



School Of Ministry

Lesson 35

SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY

(1) Why We Need Spiritual Authority....

As believers, we have been given spiritual authority through our relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. The bible says we are seated with the Lord Jesus Christ in heavenly places far above principalities and powers (Ephesians 1: 16-2:7). Just as a police officer is powerless in enforcing the law of the land without the required authority, so believers are powerless, and will be ineffective in enforcing Christ's victory and dominion over the world, demonic spirits, and Satan himself, without understanding and exercising spiritual authority. That is why the devil does not want Christians to learn about the authority that is available to us, and how to function maximally upon the earth by exercising it. ***He will fight believers and ministers in this area more than most others*** because he knows that when we learn the truth, his heyday will be over, and we will dominate him by enjoying the authority that is rightfully ours (Ephesians 3:7-20).

(2) What is Spiritual Authority? Ephesians 1:18-23

Authority is delegated power. Although the Greek word "*exousia*" should be rightly translated authority, in many parts of the New Testament it is translated as "*power*". **It means competency, mastery, delegated power and influence, authority, jurisdiction, right, strength, a covering....** That was the first grace conferred upon every believer (Eph 4:7; John 1:12; Mark 13:34; Genesis 1:26; Matthew 28:18; Luke 10:19ff; Mark 16:15ff). Spiritual authority is all the power, strength, dominion, and right of the godhead conferred upon the believer to reign with Christ on the earth as though He were here in person. When Christ ascended to Heaven, He transferred His authority to the Church. He is the Head of the Church, and believers make up the body (I Cor 12:27; Eph 5:23). Christ's authority has to be perpetuated through His body which is on the earth.

(3) **Hierarchies** are important to God, and everything in the spirit realm operates in hierarchies. Heaven and earth is set up to be this way. Even though God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are one, authority flows from the Father to the Son to the Holy Spirit (I Jn 5:7). Even though all angels are one, some angels are endowed with more authority than others

(Daniel 10:13). Satan recognizes this well, and being a “*copy-cat*” has also set up his kingdom to operate in hierarchies (Eph 6:12). All demonic spirits don’t command the same measure of authority. Satan was kicked out of heaven when (as arch-angel Lucifer) he tried to usurp God’s authority (Isa 14:12-15; Lk 10:18). ***Hierarchies are defined as arrangements of persons or things in a graded series as by rank or ability.*** When believers fail to recognize or operate within hierarchies set up by God, they hinder the flow of spiritual authority in their lives (I Cor 11:7-12; Jude 8, 9 Ampd).

(4) Benefits of Spiritual Authority. Being under authority is being under a “Covering” (Heb “*bayith*”). God’s way of protecting us and enabling us to function in His authority is to place us under a covering of authority. Failure to submit to God-ordained authority is to leave ourselves exposed to the enemy (Acts 19:13-16). A minister (believer) who hopes to succeed in life must be able to answer the “authority” question (Mk 11:28; Lk 4:36). When a believer’s obedience and submission is complete, they can successfully use the spiritual authority conferred upon them in punishing the rebellious spirits positioned against them (2 Cor 10:6). Spiritual authority enables us to fulfill every aspect of the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20) and do the works of Jesus (Luke 9:1; Luke 10:19; Acts 10:38).

(5) Submission & Authority. Authority can only be truly exercised by those “*under authority*” (Matt 8:8-13). To “*submit*” to someone or something is to “*yield or surrender oneself to the will of another; to commit something to the consideration or judgment of another; to allow oneself to be subjected to something...*” The bible teaches us to *submit* to God’s as well as man’s authority. Submission isn’t only commanded when we agree with someone or something, but when God sets them up as authority over us. Submission aids the flow of authority into and out of our lives. True submission is not only in words and actions, but also in attitude. God expects us to submit to (a) **Governing Authorities** (Rom 13:1-5); (b) **Local Church Pastors** (Heb 13:7, 17); (c) **Parents** (Eph 6:1, 2); (d) **Employers** (Eph 6:3-8); (e) **Secular leaders** (I Pet 2:13-18); (f) **Spiritual leaders** (I Pet 5:5); (g) **Marital Spouses** (Eph 5:20-22); and (h) **Ministers of the gospel** (I Cor 16:15).

(6) Rebellion Negates Authority. Rebellion is an evil spirit that destroys nations, churches, families, and God-ordained visions (I Sam 15:23). Rebellion is the opposite of submission, and can be subtle or bold-faced. Satan is at the root of every rebellion, and uses it to open the door for demonic oppression into people’s lives. ***Rebellion is an act or show of defiance to God’s set authority.*** There is never any ground to individually or corporately usurp or rebel against authority set in place by God (Psa 68:6; Deut 21:20, 21; Jude 8-12). Individuals (such

as **Jezebel**...I Kings 18, 19, 21; 2 Kings 9; Rev 2:20), and groups of people (such as **Korah, Abiram** etc...Numbers 16; and **Miriam & Aaron**...Numbers 12) who defy God's set authority unwittingly defy God Himself because He takes it personally. **David** (2 Samuel 1:11-16) and **Apostle Paul** (Acts 23:1-5) demonstrated that the honorable and godly way to respond to God's set authority when wronged by them or when we feel they are wrong, is not defiance but deference to God's superior judgment.

(7) **Receiving and Exercising Spiritual Authority.** As believers, we have been raised up to sit with Christ in heavenly places far above all principalities and powers (Eph 1:20, 21; Eph 2:6). ***This must be a revelation to us.*** We must understand that in the mind of God, we were raised when Christ was raised. All the authority that was given to Christ when He rose from the dead belongs to us through Him, and we may exercise it. It is our assignment to carry out Christ's work upon the earth, and ***one aspect of that work is to stand our ground against the devil, and put him on the run with the Word*** (Matthew 16:18, 19). We have '***Spiritual Jurisdiction***' over the areas of the earth that God gave us such as our lives, families, churches, communities etc. It is our job as ministers of Christ to ***enforce His dominion upon the earth until He returns*** (Mark 16:15-20). Satan will test your understanding of these concepts, and fight you every way he can, but remember he is a defeated foe (Colossians 2:15) and we are more than conquerors through Christ (Romans 8:37-39). ***We must take everything that is ours by force*** (Matthew 11:12)! Whatever we tolerate is tolerated, but whatever we refuse is refused (Matthew 18:18, 19), and the angels have been assigned to enforce our authority (Hebrews 1:14) as though it were Jesus Christ Himself giving the orders (Psalms 103:17-22)!