

Authority and Submission

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I. Introduction.

- A. A preoccupation of the subject of authority can be dangerous. (Luke 10)
- B. Authority and leadership are not synonymous.
- C. Leadership and position are not synonymous.
- D. In an ordered universe there has to be authority and submission to authority, and there is an ordered authority structure.

II. Background.

- A. The ministry is both a spiritual movement and an organization.
- B. All authorities have limits so the choice of realm ultimately comes down to the individual.
- C. We have to adapt to different people's life circumstances - there is a tendency in all of us to be God, which is the central sin of the universe. There is a natural tendency to Lord over people.
- D. We have to use external control as a government and societal control because there is a lack of internal control. The spiritual leadership seeks to establish inner control first by surrender and submission.

III. Topic: the exercise of authority.

- A. Authority, responsibility and accountability are key words.
- B. Authority is not a bad word. It is a reward. (Luke 22:28, 19:27)
- C. He who accepts authority must accept responsibility. The leader must function. (1 Timothy 3:4-5, Titus 2)
- D. Responsibility must be discharged with a certain kind of attitude and action.
 - 1. The process is vital in the exercise of authority.
 - 2. Husbands are to love their wives and not be harsh (Colossians).
 - 3. Fathers are not to provoke their children but love. Governors are to rule justly (2 Samuel 23:3).
 - 4. Employers are to forbear threatening (Ephesians 6:9).
 - 5. Spiritual leaders are not to act as lords over God's heritage. (1 Peter 5:3).

6. The spiritual element has to come in to restore these relationships.

E. Responsibility brings accountability. To the one who is given much, much is required. (Luke 12:41-48)

1. One is accountable to those who they receive the authority from.

2. There is an intermediate accountability to men. This is from the top down and the bottom up.

3. There is a final accountability to God. The Lord is to be the center of all the relationships with man. (Romans 14:12, 1 Peter 3:7)

IV. Conclusion: power is a poison, but to the human that has faith in some force and is conscious of his own limitations power is not necessarily fatal.

Application questions.

1. Why is it that authority is not a bad thing?

2. What is the relationship between authority and responsibility? With what attitude should authority be exercised?

3. What people do you exercise authority over? How do you measure up as a spiritual person in those areas? What can you do better?
