**Romans: “The just shall live by faith”**

***Authorities Under God***

***Read:*** *Romans 13:1-7*

***Scripture and Key References:***

“Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed.” *~ Romans 13:7*

Exodus 22:28 Ezra 6:10; Daniel 4:34-37 Acts 23:1; 24:16 Titus 3:1 2 Samuel 23:2-4 Matt. 17:24-27; Matt. 22:15-22

***Introduction:***

Paul has been systematically unfolding the Gospel. In the first 11 chapters it was the Gospel proper. In chapter 12 he turned his attention to how the Gospel transforms our relationships both inside and outside the church. And Paul knows the Gospel effects not only our relationships with individuals but also our relationships with institutions, especially governing authorities. How does the Gospel transform our attitudes and actions toward the State and other institutions of governance? It is to this question Paul addresses himself in Romans 13:1-7. Although Paul does not give us a detailed discussion of church – state relations, he does give instructions to Christians on Gospel driven citizenship. These principles are foundational to being “salt & light” in the world.

***Discussion and Review Questions:***

1. What is your attitude toward the various governments under which you live? Do you find yourself resenting government-imposed obligations? Prayerfully ask how God is calling you to change.
2. Quickly jot down on a piece of paper the authorities that God has placed in your life. Do you tend to have too high a view, or too low a view, of the authorities God has established over you? Spend time praying for each one asking God to give you a proper view of them all.
3. How does Paul’s teaching on government help you think about it’s main purpose? In what ways does this help you evaluate your own national, state, and local government?
4. Are there any ways in which you are being called to disobey an authority in order to obey God? What Scripture have you consulted for guidance?
5. Do you pay taxes with a thankful heart? Based on Romans 13, why should we consider “paying taxes” a exercise of devotion to God?