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Who's In Charge? Part 1

Romans 13:1-2

INTRO: Have you ever been to a store and wondered, "Who's in charge around here?" Have you ever gotten the run around when calling to get help with electricity, water, or gas? Finally, in desperation, you say, "I need to speak to the person in charge!" Well, God has principles for us to live by and rules for us to live under. And yes, He has put certain folks in authority to carry out His bidding.

God has a chain of command that we are to follow (I Cor 11:3; Eph 6:1). We have a real problem in our day. Folks do not want to be under authority. They have been taught that there are no rules, no absolutes, they are in charge of their destiny. One of the biggest problems that industry has today is a work force that is many times a work farce! Employees get mad when they are told to punch in on time, to not leave early, and to not abuse sick and personal days. Dependability and productivity are closely connected.

I. VS 1, ALL POWER COMES FROM GOD

A. Vs 1b, All power comes from God: "The powers that be are ordained of God."

1. Whatever authority a person has is, in God's providence, given to him by God.

a) All human authority is derived from the authority of God.

b) When Pilate said to Jesus, "...knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, 'Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above...'"

1.) The crucifixion of Christ was all in God's plan (Acts 2:23-24).

2.) God is in control. He is not the author of evil; yet, He allows things to happen for His purposes (Rom 9:17-25).

2. God is sovereign; He is in control!

B. Vs 1a, We are to be subject to those God has placed over us. One of the main purposes of authority is to build character in our lives. God uses those in authority to knock off the rough edges and make us usable for God. God is persistent in character development.

1. God uses parents to develop character in children (Prov 22:15).

a) God has put parents in authority over children (Eph 6:1-2).

b) The scriptures teach that discipline is part of character development in children (Prov 13:24; 19:18; 23:13-14). Parents if you will not restrain your children, it maybe that someday the bars of a jail will.

c) If we push away from or get out from under the reproofs and authority of our parents, God raises up new tools to chip away at the rough edges of our character.

1.) A teenager may say, "I'm sick and tired of taking orders

- from my parents!" So what does he do? He joins the Marines.
- 2.) A girl may marry to get away from the pressures of home. God then uses her husband to carry out His work of character development in her life.
  - 3.) God will use a boss on a job to develop character in an employee.
2. God wants you and I to be like Jesus. God will use whatever "tools" necessary to bring us into the image of Christ Jesus (Rom 8:28-29).
  3. God uses authority to help us grow in wisdom and character.
    - a) The only incident recorded in the life of Christ between the ages of two and thirty was a discussion with His parents on the subject of authority.
      - b) The discussion took place when Jesus was twelve years old.
        - 1.) Should He follow His spiritual calling and be about His Father's business (Luke 2:49); or should He become subject to Joseph and Mary and leave His ministry in the Temple?
        - 2.) Jesus became subject to His earthly authority, Joseph and Mary.
        - 3.) Because of this, Jesus grew in wisdom and in character (Luke 2:52).
      - c) When Jesus began His earthly ministry, He went to the one with authority to baptize and was baptized by him (Matt 3:13-17; 21:25-26).

## II. VS 2, HOW GOD USES AUTHORITY

- A. God uses authority to protect us from destructive temptation. When we resist those in authority, we get into trouble.
  1. When we submit to authority we place ourselves under God's protective umbrella. Realize that submission is not getting under the domination of authority, but rather it is getting under the protection of authority.
  2. Remember, authority is like an "umbrella of authority."
    - a) When you get out from under the umbrella of protection, you expose yourself to unnecessary temptations which are too strong for us to overcome (Runaways, etc. experience this).
    - b) The Bible says that rebellion is a very serious thing. The Bible compares rebellion with witchcraft (I Sam 15:23).
      - 1.) The terms rebellion and witchcraft have the same basic definitions: subjecting ourselves to the realm and power of Satan.
      - 2.) To get out from under your parents, to rebel against your husband, to shun authority places you in the realm and power of Satan. You are out from under God's protective umbrella when you rebel.

- B. Refusal to get under authority has a basic root - Pride. And pride leads to contention (Prov 13:10). "The well advised" are those who respect authority; they listen and by doing so get wisdom, direction to live by. They are able to see life from God's point of view because they are willing to submit to authority.
1. Those who rebel, those who are stubborn and resist authority are unhappy campers.
  2. When we refuse to get under authority, we are in constant contention with parents, then with school officials, and possible with the law.

**CONCLUSION:** God has ordained authority to direct our lives and to help us grow in character and spirituality.