Paradox of being imprisoned:
He felt freer in jail than he did on the outside, because he was following his conscience.

Questions 3, 4, and 5, p. 378.

#3. Thoreau's argument about the different ways of serving the state is important because . . .

- BODY - Army, soldier, militia, jailers, (police) posse comitatus
- MIND- Make moral decisions
- Conscience - Only obligation is to do what is right.
Heroes, patriots, reformers

#4. Some people might find Thoreau's ideas threatening because. . . **lawlessness, anarchy, tradition and conformity**

5. A paradox is (define) . . . Examples of paradoxes in "Civil Disobedience" are . . .

- A good citizen must be a lawbreaker? When? Why?
- Under a government which imprisons any unjustly, the true place for a just man is in prison (line 142-144)
- He felt freer in jail than he did on the outside. Why?
- "Government is best which governs least"
- "Government is best which governs not at all."