

# Understanding Authority (Part 1)

by Paul Lloyd

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*This sermon explores the concept of authority, its biblical foundations, and its implications for Christians today.*

**Duration:** 1:14:01

**Scripture:** Matthew 28:18, Philippians 2:5, Colossians 1:12

**Topics:** "Authority"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the concept of authority and how it relates to our faith in God. He uses the example of a police officer with a badge to illustrate the power of authority. The speaker emphasizes that authority is not dependent on physical strength or size, but rather on what is behind the person in authority. As Christians, our authority comes from God, and we should recognize and submit to His authority in our lives. The speaker encourages listeners to remain under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and walk in the spirit.

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## Transcript

We want to do that this morning, Lord, wait upon You. We want to wrap our lives around You, have You wrap Yourself around us, and experience that strength and power that comes from You afresh. Thank You, Lord, that You're here.

Thank You, God, that You're a God who cares. That every soul in this room today, every little child, every man, every woman, every youth, that you long to meet needs today, you long to speak, and you long to use your Word to do something creative in our lives, to make something in us that's of You. So, Lord, we ask You to do that.

God, we just open our hearts to You this morning and say, Lord, speak to me. And we ask You, Lord, to give us a heart that says, yes, Lord, yes, Lord. And Lord, take away from us anything that would say, no, Lord, or not yet, Lord.

May there be a spirit of surrender to You, we pray. We ask You to bind and remove every evil influence here today, every influence that would want to hinder us from hearing or receiving. Surround us with Your angels, Lord.

We come under You and we say, Jesus Christ is Lord of our lives and of this place, and that You are the one who has authority here. We don't want anything else. So we welcome You, Lord, to just be big.

Be all that You can be and want to be in our midst. Open our eyes to see You, Lord. Help me to speak Your words, Lord, not my own.

In Jesus' name, Amen. Are you glad to be here today? Do you love the Lord? Do you love His word? Amen. We do.

I'd like to speak today on the topic of understanding authority. Understanding authority. I'm not going to be able to do it in one message today.

I realized that last night I was wearing myself out. I thought I'm going to wear everybody else out if I try to do that tomorrow. So this will be part one.

Part two will come some other time. Maybe next week. I don't know.

What does that word do in you when you hear the word authority? Does that word make you feel good? Does the word make you feel bad or not feel anything? How does that word affect you? It's a lot of people. That's kind of a bad word. Authority.

A lot of us have had bad experiences with authority, haven't we? I have. And so, yeah, it's a word that has some mixed baggage with it. But I want to do a teaching on understanding authority.

Sometimes when we don't understand something, it's, well, yeah. If we don't understand something, we're missing it. We're missing the point.

And authority is one of those things that I think is not understood very well. And so today in this message, what I'd like to talk about is kind of the background of authority, where it comes from, what it is and where it is and what authority we have as Christians. And I hope you did as excited as I did when I was studying this.

And then the next time I want to talk about more of the practical thing. How shall we live because of these things? So understanding authority. Authority is everywhere.

I don't know if you realize it, but you've been moving in authority all day long. You drove to get here, right? What side of the street did you drive on? Why did you do that? It's a rule. Who made the rule? The government.

How did they get the right to do that? Authority is everywhere. You know, there's authority in your mailbox. Did you know that? I look this up.

I used to put tracks in places. And one time I heard you can't just put things in people's mailboxes. And so I knew that.

But I wanted to look up. What's the official rule about that? So I looked it up yesterday. It says this is on the Postal Service website.

It says mailboxes are considered federal property. And federal law makes it a crime to vandalize them or to in any way mess with what's inside. So have you ever heard people go around with baseball bats and drive their car and knock them over? This is what the federal law says.

Violators can be fined up to \$250,000 or imprisoned for up to three years for each act of vandalism. There was a guy one time who came down our road. He knocked about five of those things over.

I don't know if he got caught, but he could have spent 15 years in jail and paid \$1,250,000 if they threw the book at him. That's authority. There's authority in my mailbox.

There's authority in... you exercised this morning if you're like me, right? Son, get your belt on. Don't forget your belt. That's authority.

How did I get that authority? Where did it come from? It's just everywhere. We can't get away from it. And we live in a world that is... there's realms and layers of authority everywhere.

Peter said to... I think it was Ananias. He said about... remember he sold his house and he brought the money, but he didn't bring all of it. And Peter said, was it not in your power to do with whatever you wanted to? And that word is the word authority.

This might be a good place to bring this word thing up. How many of you have ever heard the difference between dunamis and exousia? Anybody? Alright, not a whole lot. Some of us.

Okay. In the King James Bible particularly, dunamis is a word translating power. Dunamis is the word in Acts 1.8 that says, but you shall receive power when the Holy Ghost has come upon you.

Dunamis. We get our word dynamite. Our English word dynamite comes from that Greek word dunamis.

It's talking about might, power. Something's going to come upon you. You're going to have power to be a witness.

Your life's going to change. That's dunamis, power. But then there's this other word called exousia.

And that word is often translated power in King James. But if you actually study it, and I mean power is not a wrong translation, but it has a lot of the connotations of authority more so. It means, exousia means you have a legal power.

In other words, you have a right to something. So for example, I have, I came here in my vehicle. That's my vehicle, right? I have a legal right to that vehicle.

Now who gave me that exousia to own personal property? Who? No? But you're right in a sense. They categorize it or they whatever, protect it. But who gave people the right to have personal property? God did.

How did He do that? He said, you shall not steal. Do you get that? By saying you shall not steal, God is saying, I acknowledge that there is such a thing as personal property that people own and you can't take it. So that all of us in this room today, we own stuff.

We have personal property. We have exousia. We have the right to oversee that property.

We have authority over that property because God gave it to us. And I'd like to say right off the bat, all authority comes from God. Remember what Jesus said to Pilate? Pilate said, don't you know I have authority that I can release you or I can kill you? And you remember what Jesus said? You can have nothing except that we're giving you from above, from God.

Jesus understood that. And so exousia, we're going to look at a lot of these words and there's actually several of them that are translated power that to me it really was a lot more exciting to put that word authority in there because power is something that is like, okay, you have like physical force or you have the might to do something. But authority means there's something behind you, bigger than you, stronger than you, backing you up.

So let's just take an example. This isn't so common in our day, but in the old days they didn't have traffic lights. They had a traffic policeman.

Now, if a semi-truck 18-wheeler is coming down the road and that policeman is standing in the middle of the road, does he have power to stop that? No, the thing will run him right over, right? He has no power, but does he have authority to stop that? And so this man who doesn't have a bit of power that could stop that semi, if he just goes like this, what happens? He better stop, right? If he doesn't stop, what happens? There's somebody behind that man. Now, if somebody just decides, hey, I think it would be fun to direct some traffic today. That would be really cool.

I'm going to just go out there and do that, okay? That could be hazardous to your health, right? Because he stands out there in his whatever, his jeans and T-shirt, and he goes, and these people are going, I don't see any sign of authority there. Why? He doesn't have a badge. He doesn't have a hat.

He doesn't have that sign of authority. And so people recognize that. And people would say, you don't have any right to do that.

People would just drive right past. We had a situation the other day. A tree fell into the road right in front of us.

I never saw anything like this. It was a calm day. This tree just rotted in half and fell across the road, and the guy who was right in front of me, you know, he just sort of ran over the sticks, the things, and it was a very bad situation, potentially.

And, you know, the tree was this big around. And so we're like, okay, what do we do now? And we, I was sort of faced with this challenge of how do we, this is dangerous. Somebody could get killed here, right? And it could be me if I'm not careful.

So we pulled over to the road, and we went back. We came back, and it just so happened this guy came from the other side who had a chainsaw in his truck. So he parked it right in front of this tree on the other side.

And, you know, I realized somebody's got to stop the traffic, right? So I didn't have my badge or I didn't have my nothing, but I just, you know, kind of went like this. And the people stopped. Why did they give me that authority? I didn't have that authority.

How did I get it? Huh? Yet they looked and they saw a tree, and they go, hey, you know what, somebody needs to do something here. I'm going to let him stop me. I'm going to allow him to have authority in my life.

And so I got to be one of them. Always wanted to be one. You know, just stop all those big heavy vehicles, you know.

And anyway, that situation turned out good. It worked out well, and, you know, praise the Lord. It was fun, you know.

The guy with the chainsaw was having fun, and everybody threw the thing over the side, and everybody got to go again. But the thing about authority is it's not dependent on how big you are, how strong you are. You could get a brand new police guy who's, you know, 19 years old, whose uniform doesn't fit him.

It's too big, you know, and hanging on him, and, you know, it's his first day on the job. But when he has that badge and he sticks his hand up, they stop. Why? Because of what's behind.

That's the beauty of authority. It's there's something behind me that it's not about me. It's what's behind me, and that thing that's behind me is way, in our case as Christians, is way bigger, way stronger than we could ever hope to be.

And so it's an exciting topic today, and I hope that, you know, through this message, I hope you can get excited about what it means to be in the authority of the Lord and to be His representative and to have Him standing behind you. What a powerful thing. Well, let's write a few things up here.

The very title of God's realm is called the Kingdom of God. That speaks of authority, doesn't it? The Kingdom of God. The Kingdom of God.

Okay. Now, there's also another realm, and it's called the what? Kingdom of what? No? Kingdom of Darkness. I like how God didn't call it the Kingdom of Satan.

It's like He didn't want to give Him, you know, even give Him that title or that credit. He said the Kingdom of Darkness. So we also have, of course, the kingdoms of this world.

Physical nations and so forth. We're not going to talk about that so much today. But in the spiritual realm, there are two kingdoms.

There's a kingdom where God reigns. There's a kingdom where Satan reigns. How did Satan... Let's see.

Who is the head of the Kingdom of God? Let's go there. God. Particularly, what person of the Godhead? The Father.

Well, okay, let me rephrase it. Who has all authority in the Kingdom of God? Okay. Okay, Jesus Christ has all authority.

He said that, didn't He? Okay, that's that exousia. He said all power is given unto Me. That's that exousia.

All authority has been given unto Me. In where? Heaven and Earth. And then He said, therefore, you do something.

Now, how did He get that? How did Jesus get that? Let's turn with me to Philippians. Philippians chapter 2. And let's look at starting at verse 5. We're going to read about how Jesus got this authority. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God.

But He made Himself of no reputation and took upon Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto

death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore, God also has highly exalted Him and given Him a name, which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Every single one of the knees in this room is going to bow to Jesus Christ and say, You are Lord. Every single tongue is going to confess that. Not one will be left out.

There won't be any who say, I'm not going to do it. I'm not doing that. Nobody's going to be able to do that.

They shall all come before the Lord Jesus Christ, the worst rebel, the worst dictator, Adolf Hitler, whoever. They shall all bow before Him, the Bible says, and they shall all declare with their mouth, Jesus Christ is Lord. Praise God.

Isn't that exciting? We live in a world where those thugs and people are running rampant and they're allowed to do their thing for a season, and that doesn't feel good and that's miserable for us, but we know there's coming a day when every one of them shall bow before Jesus Christ. Hallelujah. Without exception.

Jesus became the head. Look what it says here. He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death.

Obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. And the next verse says, Wherefore, because He was obedient to the death, God highly exalted Him and gave Him that name which is above every name. The kingdom of God works on the principle of obedience.

Jesus obeyed the Father. He went to the cross in spite of the fact that He said, if there's any other way, Father, that this cup can pass, please, but not my will and thine. He obeyed.

And that act of obedience brought Him to the highest place of honor and of authority in God's kingdom. This is the kingdom of obedience. Now, let's just contrast these.

This kingdom is the opposite. How did this whole kingdom start? Was it not through the rebellion of the devil? Rebellion. Now, where are people born? Which kingdom are people born into? This one? Or this one? Physically born into this earth.

We're born into here. How are we going to get out of here and get over there? That's the question. And that's what we want to look at.

It says in Ephesians chapter 2, a couple pages over there, it says, You has He quickened, brought alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past you walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power, that's exousia, the prince of the authority of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Now, what kind of spirit do you think works in people who are called the children of disobedience? What kind of spirit do you think that would be? Okay. Or I was going to say just disobedient.

If they're called the children of disobedience and there's a spirit that works in them, wouldn't it be a spirit of disobedience or rebellion? Same, same idea. So there's a spirit here. Now, is there a spirit over here? Come on.

Is there a spirit here? The Holy Spirit. Who is that spirit given to? Us. Look at Acts chapter 5. Turn with me quick.

Acts chapter 5 and verse 32. And we are his witnesses of these things. And so also is the Holy Ghost, whom God has given to them that obey Him.

Do you see what happens? Do you see how you get translated out of here and into here? It's a Holy Spirit. And it's given to them that obey. It's given to them that obey.

This is the way the kingdom works. There's a king. He's Jesus.

And all things are underneath Him. He is Lord. Remember I said there's 8,000 references to Lord in the Bible? 8,000.

I don't think there's any other word that has so many references. He's Lord. He's king.

The kingdom of God is a kingdom of obedience. It's a kingdom where Jesus is the head and all of us are underneath. Beneath Him.

Now, the kingdom of Satan is the opposite. It's a kingdom of rebellion. And there's a spirit of disobedience in that kingdom.

And we need to be taken out of that. Now look what it says in Colossians chapter 1. This is one I got excited about. Let's just pick up in verse 12.

Colossians chapter 1 and verse 12. Paul is writing to them. He said, Does that excite you? Satan does not have authority any longer.

He translated us out of the authority of darkness into the authority of Christ. And that is a beautiful thing. He translated us out of that kingdom into... In John chapter 1 and verse 12 it says, But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become what? Sons of God.

That word again is that exousia. Authority. When you receive Jesus, you now have authority to be a son of God.

That means you have the right. You see, this is a very legal thing. You now have a right.

You now have a right to be free from the control of this one. And you now have a right to enter into the kingdom, but also a right to become a son of God. What a privilege that is.

What a right. That to me, that authority is much more exciting than just the thought power. Because it means I have a right to be here.

I have a right to be here because of what Jesus did. He died on that cross for me. He paid the price for all my sin, for all my unrighteousness, for all my darkness.

And now I have a legal right to be into this kingdom and to be a son of God. And this, you know, Satan is, well, he's called the what of the brethren? Accuser. That's kind of a legal term there, isn't it? He's like the prosecuting attorney or whatever.

He's the accuser. And he comes and he says, Brother Paul is bad. Brother Paul did wrong.

Brother Paul, let me tell you about all the things that he did. Let me list all of Brother Paul's sins and just let it out for God and everybody to see it. He's wrong.

He's wrong. He did this and did that when he was 14, did that when he was 16. And he did this thing and he fought those thoughts and all this.

He is a legalist. He's a legal prosecutor in that sense. But the name of Jesus and the Holy Spirit and the Lord Jesus Christ, he is what? He's our advocate.

That's another law term. I have a lawyer. And, you know, like somebody said, he's a Jewish lawyer.

He's a good one. And my advocate, I hope that wasn't offensive to anybody. My advocate says he's covered in the blood.

I paid for all of those things. Paid for in full. Everything Brother Paul did.

Yes, OK, yes, he did that. But the record is expunged. It's been removed.

As far as the East is from the West, so far has he removed my sin. I don't have to stand and be guilty before God because of everything I used to do and everything I did. Why? I have an advocate.

I have authority. I have a legal standing that says that I have been justified by the blood of Jesus Christ. And so many Christians don't understand that.

And so Satan, you know, he's a liar. What he will try to do is if you're living in the reality of that, he'll try to fool you to make you think that it's not real. And, you know, if you don't know your rights, so to speak, people can take advantage of you, right? If you do know your rights, you can say, no, wait a minute, wait a minute.

That's not... you have no right to do that to me because I am this. In our case, I am covered with the blood. Jesus is my righteousness.

It's not me. And, you know, I don't try to deny things when I feel accused by the devil. No, I acknowledge it.

That's right. I did do that. That's exactly right.

And I did things that you didn't even mention, you know, and probably worse things. I did it all. I'm willing to admit the truth about myself.

But my plea is Jesus. And then I have a legal standing. Okay? That's a beautiful thing.

He gave me the right to be a son of God. He gave me the right to get out of there and get into His kingdom. That's authority.

And see, I have something now behind me. When I'm standing there in front of the bar, the judge, there's authority behind me backing it up. I mean, I can say I got Jesus as, you know, my righteousness or whatever, but if that's not really true, there's nothing behind me.

But if that's a true fact, I have all that power and all that authority behind me to back that up. And Satan has to yield. And this is what happens.

He's looking for legal rights in our life. On the night that Jesus was crucified, He said, The prince of this world cometh, but he hath what? In me. He's got nothing in me, Jesus said.

He has zero. He's coming. He's going to do what He's going to do.

But Jesus said, He has nothing in me. This is where the Christian life gets challenging, is that there's times where we get over into here and He has something. He's got something in me.

The goal is to live here where He's got nothing in me. There's nothing. I am walking in the light.

I'm not hiding anything. I'm not being deceptive. I'm not covering anything up, but I'm just in the light.

And yes, maybe I sinned, but I'm saying, Lord, wash me in the blood. I'm sorry. I repent.

Forgive me. And Satan has nothing. Where he lives in is this realm over here of the darkness where I'm not willing to say the truth about it.

That wasn't anger. That was righteous indignation. You know? No, just call it what it was.

See what I mean? It's a legal thing. If you're not going to call it what it is, then the Prince of this world cometh and He might have something in you. It says in the Bible, give no place to the devil.

That's what that's talking about. Giving him a place. A place where he can stand.

Something in our life. Some little foothold. Some little rocky outcropping.

Something that he can just stand on. Why? Because he has a legal right to stand there. And so, one of the things that we need to come to grips with as Christians is, you know, we can pray all we want.

We can cry all we want. We can say I want to be delivered all we want. We can, you know, want to be free.

But if Satan has a legal right, you're not going to get free. If he has a place that he is rightfully standing on, he knows his rights. He knows when he does not have to leave.

He also knows when he has to go. And so if there's anything in our life, you know, that's not surrendered to the Lord, isn't this? This is obedience. This is the kingdom of God where I am surrendered to the Lord.

Jesus, whatever you say, that's what I want. When we get out of that realm, Lord, I know you said that, but I just don't want to do that. you know, give me something else to do or whatever.

No, that's unsunderedness. And that opens some of those doors. And so one of the challenges of sanctification and of coming into victory, of overcoming that wicked one, is being willing to recognize any places.

Yes, we were translated out of this kingdom and into this kingdom. That is true. But there are also places in my life or in your life where we are operating in the realm of these things.

We are not surrendered. We are not submitted. We are not completely given to the Lord.

And so it's not like we're not safe. I'm not saying that. But what I'm saying is Satan has a place to torment, to do his work.

I mean, Jesus said that about the man who wouldn't forgive. You remember? This was a guy who had been forgiven everything. Ten million dollars of debt.

His Lord forgave him everything. Matthew 18. He went out and there was a guy who owed him like ten dollars.

He took him by the throat and he said, Pay everything you owe me or I'm throwing you in jail. And the Lord of that servant was so angry that He turned him over to the tormentors so he should pay back all that he owed. That's speaking about us.

I owed ten million. Probably more than ten million. God said, if you're not going to forgive, you are going to be turned over to the tormentors.

Those are the creatures in this realm. See, God is over all. He uses these creatures.

God, do you believe that? He uses tormentors. He uses creatures of darkness to accomplish His purposes because what they do is they make us miserable. They make us wiped out and they make us defeated and they make us, bringing us to that point where we just, you know what, anything God, just get me free from this bondage in my life.

I don't care what it takes. And so those evil entities end up being an instrument in the hand of God. I can testify that in my life.

I've experienced that as a Christian. I was being tormented. Things were not going my way and I was just, life was miserable until I came to that place where I was willing to deal with whatever that thing was that the Lord, the Holy Spirit of God was putting His finger on.

And then once that happened, once we reached that place, that zero point is one way to call it when we're done, freedom. Satan, in the name of Jesus, get out of my life. I renounce my tie to you.

I renounce my opening of a door to you. I want nothing to do with you. Jesus, you're everything in my life.

You come and deal it. And that devil has to go. So the question this morning, does Satan have something in you or in me? Is there anything? Any little place? I want to be like Jesus to say, Satan has nothing in me.

Not one thing. As far as I know, that's true. Satan has nothing in me today.

So salvation is in its essence is leaving the authority of Satan and coming under the authority of Jesus. Is that a good way to say it? Isn't that true? It's changing allegiance. It's changing kingdoms.

It's leaving darkness, coming to the light, leaving Satan as my king, as my master, coming to Jesus as my king. And that's salvation in its very essence. It's leaving disobedience and entering into obedience.

And the people of God are people that are marked with a spirit of obedience. We heard about it today in our Sunday school, right? He was talking about that in Deuteronomy way back then. I want you all to obey me.

It's very important. You need to be my people and show forth my praises. But we live in a world where authority is a bad word.

When I was growing up as a boy, one of the sayings that came out was question authority. Anybody ever heard that? Ever seen it on a bumper sticker? Question authority. There's probably a right place for that.

I don't mind my children questioning me or my fellow servants of the Lord in the congregation coming to me with a question about authority where I'm involved. But that was something else. The guy who said that, his name was Timothy Leary.

Anybody know who he was? He was a Harvard psychologist turned LSD promoter. He promoted everybody to do drugs. You know, take trips.

This was the way to fulfillment. I guess it was on one of his trips where he got that one. I don't know.

Question authority. God says obey authority. Another thing.

All around us is the idea of be your own authority. Is it? Be your own authority. This is huge in our country.

It's promoted everywhere. Self, in other words. And see, Satan, his kingdom, that's what he says to people.

He doesn't say you need to serve me. You need to bow down and offer sacrifices to me. Now, some people do that.

But rather it's hey, do your own thing. Whatever turns you on, whatever you like, that's fine. I'm not like him.

He says you can't do this and you can't do that and you have to do everything. I'm not that way. In my kingdom, you can do whatever you want.

You can be your own authority. And most people say I like that. I really like that.

That feels a lot better to me. That's not so confining. Be your own authority.

God says something else. He says submit yourself to authority. Come under.

Put yourself under the authority in your life. And authority, probably next time we'll talk more about what is this authority? Where is it? And how does it practically work itself out? But God says put yourself under authority. You do it.

You submit yourself. My job is to make you submit. My job is to submit myself.

And that's all of our jobs. God says put yourself under authority. Alright? Okay, the idea in the world.

Here's another one. Can you all read that? Or am I just scribbling? Authority is in my way. I can relate to that.

I'm just telling you how I used to think. Authority is in my way. I want to do this and they're saying no.

In the kingdom, it's different. It says authority is my friend. And it is a gift from God to me.

Do you believe that? Are you glad that there's police? How many of you appreciate the fact that there's policemen in your community? Anybody? We should all be thankful for that. If there was no police, what would our life be like? I don't really want to think about that. I'm thankful for that.

You know what? There was a time when the policeman was not my friend. You know why? Yeah, you know why. Because I did stuff I shouldn't.

Some of which I could have been in trouble for with the police if I got caught. But now he's my friend. Authority is a gift from God.

And I was thinking just this morning as I was thinking about this. I was really blessed with thinking about I-58. Okay? The world says authority is in my way.

Wait a minute. You're a relief. They're doing this or they're doing that or they won't let this or they can't.

I've been blessed to see the leadership of I-58 say, you know what? God has all authority. And you're a relief and whoever else it is that we have to deal with, the Greek government, we're going to get on our knees and we're going to talk to the authority. We're going to ask Him to open doors.

And we're going to believe God that these people cannot stop us. This entity which has authority, they have the authority there to say, you all got to leave. I-58, get out.

They could do that, right? Not if God says, no, I-58 will stay. They will stay. And one of the things that's blessed me is one of the things that has opened that door and allowed God to touch the hearts and make this happen is the attitude of I-58 toward that authority.

See how this works? I-58 comes in and says, hey, you know, these bathrooms are a mess. And they were, right? I mean, we won't get into the graphic details, right? They were a mess. I-58 comes in, hey, we'll clean it.

We'll do it. The relief workers from Europe, do you think they wanted to do that? The secular relief workers. I'm not touching that stuff.

Mm-mm. Not me. The Christians came in and said, we'll do it.

We're here to bless. We're here to serve. We're here to make you successful.

We'll clean your toilets for you. Send a crew. Go for it.

So they clean them all up and they do it. And these people look on and they go, wow. You know what? These people are like, these people are pretty handy to have around here.

And, you know, I mean, we get checked up on, you know, and they take pictures of stuff. And well, when they took pictures of those bathrooms, they looked pretty good. They made us look good.

And so God is using that. The humble spirit that says, we don't have to make our way here. We don't have to force ourself to make this thing happen.

See, that's, that is faith. Real faith that says there's somebody behind us. We're here on His mission.

And He's going to make the, He's going to open these doors and we're just going to obey Him. We're just going to do what He says. We're going to serve.

We're going to lay down our life and we'll see what God will do through that. And so, you know, the Lord has opened up amazing doors. If I understood right, everybody else was kicked out.

Is that right? John? All the other NGOs or whatever? All except one or two. I don't know how many that was. But basically, God gave favor.

Okay? Because He had something He was going to do. The one who said, all authority in heaven and earth is mine. Go therefore, said, this group's going to stay here because they're doing something for me.

That's how it works. This, where should I put this? I'm going to put humility right here. And over here, the opposite is pride.

This realm is the realm where pride reigns supreme. I do what I want to do. Nobody tells me anything.

This realm over here is where humility reigns supreme. Lord, I surrender all. Father, not my will, but Thy will be done.

And see, when we operate in the pride realm, however that may manifest itself in our life, once again, we're giving a foothold. We're opening an opportunity for Satan to have a legal right to come and do his thing. When we walk into humility and the brokenness and the lowliness and we say, God, I'm Yours.

Do whatever You want to do. I humble myself before You. Then He has nothing in us.

So authority is not our enemy. You know, wonderful example. Hudson Taylor, I really love his stories.

He was a young guy. I think he might have been 24, 25. He met this girl over there in China that he really liked.

And he felt like, she's the one for me. She's it. She was a godly young lady.

Her parents were both killed, or both died in a way of sickness, I think, in China as missionaries. And she just said, I'm staying. I want to serve God here.

She was about 21 maybe or somewhere in that realm. So Hudson Taylor approached the lady who was the authority. I don't remember her name, probably just as well.

She was this elderly missionary lady who, how can I say it, kindly. She didn't have a real good attitude towards Hudson. Let's put it that way.

In fact, she didn't like him at all. In fact, she said to him, you can have nothing to do with Maria. Zero.

I don't want you to see her. I don't want you to talk to her. I don't want you to come visiting.

I forbid you to have anything to do with her. I don't approve of you. I don't like your method.

You go around cutting your hair like these Chinese people, wearing those funny robes. We don't do that. We're Western missionaries and we're not going to yield to their customs here.

Basically, she thought he was a weirdo and somebody that she just didn't trust. What do you do now? Right? Hudson knew what it was like to walk with God. Hudson got on his knees and he took her to the Lord, as he had learned to do many times before that.

He said, God, I believe this is the one for me. This lady is standing in my way and I can't do anything. I'm not allowed to see her.

Now listen, many a young man would say, I don't care what that old lady has to say. God told me she's going to be my wife and I'm going to do it anyway. Many a person would take that attitude, but Hudson Taylor, he said no.

He said, Lord, I've learned enough about walking with You over the years that if this is Your will, there is nobody on earth that can stand in the way of it. Nobody. I don't care how mean that lady is.

I don't care how much of a bad attitude that lady has. She cannot stop it from coming to pass. Now is that faith or what? Do you see how faith is tied in with this whole thing of authority? It's believing that if I'm walking in the Lord's will and plan for my life, that whatever He wants to bring to pass, it's going to happen.

It doesn't matter what the government says. It doesn't matter what the parents say or whoever says. It shall come to pass in God's time.

And so many times Hudson learned that when he yielded like that, God did beautiful things all through the process. And in the process of time, what happened was this lady was not the ultimate authority. She had an uncle back in England who was the official guardian of this Maria.

So Hudson did the wise thing. After he prayed, he said, I'm going to write him a letter and I'm going to explain the situation and I'm going to ask God to touch his heart to say yes. He went above her.

She wasn't the ultimate authority. Now, if she was the ultimate authority, then he would have had to just go straight up to the Lord and say, God, you're going to have to move something here. But he saw that there was another layer of authority that he could appeal to.

So he did that. He wrote the letter. Of course, it takes like three or four months for the letter to get there and get back.

So they had a long time to wait. I'm not going to give you all the details of the story, but the long story short, the uncle looked into who this guy was, talked to his friends and his mission society and the uncle goes, I think this guy is a good guy and I'm going to give my approval for it. He got the letter.

He got the approval. And he went and saw her. And I hope he resisted the temptation to look a certain way towards the older lady.

See, he has a right. I have a right to be here. Who's there? It's Hudson.

Who gave you the right to be here? I have it right here. I have a legal right that says I may court Maria. Right? What? Let me see that.

And he was right. He had a right. He had the right.

The exousia. The authority. And when you have that authority, nothing is going to stop it.

Just tell one more story. There was a young lady who wanted to go to China. Her mother did not want her to go.

What was her name? Isabel Coon? How old was she? Early 20s, that's what I was going to say. Her mother forbade her. She said, Over my dead body you go to China.

Now parents, take heed. Do you know what happened? It's sort of amusing, but it's really not if you think of the reality of it. Her mother died.

I don't know how long it was after that. A year or two? Something like that. Her mother's prophecy came true.

It was over her dead body that her daughter was released into the plan of God. She knew God's called me to go to China. She had an authority that was unyielding.

You will not go over my dead body. Parents, be careful what we say. Because God said, Okay, so be it.

That girl went over her mother's dead body. So that's a sober warning for those in authority with those under us. We've got to be so careful.

I don't want to stand in the way of God for my children or my congregation. I don't want to stop God's plan from coming to pass in your life. I don't want to get in the way of Him.

No, Lord. I want to see everybody find the fullness of the will of God for your life. I've learned that God works through those who have an understanding of this principle.

The very thing that you all have on your head on the lady's side here today, it's called power in the King James. It's actually exousia. You have authority on your head.

That's what the Bible says. This is the very essence of Christianity. It's that we are under the authority of Jesus Christ.

Ladies are under the authority of our husbands and of the Lord. And so God said, I want you to even wear something upon your head to demonstrate it to the angels. This one is under authority.

This one here has power on her head, has authority on her head. Well, we're winding it up here. Let's close with the story of the centurion in Luke chapter 7. It's a very familiar story.

Let's just start reading in verse 1. Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant who was dear unto him was sick and ready to die. And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.

And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying that he was worthy for whom he should do this. This is a Roman centurion. This is not an Israelite or a Jew.

But they said, He's worthy because he loves our nation. He's built us a synagogue. Then Jesus went with them.

And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying to him, Lord, trouble not yourself, for I am not worthy that you should enter unto my roof. Wherefore, neither thought I myself worthy to come unto you, but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. Now look at this next statement very closely.

For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers. And I say unto one, Go, and he goes. And to another, Come, and he comes.

And to my servant, do this, and he doeth it. And when Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turned about and said to the people, I say to you, I have not found so great faith in all Israel. And they returned to the house and found the servant whole that had been sick.

What struck me about that was the statement that he made. My conditioning tells me that I should have said that different. I should have said, Okay, I understand how this works, because I'm a man in authority.

And when I say this, they do it. And when I say that, they come. That's my conditioning.

I think that's our conditioning here. But he didn't say that. He said, I am a man set under authority.

Isn't that interesting? In other words, he said, I am here. I am set under authority. And when I say do this or do that, they do it.

Why? Not because of me. They do it because of that. See, in the Roman government, if you didn't obey that centurion, you had the entire Roman empire power and strength backing him up to come and do to you what they would do to people like that, which probably we wouldn't really want to know about.

He said, I'm a man under authority. And he looked at Jesus. This is the amazing thing why his faith is so strong.

He looked at Jesus and he said, I understand that you're somebody who's under authority. He said, I'm a man set under authority. I also am a man set under authority.

He looked at Jesus and he somehow in the spiritual realm, he could see, OK, this guy, he's not doing this stuff by himself. He is set under authority. And when he says to the devil to go, that devil has to go because he's got something backing him up.

And when he says sickness go or whatever it is, he saw into that. That's an amazing thing if you really think about it. He just didn't see a man there.

He applied it to his own life. He said, wow, this is just like me. Like when I tell my servant to go, he goes right away.

And when I tell this one to come, he comes. And Jesus said, I have not found such faith. And I want to say that this principle of understanding authority has everything to do with our faith.

How big is our God? How big is He? Is He big enough to move anything in this world? Is He big enough to move my dad? Who says, no way, son. It ain't going to happen. Is He big enough to move him? I mean, to God, it doesn't take a whole lot to move somebody, does it? But what often happens is there's a time of testing.

And my dad or my pastor or my boss or whoever that authority is in my life, it doesn't seem like they are going to move. And there's a waiting time. There's a testing time where our faith is tried.

And we're tempted to get over into this realm, to take up a rebellion, to question that authority, to say, why God? Why did you let this person be an authority in my life or whatever? But for those who stay under in faith saying, God, I believe this is of You. I believe with all my might You're telling me to do this certain thing or to not do something or whatever. God's going to bring you through.

If that's His will, nobody can stop it. Do you believe that? And so it's very much an exercise of our faith. And those people who've learned this, there's a certain reverence about them.

This thing of authority, some people get it and some people don't. And you can tell when somebody got it. Like, I'm thinking of Samson, Brother Samson, remember he was here a couple of weeks ago.

We never met him, but he came to our prayer meeting and we prayed together. Just talked with him afterwards. And here's a guy who's really a mighty man of God.

He started 200 churches or something over there in Ethiopia. The Lord did through him. And I don't feel like I'm even worthy to shine his shoes, you know? Spiritually speaking, so to speak.

But this guy, he's sitting there talking with us, shares a little bit of his testimony. And Aaron shared, you know, we really appreciate you. We'd like to see if we can hear from you.

We do have somebody scheduled for a main message already. And he was just like, hey, no problem. Just, if you want me to speak, that's fine.

If you want me to have any part, if you want me to speak for five minutes, that's fine. If you want me to just do a main message, that is okay with me. He got it.

He got it. He understood authority. He knew that he didn't have to come in here and say, don't you know who I am? You know, come on.

You've given me 15 minutes to share. You know, pride. He just got it.

And I respected him so much for that. I just sensed this is a man of God. He didn't have any agenda except for, Lord, use me wherever you want and however you want.

And I pray that for all of us in this room that we would be of such a spirit as that. We would exude that humble spirit that says, I don't have to force my way. I don't have to make you do or make these people do it or, you know, whatever it may be.

I'm trusting God to bring it to pass. And next week, or whenever it is, the next time we talk, I want to share some more really practical applications of this in our life. Some stories that are amazing, stories of how God has worked and just how this thing fleshes it out in real life, real time.

You know, God says we're supposed to be humble. God says we're supposed to humble ourselves. And then He'll do what? Lift us up, right? So our job is what? Humble ourselves.

What's God's job? Lift us up. He's got the hard part. We've got the easy part, right? And I pray that we could embrace this thing.

I realize that many people have been hurt by authority, maybe even in this church, maybe in your home, maybe at work, and so forth. And we're going to just talk real practical next time about how to work it out, our salvation with fear and trembling, how to walk out this reality of the kingdom that we live in now in a way that brings glory to God and blessing to ourselves and to everybody around us. So I pray that you could pray for me as I seek the Lord how to share those things and that God would work in us that most excellent spirit of Jesus Christ.

Oh, it's good. It's good, isn't it? Wow. You know, it's what makes the difference in my life, in our lives, whether we get along at work, have a happy home sweet home, have a happy beautiful missionary experience.

You know, it doesn't matter, right? Oh, thank you, Brother Paul, for bringing us the word of the Lord and those beautiful practical examples. Maybe someone has a testimony they'd like to share this morning. Just a word of blessing, a word of edification to all of us.

How many have ever experienced the bitterness of the consequence of my pride and my pushing and my forcing my own way? I have. How many have ever experienced the joy of just great faith that God is going to work this out and I don't have to push or force my way? And you've experienced the blessing? Yes. Amen.

Wow. It makes it so distinctly clear, doesn't it? Darkness. Light.

Kingdom of Satan. Kingdom of Christ. Yes.

I'd just like to say I want to thank Jesus for that word, authority. Because that's Jesus. He listened to His Father, didn't He? And I want to listen to my Father.

And I want to thank God for everything He gives me every day at my age. And I just hope that whoever's sitting here is fighting with that. If you're fighting with it, you're not giving in to God, you're giving in to Satan.

And that won't help you in your walk with God, that's for sure. So thank you, Brother Paul, for bringing that to everybody here. And I hope everybody here walks away with that in their heart.

Thank you. Amen. Praise God.

I think there was a hand up front here. Do you have a mic? Go ahead, Timothy. This subject really gets me excited as I think about these things.

I guess especially that last story that Brother Paul shared about the centurion, just the thought of the fact that our faith in God increases as we acknowledge and receive the channels God has chosen to send His authority and how He's chosen to exercise that here on earth. And so, I guess the more I grow in looking at this subject, I like to think of authority as a channel of God's blessings coming down to me. I think where our problem often comes in, I guess this is my personal experience and just as I've studied this aspect too, I feel like from what I've been hurt or what I've hurt others in using my, quote, authority, sometimes was actually more of an issue of pride of my position.

My position was not actually real authority. Because if I'm confident of the fact that I'm standing in the channel of God's blessings, I have nothing to lose so I don't have anything to defend for myself. So that's a little bit the approach I like to think about is a channel of God's blessings of grace to me.

Praise God. Thank you. Well, I look forward to part two.

Amen. I just want to say, if you find anything in your heart on the side of the kingdom of darkness, oh, I urge you today, quickly, run and get under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Repent and turn from that wicked pride in self.

And it's not just a once and done, is it? We're in a warfare, flesh, spirit. So sometimes, as we discussed in our Sunday school class, you know, you feel that response, the motion, you know, in the heart. And we have to quickly recognize that and repent of even a wrong thought and attitude and remain and stay under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and in His Spirit, walking in the Spirit.

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