

## Authority

All human authority is to some measure relative, as is our obligation to obey. Submitting to God-given authorities should be our normative reflex, but there are no final authorities on earth. God is always and only our final authority.

Limits to God-given authorities:

1. When an authority requires sin.
2. When an authority drives outside its God-assigned lanes.
3. When protecting oneself from wrongful harm.  
(Jonathan Leeman in *Authority* pp. 77-81.)

Five Principles of Good Authority:

1. Good authority is not unaccountable but submits to a higher authority.
2. Good authority doesn't steal life but creates it. Instead of using others to serve himself, a good authority uses his own abilities to help others.
3. It is not unteachable but seeks wisdom.
4. It is neither permissive nor authoritarian but administers discipline.
5. It is not self-protective but bears the costs (i.e. sacrificial).  
(Jonathan Leeman in *Authority* Chapters 6-10 titles)

Considerations for dealing with complexities in authorities over you:

1. Keep your eyes fixed on the day of judgment (God will right all wrongs).
2. Study Scripture (Our acts will be judged according to God's Word at the Judgment Seat of Christ).
3. Mind your conscience.
4. Inform your conscience.
5. Seek the counsel of your pastors and fellow church members.
6. Ask the Lord for wisdom.
7. Address the person in authority directly, or work to see that authority removed from being over you (be discerning in cases of abuse).  
(Jonathan Leeman's *Authority* pp. 82-83).

Advice for when you are "stuck" under bad authority:

1. Ask God to change the heart of the leader.
2. Ask God to change your circumstances.
3. Or, if you're stuck in the situation, ask God to do what He so commonly does in our trials: make you look more and more like Jesus, who suffered, and was then exalted (Phil. 2:5-11; 1 Pet. 2:18-25).  
(Jonathan Leeman's *Authority* pp. 82-83).