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Authority Matters

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Romans 13:1-7 ¹Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which is from God. The authorities that exist have been appointed by God. ²Consequently, whoever resists authority is opposing what God has set in place, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. ³For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you want to be unafraid of the one in authority? Then do what is right, and you will have his approval. ⁴For he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not carry the sword in vain. He is God's servant, an agent of retribution to the wrongdoer. ⁵Therefore it is necessary to submit to authority, not only to avoid punishment, but also as a matter of conscience. ⁶This is also why you pay taxes. For the authorities are God's servants, who devote themselves to their work. ⁷Pay everyone what you owe him: taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due. (BSB)

I. Here are the details of this passage.

A. All authority is **delegated** authority from God. V. 1

B. **Submission** is not a bad word! V. 1-3

C. The government has the **sword**. Here are cases in which the Bible allows the government to justify the taking of human life. V. 4

1. **A just war.**

2. **Capital punishment.**

3. **Accidents.**

4. **Self-defense.**

D. We must **obey** the authorities over us as a matter of conscience. V. 5

E. We must be people who pay their **taxes**. V. 6

F. We must be people who repay their **debts**. V. 7

II. How can we apply these truths?

A. Our **attitude** toward those over us has got to be God honoring.

B. We must **resist** the spirit of our age that is anarchist.

C. Voting is **mandatory** for a believer in our country since the people determine which leaders we have. We also have the privilege to **influence** the policies of our country.

D. We must be **law-abiding** even when we can get away with breaking the law.

E. We must be people of **honor** in paying our taxes and repaying our debts.