

# Week 5: Authority

## Introduction

If we are going to move in the power and authority of Jesus Christ then we need to understand authority. You simply cannot have one without the other. Spiritual authority comes from God. It begins with Him. It's located within Him, He is the ultimate authority. Yet He desires to express His authority through mankind.

### A. Relationship between faith, authority and power

- i) ***"When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. 'Lord,' he said, 'my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering.' Jesus said to him, 'I will go and heal him.' The centurion replied, 'Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."***

***When Jesus heard this, he was astonished and said to those following him, 'I tell you the truth, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' Then Jesus said to the centurion, 'Go! It will be done just as you believed it would.' And his servant was healed at that very hour."***

Matthew 8:5-13

Note the centurion's discernment that Jesus is 'under authority'

- ii) ***"You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world."***

1 John 4:4

### B. Jesus' understanding of authority

- Jesus demonstrated perfect submission.  
***"By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me."***

John 5:30

- Jesus demonstrated complete dependence upon His Father.

*"Jesus answered, 'My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me.'"*

John 7:16

### **C. Satan is a rebel**

*"Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him."*

Revelation 12: 7 - 9

Satan was an "anointed cherub" (Ezekiel 28:14). He was adorned with every precious jewel imaginable (Ezekiel 28:13). He was "the model of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty" (Ezekiel 28:12).

*"No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."*

Matthew 6:24

## **GOD IS THE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY – SOVEREIGN**

- **Delegated Authority: God models delegation.**

*Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.*

Romans 13:1-3

*Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.*

Hebrews 13:17

- **Value and Function**

*"Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other."*

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

It is essential that we distinguish between value and function.

## **The Purpose of Authority**

- **To Protect**

*"Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears."*

Acts 20:28-31

- **To Build Up**

*"For even if I boast somewhat freely about the authority the Lord gave us for building you up rather than pulling you down, I will not be ashamed of it."*

2 Corinthians 10:8

- **To Release**

*"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers"*

Ephesians 4:11

- **To Lead**

*"...if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; **if it is leadership, let him govern diligently**; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully."*

Romans 12:8

- **To release Supernatural Anointing**

*"Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up."*

James 5:14-15

## **Additional Comments**

- 1) We are to submit with a willing heart, not through gritted teeth.
- 2) If you can not submit out of conscience (e.g. to steal/ lie/ dishonour Christ) then you must refuse to obey, but with respect and honesty. Most disagreements and rebellion in church do not relate to the heart of the gospel but to matters of preference, independence and rebellion.

## Group Work

1. What in this teaching was new to you?
2. What areas of this teaching did you struggle with (if any)?
3. How do you respond to the idea that God's authority is delegated, and our need to recognise that we are both in authority and under authority?
4. Read through the 5 purposes of authority and discuss each one in turn. Share examples of when you have seen those in authority use these purposes well.
5. Pray for one another.

## Homework

1. Spend time working through the 'rejection' stronghold worksheet.
2. Spend time revisiting any areas of this week's teaching which were difficult for you (if there were some).
3. Ask God to reveal areas of your life which you have not yet fully submitted to his Authority and pray into it.