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## Romans 13:1-7

Good morning. Today's Scripture text comes from Romans 13:1-7.

1. "Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.
2. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.
3. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same;
4. for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.
5. Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake.
6. For because of this you also pay taxes, for *rulers* are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing.
7. Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor."

Yes, it's April 15th again. Income tax day in the good 'ole U.S. of A.

So, how is it with you? The word of God commands you to pay your taxes. And be blamelessly honest--without even the slightest appearance of evil--on all your 1040 forms!

True, make no mistake about it--the tax codes are designed to make a liar and a thief out of you--no doubt here. But consider this--life is a test. And bottom lines are so very objective to score.

Many people rationalize that the government isn't fair, it often uses our money for ungodly things like abortion, along with a host of various other "legitimate" excuses. But the plain fact is that Jesus paid taxes and commanded His followers to do so--even to the very government and authorities that crucified Him and martyred His followers!

The real truth of the matter is that people are often greedy and covet their money. Colossians 3:5 states that we are to be "dead to greed, which amounts to idolatry." Greed, as seen in cheating on your taxes, is declared to be idolatry by God's word. The apostle Paul writes that we are to learn to be content with what we have--Philippians 4:11. He knew firsthand that covetousness causes spiritual death.

Remember . . . we operate on faith--that is the conviction of things not seen. The governments and nations of this world have been set up by God for His

purposes. And He lets us know in the Scriptures that these very nations will be deceived by Satan and rise up against Jesus and the camp of the saints, His church, in the last days.

So what?! Are we not to consider ourselves as sheep to be slaughtered if need be? And more significantly, are not we Christians to present our bodies as living sacrifices acceptable to God?

Jesus says, “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Do you have an honest and true heart? What do your tax forms say?