

SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY

What is the relation between authority and power?

First, authority is the freedom to decide or a right to act without hindrance. All such authority begins with God, for there is no authority except from God (Rom 13: 1). God gave Paul the right to preach the gospel (1 Co 9: 18). Believers have the right to become children of God (John 1:12), and they have freedom with respect to the law (1 Co 8:9).

Second, the concept of authority refers to the power, ability, or capability to complete an action.

Jesus was given the authority to forgive sins (Matt 9:6-8) and to drive out spirits (Mark 6:7).

Jesus gave seventy-two disciples the authority to trample on snakes and scorpions (Luke 10:19).

Third, the word "authority" is used with reference to delegated authority in the form of a warrant, license, or authorization to perform. Jesus was asked by whose authorization he taught (Matt 21 :23). He was granted authority for his ministry from God the Father (John 10:18).

Definition of authority by Psychology Dictionary on the Internet

What is AUTHORITY?

the capacity to influence others either directly or indirectly. Formal authority, for
Informal authority is based on the individual having attributes that
facilitate achievement of a group

AUTHORITY: "A person in authority has power over others."

That is because authority and power are not the same thing, even though many leaders fail to grasp the distinction. In particular, an alarming number of academic administrators these days don't seem to understand the difference between exercising duly constituted authority and merely wielding power. .

Authority is essentially the capacity to carry out one's duties and responsibilities. , presidents have authority to determine budgets, and so on.

For authority to be valid, it must be given to, which is to say derived from something larger than itself .

The officers of a college, for instance, typically derive their authority from elected or appointed boards.

What is Power?

But what is power? It is the authority influence people to change their minds, their attitudes or their behaviour. Power is everywhere- (ubiquitous) in human relationships: in every group of people there are those with greater and those with less power, those who influence and those who are influenced. Part of the process of belonging to any group, including the church, is finding out, consciously or subconsciously, where we stand in the hierarchy of power.

But how is authority related to power? If power is the ability to influence people, authority is permission to influence people. This permission may be given either from above ,a person appointing someone to a certain position, (Pastor Ray - Apostle elect) or from below, from the people asking someone to be their leader. (Asking someone to represent them)

God's View of Authority”

Authority must be understood by every Christian since it is the entire basis of our relationship with Christ. "Authority" means "the right to command and enforce

obedience." When we accept Jesus Christ as our "Lord," this means that He is supposed to become our "boss" or "authority" over our whole life (Luke 6:46). In addition, the Bible becomes the source of authoritative instruction for our Christian Life (2 Tim. 3: 16).

Since submission to authority is basic to Christian Life, it is important that we understand that all authority is a God-given institution. The Lordship of Christ is the highest source of authority that we must answer to (Matt. 28:18), but God has also ordained at least three other categories of subordinate authority in the world that we must also submit to:

(1) 'The Equality' (Eph. 6-;1 .The-wife-is to cooperate with her husband, which is the head of the family (Eph. 5:22-24, 1 Tim. 2:12), and the husband is to submit to Christ and love his wife (Eph. 5:23; 25).

(2) The State - We are to cooperate with those authority figures and obey the local and federal "laws of the land, within the boundaries of God's laws (1 Pet. 2:13-14).

(3) The Church - Christians are to submit to the headship of Christ which is exercised through his Spirit (Rom. 8:14), his Word (2 Tim. 3:16), and Church leadership (Matt. 18:17-20, Heb. 13:17).

God has established these authorities as the "delegated" extensions of His authority.

If we resist cooperation, we are in effect, resisting God's own authority and Lordship. This is why Paul told wives to submit to their husbands "as to the Lord" (Eph. 5:22).

Rebellion Disrespects all Authority

Just as all authority is related to other authority, all rebellion is also interrelated. It does not regard any class of authority. Rebellion is "the unwillingness to be ruled by any source other than self." It is an indiscriminate contempt toward all authority.

Our attitude toward Christ as our Lord, is directly associated with our attitude toward other authority. Jesus Christ cannot be fully "Lord" over the person who harbors rebellion toward authority figures. The Bible says, "Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves" (Rom. 13:2).

Just as God is the source of all authority, Satan is author of all rebellion. We may recall that the Devil (Lucifer), a former archangel, was originally cast out of Heaven because he led an insurrection against God (Isa. 14:12-15). Rebellion is the very spirit of Satan's attitude (Eph. 2:2), and if we permit it to dominate us it will infect and taint our attitude toward all authority, '- including God and His Word. The prophet Samuel said, "...rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry" (1 Sam. 15:23). The Apostle Peter said that those who are corrupt "despise authority" (2 Pet. 2: 10), and the Proverbs say, "An evil man seeks only rebellion" (Prov. 17:11).

The truth is, God has placed an entire network of people in this world into positions of authority.

Coming under authority and showing respect isn't easy. Nobody wants to be told what to do or how to do it. We criticize anybody that makes a decision we don't like. It's not right. It's not fair. It's not good for me.

In our country we've taken our right to free speech to an unbelievable level. We openly criticize our leaders, our country, our values, and pretty much anything else that doesn't line up with what we want. We don't see anything wrong with complaining, whining, and showing disgust to anybody who will listen.

THE IMPORTANCE OF AUTHORITY

Scripture Reading: Rom. 13:1-7; Heb. 1:3; Isa. 14:12-14; Matt. 6:13; 26:62-64

The Throne Of God Established Upon Authority

God's works issue from God's throne; God's throne is established upon authority. All things have been created by the authority of God, and all laws on earth are held together through authority. Hence, the Bible says that God upholds all things by the word, which is of His authority (Heb. 1:3b). It does not say that God upholds all things by His power. God's authority represents God Himself; God's power only represents God's works. It is easy to be forgiven of sin against God's power, but it is not that easy to be forgiven of sin against God's authority, because sinning against God's authority is sinning against God Himself. In the whole universe only God is authority. All other authorities are appointed by God. If we want to serve God, we must know God's authority.

SATAN'S BEGINNING

Satan became Satan because he overstepped God's authority. He wanted to compete with God and to stand in opposition to God. Rebellion is the cause of the fall of Satan. Both Isaiah 14:12-15 and Ezekiel 28: 13-17 speak of the transgression and the fall of Satan. Isaiah 14 tells us that Satan violated God's authority, while Ezekiel 28 tells us that he violated God's holiness. Violating God's authority is a matter of rebellion;

SUBMITTING TO GOD'S DELEGATED AUTHORITY

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. (Rom. 13:1)

If Jesus asked you to clean the church bathrooms, how clean would they be? If He asked you to help in the nursery, how well would you handle the children?

When you volunteer and are asked to do something, it is important to remember that it is as if Jesus Himself asked you, because whatever you are doing is for Him.

According to our text, obedience to higher authority. authority rest in the office.

In order to properly submit to authority, you must have a clear understanding that the authority rests in the office, and in the man who holds the-office.

For instance, a former president cannot just drive up to the Flagstaff House and walk into the office of the President. He must go through the proper security protocol like every other citizen because he is no longer in authority. .

To put it bluntly, if you get mad and speak against the leaders, then it is a form of rebellion. In reality, you are coming against God since He is the One who puts leaders into their positions. If you have a problem with something, make the effort to talk with the leadership in an attitude of love and let them explain why they do things the way they do. This understanding may make it easier for you to go with the flow. But even if you don't understand, in the end, the Armor bearer must submit to the policies and methods that the leadership puts into place.

Follow the God-ordained chain of command. Then all things will be done decently and in order, and you will be a tremendous asset to your leader.

2. God's delegated authority does not belong to the person exercising it - that person is just a channel.

THE GREATEST DEMAND IN THE BIBLE BEING SUBMISSION TO GOD'S WILL

The greatest demand God has on man is not bearing the cross, offerings, consecration, or self-sacrifice.

God's greatest demand on man is submission. God commanded Saul to smite the Amalekites and utterly destroy all that they had (1 Sam. 15:1-3). But after Saul overcame the Amalekites, he spared Agag the king of Amalek. He also appreciated the best sheep, the best oxen, and all that was good and refused to destroy them, hoping instead to offer them as sacrifices to God (vv. 7-9, 14-15). But Samuel said to him, "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed, than the fat of rams" (v. 22). The sacrifice spoken of here is the burnt offering; it has nothing to do with sin. It is for God's acceptance and satisfaction. However, Samuel said that to heed and to obey are better than sacrifice. This is because even in this kind of sacrifice there was the possibility of a mixture with the self-will. Only in heeding and obeying is there an absolute honoring of God and an exaltation of His will.

Obedience is the other end of authority. In order to have obedience, one must first keep the self out of the picture. One must not try to obey with the self. There the possibility of obedience only by living in the spirit. Obedience is the highest expression of response to God's will.

Hence, there are two principles in the universe God's authority and Satan's rebellion. We cannot serve God on the one hand, while taking the way of rebellion with a spirit of rebellion on the other hand. Although a rebellious person can preach, Satan will laugh, because the principle of Satan is there in the preaching. Service is ever attendant to authority. Do we want to submit to God's authority or not? We who serve God must gain this basic understanding at some time.

It is like touching electricity. Once one touches it, he will never be careless with it. In the same way, once a man meets God's authority and is smitten by it, his eyes will be enlightened.

He will be able to discern not only himself, but others as well. He will know who is and who is not lawless.

May be merciful to us that we would be delivered from the way of rebellion.

We can lead God's children in the proper path only when we know God's authority and have learned the lesson of submission.

EXAMPLES OF REBELLION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

(2) Scripture Reading: Gen. 9:20-27; Lev. 10:1-2; Num. 12:1-15; 16

1. THE REBELLION OF HAM

The Failure of the Deputy Authority Being a Test to Those Submitting to Authority
God saved Noah's household because of his righteousness. In God's plan, Noah was the head of his household. God placed Noah's family under his authority. God also set Noah to be the head of the earth at that time.

But one day Noah drank of the wine of the vineyard and became drunk. He became naked in the tent. When his son Ham saw his father's nakedness, he went out and told his two brothers. As far as his conduct was concerned, Noah was wrong; he should not have been drunk.

But Ham did not see the seriousness of authority. The father is the authority set up by God in the family.

When Ham saw the impropriety of his father, there was no sense of shame or sorrow. He also did not think of covering the matter. This proves that he had a spirit of rebellion. He went out to tell his brothers and expose the shame of his father. This proves that he also had a reviling conduct. But notice how Shem and

Japheth dealt with the matter. They went into the tent backward. They did not turn their faces toward their father's shame; instead, they covered their father with the garment on their shoulders. The failure of Noah became a test to Shem, Ham, Japheth, and Canaan the son of Ham. It showed who was submissive and who was rebellious.

Noah's failure exposed Ham's rebellion.

Everyone who learns to serve the Lord must come face-to-face with authority. He cannot serve God in a spirit of lawlessness.

2. NADAB AND ABIHU OFFERING STRANGE FIRE

How solemn is the story of Nadab and Abihu! They became priests because they belonged to the house of Aaron. This was due to the proper condition of their house before God; it was not due to the proper condition of the individuals in that house. God appointed Aaron to be the priest. The anointing was upon the head of Aaron (Lev. 8: 12). In all things related to offerings and service, the chief person was Aaron. His sons were just helpers taking orders from him to attend to the affairs beside the altar. God had no intention for Aaron's sons to be priests independently. He only wanted them to be under Aaron's authority. Leviticus 8 refers to Aaron and his sons twelve times. Then chapter nine indicates that Aaron offered the sacrifices while his sons helped alongside of him. If Aaron did not move, his sons should not have moved.

Everything should have been under Aaron's name. Nothing should have been under his sons' names. When his sons assumed the headship presumptuously to offer sacrifices, it became STRANGE FIRE. But the sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, thought that they also could offer sacrifices. Without Aaron's command, they offered up strange fire.

1. MEANING OF STRANGE FIRE

The meaning of strange fire is serve God while refusing to take orders and disregarding authority. They observed that it was a simple matter for their father to offer sacrifices. Nothing extraordinary seemed to be involved; therefore, they thought that they could do the same. Hence, they took the matter into their own hands. They did not consider the matter of God's authority.

Service must originate from God Here we see a very solemn matter. Serving God and offering strange fire are two similar matters, yet they are very different. Service to God originates from God. It is man serving God through submission to His authority. The result is acceptance. Strange fire, however, originates from man. There is no need of obedience to God's will or submission to His authority. All that is needed is man's zeal, and the result is death. We often incur more death the more we serve and work. Under such circumstances we have to ask God to enlighten us.

Are we under the principle of service, or are we under the principle of strange fire? God's Work Being Coordination in Authority When Nadab and Abihu worked apart from Aaron, they were working apart from God, because God's work is coordination in authority. God ordained that they serve under Aaron's authority. In the New Testament there are Barnabas and Paul, Paul and Timothy, and Peter and Mark. In all these we see a responsible one who leads on the one hand and a helper who follows on the other hand. In God's work some are set to be authorities while others are set to submit to authorities. When Nadab and Abihu got into trouble with Aaron, they got into trouble with God. They could not work apart from Aaron. Anyone who violates authority will be devoured by the fire of God.

3) THE REVILING OF AARON AND MIRIAM

Incurring God's Anger by Reviling the Deputy Authority

Aaron and Miriam were the older brother and sister of Moses. In the family Moses was under the authority of Aaron and Miriam. But in God's calling and work, Aaron and Miriam were under Moses' authority. They were not happy about Moses marrying an Ethiopian woman, and they spoke against and reviled Moses, saying, "Has Jehovah indeed spoken only through Moses? Has he not spoken through us also?" (Num, 12:2)0Ethiopians are Africans. They are the descendants of Ham. It was not right for Moses to marry an Ethiopian, Miriam was older than Moses.

It was all right for her to rebuke her brother on the ground of family relationship. But in opening her mouth, she touched the work of God and overstepped Moses' position. In His work, God had placed deputy authority in the hand of Moses. It was a big mistake for Miriam and Aaron to speak against Moses because of family problems.

God appointed Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt. But Miriam despised Moses. For this reason, God was not happy with her. It is all right for you to deal with your brother, But it is not all right for you to speak against God's authority. Neither Aaron nor Miriam knew God's authority. They fostered a rebellious heart by standing on natural ground. Moses did not answer, that the was God's appointed authority, there was no need for anyone to protect him. Whoever spoke against him would touch death. He did not need to open his mouth. As long as God had given him authority, he did not have to speak. A lion does not need protection because it is the authority. Moses first submitted to God's authority. Then he was able to represent God as authority. He was very meek, more than all men who were on the

face of the earth (v. 3). The authority which Moses represented was the authority of God. All authorities are delegated by God, and no one can take them away. Their words of rebellion ascended upward and were heard by God (v. 2b). When Aaron and Miriam offended Moses, they offended God in Moses. Therefore, God became angry. Once a man touches deputy authority, he touches God in that person. Once he offends the delegated authority, he offends God.

Authority Being God's Selection Rather than Man's Attainment God called all three to come out to the entrance of the tent of meeting (v. 4). Aaron and Miriam came out boldly, presuming that they would be vindicated. They thought that God had finally called them. They thought, "You, Moses, have married an Ethiopian woman and have caused unhappiness in the family. We have many things to say to God." But God said, "Moses is my servant. He is faithful in my entire house. Why are you so bold as to speak against my servant?"

Spiritual authority does not come through man's attainment. Rather, it comes through God's selection, Spiritual matters are entirely different from worldly principles, Authority is God Himself. It cannot be offended. Whoever speaks against Moses speaks against God's selection. We cannot despise God's selection

The Manifestation of Rebellion Being Leprosy When the anger of God was kindled, the cloud removed from over the tent, and the presence of God was gone. Immediately, Miriam became leprous (v. 10). This was not from infection.

It was inflicted by God. Being leprous is not any better than marrying an Ethiopian woman. As soon as inward rebellion is manifested, it becomes leprosy. Lepers have to be shut out. Man cannot approach them. They lose all fellowship.

When Aaron saw that Miriam became leprous, he besought Moses to be a mediator so that God would heal her. God instructed Miriam to be shut out from the camp seven days before she could be received again. She bore shame for seven days as if

her father had spit in her face. Only after seven days did the tent of meeting journey on. Whenever there is rebellion and reviling among us, God's presence is gone, and the tent will not move. The pillar of cloud will not come until reviling words have been judged. If the matter of authority is not settled, all other matters will remain unsettled.

Submitting to God's Direct Authority and Also Submitting to His Deputy Authority Many think that they have submitted themselves to God already. They do not know that they still need to submit to God's deputy authority. Those who are truly submissive see God's authority in all environments in their homes and in all institutions. God said, "Why then were you not afraid to speak against 11y servant, against Moses?" (v. 8). Every time reviling words come, we have to pay much attention to them. We cannot be careless, thinking that we can say things rashly. When there is reviling, it proves that there is the spirit of rebellion within. The reviling is the sprouting of this rebellion. We have to fear God and must not speak in a rash way.

Many today speak against those ahead of them. They speak against the responsible brothers in the church, but they do not realize the seriousness of this matter. If one day the church receives grace from God, she will separate herself from those who revile the servant of God. She will not talk to them because they are leprous. May God be merciful to us that we would see that this is not a matter with our brother, but a matter of God's appointed authority? If we have met authority, we will realize that there are too many incidents where we sin against God. Thereafter, our concept concerning sin will be changed. We will see sin from God's point of view. The sin that God condemns is man's rebellion.

2. THE REBELLION OF KORAH'S COMPANY, AND OF DATHAN AND ABIRAM

A Corporate Rebellion Numbers 16 speaks of the company of Korah, who were Levites, and Dathan and Abiram, who were of the tribe of Reuben. The Levites represented the tribe of spirituality; Dathan and Abiram represented the leaders. In addition, there were two hundred fifty well-known men. All of these princes gathered together to rebel. They attacked Moses and Aaron, saying, "You have gone too far! For all the assembly is holy Why then do you exalt yourselves above the congregation of Jehovah?" (v. 3). They did not respect Moses and Aaron. Perhaps they spoke these words in all honesty. They did not see the authority of Jehovah. They thought that this was a personal matter. They considered that among God's people there was no authority. When they rebuked Moses, they mentioned nothing about Moses' relationship with God or God's command in this matter. When Moses heard these serious charges, he was neither angry nor upset. Instead, he fell before Jehovah. He did not act in any way by himself. He did not try to exercise authority, because authority is of God. He told the company of Korah to wait until the morning. In the morning Jehovah would prove who was His and who was holy.

He was answering an improper spirit with a proper spirit. The words of Korah's company were based completely on reasoning's. Their words were entirely suppositions. But Moses said that the Lord would make everything clear. It was all a matter of Jehovah's selection and command. It was not Moses' problem but Jehovah's problem. They thought that they were only against Moses and Aaron, and that they were not against God.

They had no intention of rebelling against God. They intended to continue to serve God. They were only despising Moses and Aaron. But God cannot be separated

from His deputy authority. One cannot take one attitude towards God and a different attitude towards Moses and Aaron. No one can reject God's deputy authority on the one hand while receiving God on the other hand. If they had submitted to the authority of Moses and Aaron, they would have been submitting to God. But Moses did not lift himself up because of God's authority on him. He humbled himself under the authority of God. In a gentle way he said to them, "Take censers, ...and put fire in them and place incense upon them before Jehovah tomorrow, and the man whom Jehovah chooses, he shall be holy" (vv. 6-7). Moses was an aged man. He knew the consequence of such an act, and he sighed, saying, "You have gone too far, sons of Levi!

Is it too small a thing for you that the God of Israel has separated you from the assembly of Israel to bring you near to Himself? ..Therefore you and all your company have gathered together against Jehovah" (vv. 7, 9, 11).

At that time Dathan and Abiram were not present. Later Moses sent men to ask them to come.

But they refused, saying, "You have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and honey, nor given us an inheritance of fields and vineyards. Will you put out the eyes of these men? We will not come up" (v. 14). Their attitude was that of rebellion. Basically, they did not believe in the promise of God. Their attention was on the earthly blessing. They forgot their own mistake they were the ones who had refused to enter Canaan. But they turned around to rebel against Moses with bitter words.

4. God Must Remove Rebellion from among His People

Then Moses became angry. He did not answer them, but prayed to God instead. Many times man's rebellion forces God to step forth in judgment. The Israelites tempted God ten times and doubted Him five times. But God tolerated and forgave all of them. Yet when rebellion broke out this time, God stepped forth to judge. He

said, "Separate yourselves from among this assembly that I may consume them in a moment" (v. 21). God must remove rebellion from among His people. Moses and Aaron fell down before God and prayed, "Shall one man sin, and will You be angry with all the assembly?" (v. 22). God answered Moses and Aaron's prayer and judged only the company of Korah. Not only did the Israelites have to hearken to God's appointed authority, but God Himself also testified before the Israelites that He accepted their word.

Rebellion is a principle from Hades. When they rebelled, the gates of Hades were opened. The earth opened its mouth and swallowed Korah, Dathan, Abiram, their households, and all their goods. They fell into Hades alive. The gates of Hades cannot prevail against the church. But a spirit of rebellion can open the gates. The church is not victorious because there are rebellious ones within her. When there is no rebellion, the earth cannot open its mouth. All kinds of sins release death. Only submission to authority will shut the gates of Hades and release life.

Submissive Ones Acting Not by Doctrine but by Faith When the rebellious ones spoke against Moses for not leading them into the land flowing with milk and honey, and for not giving them the inheritance of fields and vineyards, their words were somewhat true. They were then in the wilderness and were, indeed, not yet in the land flowing with milk and honey. Please note that whenever men act and judge according to doctrine or according to what they see with their physical eyes, they are taking the way of reason. But those who submit to authority will enter Canaan by faith. The way of the spirit can never be taken by those who argue and reason. Those who by faith take the leading of the pillars of cloud and of fire and take the leading of Moses, the deputy authority, will enjoy the fullness of the Spirit. The earth opens its mouth for the rebellious ones. This is the way of death leading them quickly to Hades. Those who do not submit to authority have

clear eyes, but they only see the desolation in the wilderness. Only those who are apparently blind, who probe forward by faith, ignoring the present desolation, can enter into Canaan. Those on the spiritual pathway see the future promise of blessing by the eyes of faith. Therefore, one must meet authority, be restricted by God, and be led by His deputy authority. If a man sees only his father, brothers, or sisters, he does not know what authority is, and has not yet met God. In any case, the matter of authority is an inward revelation rather than an outward teaching.

The Contagion of Rebellion

In Numbers 16 there are two rebellions. In verses 1 through 40 we have the rebellion of the leaders, whereas in verses 41 through 50 we have the rebellion of the whole assembly.

A spirit of rebellion is contagious. The judgment on the two hundred fifty was not enough to warn the whole assembly. They saw with their own eyes fire coming forth from God to consume the two hundred fifty incense burners. Yet they still rebelled. They even accused Moses of killing them.

Moses and Aaron could not open the earth; it was God who opened it. Moses could not consume people with fire; it was the fire that proceeded from Jehovah God that judged the people.

Some men only see through their own eyes. They do not see that all authority is of God.

Such people are very bold; they are not afraid even when they see judgment, because they do not have the knowledge of authority. This is a very dangerous matter. When the whole assembly attacked Moses and Aaron, the glory of God appeared, proving that authority is from God. God came forth to judge. A plague broke out, and 14,700 died. Moses was quick in his spiritual sensation; he immediately ordered Aaron to take the censer, put fire in it, and place incense on it

to make propitiation for the assembly. Aaron stood between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped.

God can bear His people's ten munnurings in the wilderness. But He cannot bear His authority being offended. God can bear many sins and can even pardon them. Once rebellion appears, however, God cannot tolerate it, for rebellion is according to the principle of death. It is according to the principle of Satan. For this reason, the sin of rebellion is more serious than any other kind of sin. Whenever someone opposes authority, God immediately comes in to judge.

How solemn a matter this is! David knew authority.

DAVID'S KNOWLEDGE OF AUTHORITY

Scripture Reading: 1 Sam. 24:4-6; 26:9, 11; 2 Sam. 1:14

David Gaining the Throne Without Paying the Price of Rebellion

During the setting up of the kingdom of Israel, God officially established His authority on earth. When the Israelites entered Canaan they asked God for a king, and God sent Samuel to anoint Saul as their first king (1 Sam. 10:1). Saul was chosen by God. God set him up as the authority, that is, as His deputy authority. But when he became king, Saul did not submit to the authority of God. He violated God's authority. In refusing to kill the king of Amalek and the best of the sheep and oxen, he rebelled against God and disobeyed His words. Therefore, God set Saul aside and anointed David (1 Sam. 15 16). However, David was under Saul's authority.

He was one of Saul's subjects and was even a soldier in Saul's camp. Later, he even became Saul's son-in-law. Both of these men had the anointing upon them. But Saul often sought to kill David.

There were two kings in Israel. One was set aside but still sitting on the throne. The other was chosen but not inaugurated: At this juncture David was-in a very difficult situation.

In I Samuel 24 we see Saul chasing David in the wilderness of Engedi. When Saul went into a cave to cover his feet, David and his followers were in the innermost part of the cave. His followers suggested that David kill Saul, but David rejected the temptation. He dared not rebel against authority with his own hands (vv. 1-7). David was anointed by God. Concerning the throne, he stood in the proper position of God's plan and will. Who would have had anything to say about him being king? What would be wrong if David helped himself become king? Would it not be a good way to help God to accomplish His will? But David deeply felt that this could not be done. If he had killed Saul, it would have been in the principle of rebellion against God's authority, because God's anointing was still upon Saul. Although Saul was rejected, he was still God's anointed and still set up by God. If he had killed Saul, David could have become king immediately, and God's will would not have been delayed. But David was a man that denied his self. He would rather see his kingship postponed and God's plan delayed than to become a rebellious one. As a result he was eventually made God's authority.

At one time God set Saul to be king and David was under Saul's authority. If David had killed Saul, he would have gained the kingship at the price of rebellion. He would have fallen on the ground of rebellion. David dared not do this. This is the same in principle as Michael not daring to bring a reviling judgment against Satan (Jude 9). Authority is a tremendous matter.

SUBMISSION BEING HIGHER THAN OUR WORK

If a man is to serve God, he must submit to authority. Submission is higher than our work. Even if David set the whole kingdom in order, this would avail nothing without being under God's authority; he would still be like Saul. In the Old Testament Saul loved the best of the sheep and the oxen and would not destroy them, but rather saved them for offering. This is in the same principle of rebellion as Judas in the New Testament, who betrayed the Lord Jesus out of his love for thirty pieces of silver (Matt. 26: 14-16). Offerings cannot cover up rebellion. If David wanted to accomplish God's will and plan, he could have killed Saul. Then he could have served God right away. But David dared not do this. He waited for God to work. He was willing to be submissive. David only cut off the skirt of Saul's cloak, and even then his heart smote him.

His feeling was as sensitive as a New Testament believer. What we condemn is not just murder; even the cutting off of another's garment with a little knife is wrong and is rebellion.

Backbiting, an evil eye, or a grudge in the heart may not be murder, but they are similar to the cutting off of another's garment, and they proceed from a spirit of rebellion.

David was one who knew God's authority from his heart. He was chased by Saul many times, yet he still submitted to God's authority. He considered Saul as lord, the anointed of Jehovah.

This speaks of an important matter. Submission to authority is not submission to a person. It is submission to the anointing upon the person, the anointing which was upon him when God set him up as authority. David knew of the anointing on Saul. He acknowledged that Saul was God's anointed. Hence, he could only seek for his

own escape; he could not put forth his hand to hurt Saul. Saul was disobedient to God's command. He was rejected by God. But this was something between Saul and God. As for David, he submitted to God's anointed. This was David's responsibility before God.

DAVID UPHOLDING GOD'S AUTHORITY IN AN ABSOLUTE WAY

God wants His authority to be upheld in an absolute way. He has to recover this matter. Look again into 1 Samuel 26. A similar thing happened in the wilderness of Ziph. A second temptation came. Saul fell asleep, and David came into the place where he slept. Abishai wanted to kill Saul, but David forbade him. He swore and said, "Who can stretch forth his hand against Jehovah's anointed and be guiltless?" This is the second time that David spared Saul.

He only took Saul's spear and water jug (vv. 7-12). This was an improvement from the previous time. He did not take anything from Saul's body. Instead, he only took something from beside his body. He gave up the chance of saving his own life to submit to and uphold God's authority.

According to 1 Samuel 31 and 2 Samuel 1, Saul killed himself. A young Amalekite came to David to claim the credit, saying that he had killed Saul. David's attitude was still that of denying the self and submitting to God's authority. He said to the man, "How is it that you were not afraid to stretch forth your hand to destroy Jehovah's anointed?" (2 Sam. 1:14). Then he ordered that the young messenger be killed.

Because David maintained God's authority, he was called a man after God's heart. His kingdom has been preserved until now, for the Lord is a descendant of David. Only those who submit to authority can themselves be the authority. This is a serious matter. We must uproot rebellion from among us. In order to be an authority, there must first be submission to authority. This one matter is crucial.

Apart from this, we have no way to go on. The church is an organ of submission .. We must submit to God's authority from our heart. Only then will the church be blessed.

God is establishing his authority in the church God purposes that we be His kingdom and His church, since the church is ordained to be the sphere wherein God's authority is exercised. He wishes to have His rightful place in more than just a few individuals; He desires the whole church to give Him absolute preeminence in order that His authority may prevail and there be no rebellion. Thus will God set up His authority in the midst of His created beings? He wants us to be obedient not only to the direct authority which He Himself exercises but also to the delegated authorities whom He sets up. What He expects is full obedience, not a partial one.

Jesus our Lord While on earth the Lord obeyed in even very minor matters. For example, He paid the temple tax.

Having no money, He obtained the shekel from the mouth of a fish. Again, when asked on another occasion about paying civil taxes, He affirmed: "Render ... to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Matt. 22.21). Although Caesar was a rebellious person, he was nonetheless set up by God; consequently, he must be obeyed. After we have fully obeyed, our Lord will then rise up and deal with those who disobey.

Through our obedience the kingdom shall be extended to the whole earth.

Delegated authority is so serious that if one offends it he is at odds with God.

God Respects His Delegated Authority Practical Steps for Respecting Authority.

The Credentials for Delegated Authority

1. No delegated authority in the Bible given by God was greater than that of Moses, so we may use him as an example. To examine the required credentials of a delegated authority we will focus on how he reacted when his authority was transgressed, ridiculed, opposed, and rejected.

2. The entire time Moses lead the Children of Israel his authority was constantly called into question. Korah and 250 Elders, and even Aaron and Miriam (his own family) challenged his authority. But in spite of all of Moses failures God's testimony about him was, "(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth." (Numbers 12:3) Moses had the right heart condition, he was "meek" and "gentle" that is why God chose him, not because he was educated and strong in battle.

Watchman Nee's Ten Commandments of Spiritual Authority. By Andy Stanley

1. One who learns spiritual authority as the power base for ministry must recognize the essential Source of all authority is God. While many rely on their position granted to them by another human being, true spiritual authority can only stem from God. Positional leadership will always be limited in its power; people ultimately respect and follow the influence of one who is anointed with authority from above.

2. God's delegated authority does not belong to the person exercising it - that person is just a channel.

Perhaps Andy Stanley says it best when expounding on a passage repeated four times in the book of Daniel (4:17, 4:25; 4:32; 5:21): "Leadership is a stewardship, it is temporary, and you're accountable." Nebuchadnezzar learned it the hard way

but at least he "got it"! A later king-Belshazzar -reated his-predecessor's most important life lesson with contempt and lost everything including his life.

{. The channel of delegated authority is responsible to God for how that authority is exercised.

As often seen in the Biblical narrative, authority wrongly exercised by one, leads to another raised in his stead. Moses failed by not speaking to the rock and Joshua replaced him. As Saul became power hungry and consumed with self-preservation a young worshiper named David began his ascension to the throne .

1. A leader is one who recognizes God's authority manifested in real-life situations.

A person who has spiritual influence is one who not only knows God but has also experienced God. His or her wisdom is derived from seeing God's finger in the "normal stuff" of life and responding rightly to the means and methods of Sovereignty. Subjection to authority means that a person is subjected to God Himself and not to the channel through which the authority comes.

Perhaps you've seen leaders who start out well with a desire to please only God, yet end up serving a system that God has seemingly withdrawn from. "Ichabod" (see 1 Samue14:21) is clearly written over the institution as it has become self-serving and no longer reveals the glory of God to its constituents. Instead of serving "an audience of One", the leader now serves the structure or hierarchy that granted him his perceived position of authority.

Rebellion against authority means that a person is not subjecting himself to God, though it may appear that the person is rejecting some impure manifestation of God's authority through a human channel.

In Numbers 16 about the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, Abiram, and On. They believed that Moses and Aaron had set themselves above everyone else apart from

God's authority. While Moses and Aaron were certainly human and thus prone to sin and failure, these rebels failed to understand that it was God's authority they were questioning. They were struck down because they "treated the Lord with contempt" (16:30). Incidentally, not long after this event both Moses and Aaron also failed to subject themselves to God's authority (20:12) and forfeited their privilege of entering the Promised Land.

7. People who are under God's authority look for and recognize spiritual authority and willingly place themselves under it.

A centurion with great authority and power in the Roman world recognized Jesus' Sovereign authority and humbly noted that he was undeserving of having audience with Him (see Luke 7: 1-10). Jesus commended this man for his tremendous faith something He could not say about His own people who should have recognized Him for Who He truly was.

8. Spiritual authority is never exercised for one's own benefit, but for those under it.

The greatest model ever of this is Jesus of Nazareth. Entering our world as a vulnerable little baby and choosing poverty for circumstances rather than a palace, Jesus demonstrated that He wouldn't take advantage of His heavenly position (Philippians 2:6). He instructs His disciples on authority in Matthew 20:25-28: "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."

9. A person in spiritual authority does not have to insist on obedience(force people to obey you, that is the moral responsibility of the follower.

When a leader has to remind followers to obey his or her authority it may be a sign that the leader is no longer in authority. True followers who submit themselves to God's authority will remove themselves from the influence of those who are simply blowing their own trumpet and seek out another leader where's God's authority is clearly evident. The men who followed David did that. And David removed himself from Saul's authority as well though perhaps more so for the preservation of his life than anything else.

10. God is responsible to defend spiritual authority.

When one who has spiritual authority is rejected it is not his or her responsibility to defend that authority. This principle is clearly seen in the Numbers 16 story alluded to earlier. In God's words: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay" (Deuteronomy 32:35, Romans 12:19).

3. There are five critical credentials required to be a delegated authority. Let us look at them:

A. Meekness and gentleness.

(1) God will not delegate his power or authority to an arrogant person. Those who God sets up in authority are the meek and the tender, and this is not ordinary meekness it's the meekness of God.

(2) The person least likely to be given authority is often the very one who considers himself an authority and least qualified. Likewise, the more authority a person thinks he has, the less he actually does have.

(3) Thus, we should never try to establish our own authority. The more we try the less we are fit for authority. It is given by God and God alone, to the meek and gentle person.

B. Not to listen to slanderous words.

(1) A delegated authority must protect his heart from such things. All who desire to be God's spokesmen and desire to help people must learn not to listen to slander. Let God do the listening. Do not pay attention to how people criticize you; do not get angry.

(2) Those who are disturbed and overwhelmed by words prove themselves to be unfit to be a delegated authority.

C. Make no self-defense.

(1) Defense or vindication, whatever reaction there may be should come from God. No one on earth could ever be more in authority than Jesus yet He never defended Himself The Bible says Jesus, "opened not His mouth" He stood in silence before those who were charging Him with lies.

(2) Authority and self-defense are incompatible they cannot exist together. He who justifies or Vindicates himself does not know God or His ways.

(3) He who speaks for himself is under judgment. God has appointed you, He does the speaking for you. The moment you justify yourself before men, man becomes your judge. As soon as you try to explain yourself you have fallen before men.

D. No personal feeling.

(1) Those who do not know how to control their heart and lips are not fit to be in authority. In all things we must not involve our emotions, we are to have no personal opinion of our own. We are not to personally judge to punish one for their actions.

(2) Authority is set up to execute God's order not to uplift oneself. The important thing is to help people to be subject correctly to God's authority and justice.

(3) To be a delegated authority is not at all an easy thing, because it requires the emptying of one's self.

E. Revelation.

(1) A man's value before God is not decided by other's judgment nor by his own. He is measured by the revelation he receives from God. Revelation is God's evaluation and measuring stick.

(2) God authority is built on God's revelation and His estimation of a person is according to that revelation.

(3) If God gives revelation is His authority is established and when His revelation is withdrawn the man is rejected and so is His authority.

(4) If we want to learn to be an authority we must pay attention to our relationship before God. If God desires to have communion with us face-to-face no one can eliminate us. But if our communication above is severed, and the heavens are shut, all we do will be for naught.

(5) An open heaven is the seal of God and the testimony of son ship. Revelation is therefore the evidence of authority.

Conclusion.

What is your attitude toward submitting to authority? If you have problems with it, talk to God and get to the root of the reason why. If you've been taken advantage of or hurt by an authority figure, let God minister healing to you. There is a godly pattern for submission and authority, and God wants to help you experience it, so you can reach your full potential.

A word of instruction often the Bible will exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (1 Tim. 2: 1,2).

Source: Spiritual Authority by Watchman Nee, Authority and Submission by Watchman Nee, Article by Andy Stanley on the internet.

