

## “The Significance of Authority”

It's the uniform agreement of Christendom that all authority is either in or from God and that people possesses this gift, only to the degree that the Lord bestows it. Furthermore, the two basic forms of authority are intrinsic (belonging to one's essential nature) and deprived (given to one from another source). Since there is no authority except from God, every kind of authority other than that of God Himself, is derived (given to) and secondary to God's power (John 19:11). It derives its power from the Father, Son, is manifested by the Holy Spirit and is given in and through the Bible to the Church and the world. While each of the approaches to authority described in the above historical survey is still practiced and taught today. Scripture affirms that all legitimate power comes from God.

Romans 13:1-5 says:

*“Everyone must submit to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. God has established the authorities that exist. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authority, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. “*

The Bible expresses God's authority as “upholding all things by the His Word, (Hebrews 1:3 NKJV). In reality this means, God's Word is His authority. Therefore, God's authority represents Himself, while His power depicts His acts. Consequently, sin against God's power (act) is different than sin against God's authority (Himself). Sin against His authority is sin against the very character and nature of God. So if you rebel against God's authority or those He delegates it to, you are contending with His very character and nature. Rather than struggle against any form of authority you should submit to it.

Acts 9:1-6 says:

*“Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the priest and asked him for letters to the Synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him. “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” Who are you, Lord? “Saul asked. I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting, “he replied. Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”*

Prior to Paul's divine encounter with God, he was persecuting the Church. Once the Lord dealt with Paul, he experienced a life-changing event. We all know that salvation came to Paul during his personal visitation from the Lord, However, something else happened in his life. He saw for the first time the authority of God, and it instantly changed him. Isn't it interesting that just a few

days later the Lord sent the high and mighty Paul, the Pharisee among Pharisees, the judge, jury and persecutor of the church to an unknown Christian named Ananias for prayer? The intriguing thought here, is that, had Paul not experienced God's authority on the road to Damascus that day, he would have never surrendered himself to such an obscure Christian brother in the city.

The revelation that Paul had on the road to Damascus is important for our Christian walk. Unless we are introduced to God's authority, we will continue to satisfy our insatiable desire for self-exaltation, and continue, openly or secretly, to tear down any delegated authority. Until we experience the illumination of His Omnipotence through the revelation that He reigns, we will continue to usurp His authority and those appointed by Him. Unless the Kingdom of God works in us, we will be critical and hold in contempt, everything that is attached to His Sovereignty. We too, like Paul, will be about tearing down God's Kingdom as well as the Lord's delegated authority, thinking we are about the Father's business.

**To be a person of authority we must first submit to authority.** The key element of submission is that we must become aware of the awesomeness of the Lord. Until this occurs we will continue to strive against authority rather than serve them. When we are revealed the glorious power of God, then submitting to any and all authority is simple. As a matter of fact, like Watchman Nee, we will look for authority to submit to in whatever environment we're in.

The greatest commandment of the Lord is not for us to bear the cross, to serve, give offerings or deny oneself; the greatest commandment is for us to obey! In order to obey we need to know, by divine revelation, who and what we are to obey. This cannot occur from a religious set of rules or regulations. To obey requires relationship! We can't have a relationship with a God we don't know, and we can't truly submit to the Lord's authority until we have been revealed it. If we are lacking in relationship and the revelation of God's authority, we must ask the Lord for it, and He will surely give it to us.

Our God is omnipotent, to be omnipotent, He is sovereign, one cannot exist without the other. To reign, God must have power, and to reign sovereign, He must have all power and authority. God possesses what no one can, an incomprehensible plentitude of power and authority, a power that is absolute and never ending. Furthermore, God delegates authority to His creation but never surrenders the least iota of His power, might, or authority. God gives but He doesn't give away, all that He gives, remains His own and returns to Him only. Forever He remains what He has forever been, the Lord omnipotent full of power and authority.

There are two principles in the universe, God's authority and Satan's rebellion; we cannot serve God on one hand, while being rebellious on the other. All authority is from God because He orders everything. If we trace any authority upward, we will eventually come back to the Lord. God is above all authorities, and every authority is under Him. Once we touch any authority, we touch Him! Remember that God's work is not necessarily carried out by power but by authority. He upholds everything by His authority (Word). Creation came about through the Word of His authority. We certainly don't understand how God's authority works, but we do know that God accomplished everything through it.

In Matthew 8:5-13, The centurion whose servant was sick, knew that there was an authority above him to which he should submit, inasmuch as there were those under him who submitted to him. Therefore, he only needed the Lord to say one word, and he believed that the matter would be settled. He knew that all authority was in the Lord's hand; He believed in the Lord's authority. This is why Jesus said that He had found no faith greater than this. When you, like the centurion, respond to God's authority as well as to those He delegates it to, with submission, you too will have similar results.

## **Conclusion**

Today God appoints authorities everywhere in the universe and beyond. He established all of the orbits in the universe; He has established all of the provinces in the world and they are under His authority and He dispenses authority to those He chooses. I pray that you will see that those who offends God's authorities offend the Almighty One simultaneously! If God trust those He empowers, then we must trust God to deal with those He has appointed. It's time to release our hurts, disappointments, fears; anger, criticism judgment, suspicion, mistrust and bitterness against those who have been given authority over you. Our past pain (whether real or perceived) has skewed our acceptance of delegated authority. As we trust the Lord to heal us today, let's ask Him to change our mind set, that says "delegated authority must be perfect" and accept the truth of this message, "**The Significance of Authority.**"

## **Pray**

Lord I repent for being rebellious and refute the belief system that has been drummed into my head that says, "Rebel against Authority." I ask that you would reveal to me, your great authority and omnipotence. Also show me how to properly relate and submit to those you have placed over me. Satan has controlled me too long causing me to fear authority. I deny him any influence in my life today. I declare and decree that submitting to authority brings peace and spiritual prosperity to my life. I will embrace authority rather than ignore it or tear it down. Lord, your plan is good and never harmful or destructive. I admit that I have been hurt in the past and because of that hurt, I have remained angry and shut down as it applies to authority. I repent for allowing past hurts to stop me from loving and trusting authority. I declare that the authority issues in my life are healed, and I am ready to trust and love again, in Jesus Name, amen!

\* Some of this material was taken from Watchmen Nee's Book, "Spiritual Authority."

---

**Permissions:** You are permitted to reproduce and distribute this material in any format provided that you do NOT alter the wording in any way, you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction, and you do not make more than 100 physical copies. For web posting, a link to this document on our website is preferred. Any exceptions to the above must be explicitly approved by Arise Christian Fellowship.

**Please include the following statement on any distributed copy:** By Vance Russell, Arise Christian Fellowship 2007.  
Website: [www.ariseministries.com](http://www.ariseministries.com). Email: [ministries@ariseministries.com](mailto:ministries@ariseministries.com). Telephone: 512.451.8260.

---