

Understanding Authority (Part 2)

by Paul Lloyd

The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding and submitting to God's authority, which leads to true freedom and humility.

Duration: 1:18:39

Scripture: Romans 3:21

Topics: "Authority"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of obeying and submitting to pastors for the sake of one's soul. He urges the congregation to willingly follow the pastor's guidance in matters that are not explicitly addressed in the Bible. The preacher specifically mentions the issue of dress, advising the congregation to avoid unnecessary ornaments and expenses, and to be examples of simplicity. He also highlights the significance of teaching children to obey promptly and without repeated instructions, drawing a parallel to the obedience of the Rechabites in the Old Testament.

Transcript

Just lift up your heart to the Lord and express your desire to love Him and hear His voice today. Lord, we do thank You for what You're speaking to us today. Thank You that we get to be here today, we get to hear the words of life again.

And Lord, we look to You as the author of life and the author of the Bible, and the author and finisher of our faith. And God, we just pray this morning that You'll bless us, that You'll touch us, that You'll speak to us, Lord, and that You'll meet each one of us right where we're at today. You know exactly what we need to hear.

And Lord, I thank You that You're able to take a subject that I'm speaking on, and You could speak to somebody in a totally different area. It has nothing to do with it. I've seen You do that, Lord.

And we pray for that. Speak to us all what we need today. And just quick in Your Word, Lord, we say You are good, God, as we've already heard today.

And Your Word is good. Your ways are good. Your Lordship is good.

Your leadership is good. And we give You all authority in this place. We acknowledge that You have that authority, Lord.

And we come under Your authority and say, Lord, take Your place as King of kings and Lord of lords, and King of our lives. And Lord, give us all a spirit this morning of submission to You, and surrender to You, as servants of God. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Well, praise God. Are you glad to be here? Has God been good to you this week? Do you love God's Word, even when it's hard? Even when it doesn't feel good? It's still good, isn't it? Amen.

Well, for those of you that weren't here last week, this is part two of a series on understanding authority. And as sort of a subtitle, I picked out the title Practical Humility for today's message. Practical Humility.

And I just want to quickly review what we did last week, see how well you all learned it. Authority is a huge topic. We kind of took a big picture last week of it.

Through the Word of God, we saw that all authority comes from God. We saw that there's basically two authority structures in the world, in the spiritual world. Let's put it that way.

You have the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Darkness. Jesus is the head of the Kingdom of God. Satan is the head of the Kingdom of Darkness.

Now, who remembers, how did Jesus get to be the head? How did he get to have all authority given to him? How did he get to have every knee bow and every tongue confess? What did he do that we looked at there in Ephesians chapter, or Philippians chapter two? He humbled himself. Very good. He was obedient, even unto death.

Humility, it says, because he humbled himself even unto death. And the Kingdom of God is a kingdom of humility. Now, on the other side, what was the motivation of Satan? Pride.

We have it right there, and I think it's in Isaiah 14. Ezekiel, as well, says, I will be like the Most High. I will exalt myself above the Most High.

And because of that, he fell. And Jesus said, I beheld Satan fall like lightning. I believe that it was like lightning he fell when he made that statement of pride.

The power of God just cast him out of the Kingdom of God. And his pride manifested itself in what? Rebellion. Very good.

Jesus' humility manifested itself in what? Obedience. So we're starting to see a vast difference between these two kingdoms. Satan, as we know, is a liar.

Satan promises freedom, doesn't he? If you serve me, you can do whatever you want. I'm not like God. He demands all these things of you.

He says, you can't do this and you can't do that. Satan says, I'm not that way. I give you freedom.

You can do whatever pleases you. But with his freedom comes what? Bondage. Because guess who's your Lord then? Guess who has authority over you? It's Satan.

On the other hand, to the natural man, the Kingdom of God and the Word of God looks like, in a sense, it looks like bondage because it says, you shall follow me, you must obey me. And to the natural man, that doesn't feel good, does it? It didn't to me. But what comes with that is freedom.

Freedom. We read about it just in our Sunday school lesson. You know, all the things that God does, they're not for our evil, they're for our good.

And so, we're all born into this Kingdom. Everybody. I was thinking about it this morning.

I was a very proud young man. Rebellious young man. And a very bound young man.

I even said, I'm ashamed to say it, to think that this is who I was, but I even said to my parents one time, I said to my mother, I said, I do what I want to do. Nobody's going to tell me what to do. I'm the boss.

I actually said that in my foolish pride. Well, I left, I moved to Colorado for a while and met the Lord out there. I got saved and you know what God told me to do? He said, give your mother a call and go tell her you're sorry.

So I did. I got on the phone and I called her. This was several months later.

I said, Mom, do you remember the way I used to be? I said, I just want you to know something happened. Remember how I used to say to you, nobody tells me what to do. I'm my own boss.

And on and on. She said, yeah, I remember that. I said, Mom, first of all, I said, I'm sorry, Mom.

That was really wrong. And I said, would you forgive me for that? And I said, I give my life to Jesus. And now He's my Lord.

And that means I do whatever He says. And I follow Him. And I felt like He told me to give you a call and say I'm sorry.

Praise God. That's what happens when God takes a soul out of the kingdom of darkness and translates them into His kingdom. And do you remember last week it said, see there's a spirit in both these kingdoms.

What's the spirit in this kingdom? The spirit of darkness. That's right. And it says it's the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience.

That's Ephesians chapter 2. Now this is the Holy Spirit which is given to them that what? Obey Him. Acts chapter 5. That doesn't sound theologically correct in our world today, does it? The Holy Spirit is given to them that obey Him. Acts 5.32. If you want to check that one out.

See, it's a coming under the authority of God. Salvation is basically leaving the authority of self. I'm my own boss.

I'm my own Lord. And it's coming under God's authority and saying from now on God is my authority. I follow Him.

His word. I am going to obey the Lord with my life. I've left that life of disobedience.

You could say that salvation is, in a nutshell, that's what happens in salvation. It's one way of describing it. It's leaving that disobedient spirit.

That rebellious spirit. That proud spirit. And it's saying God I'm coming under your authority now.

I'm not going to be my own authority. And I'm leaving behind Satan's authority. He's a terrible authority to have over our life, isn't he? And so today, who's your authority? Who is the head of your life? Who do you get your orders from? And it says that He has translated us out of the authority of darkness.

That's Colossians chapter 1. And brought us, translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son. And so, and He also says He gave us, as many as received Him, to them gave He the authority to become the sons of God. So authority is a powerful thing.

We looked at the differences in the words there. I'm not going to get into that today. I want to just go briefly through this.

But the world says question authority. Be your own authority. They may not say this, or we may not have said this, but authority is in my way.

Authority is something that's standing in my way of me doing what I want to do. On the other hand, God says authority, that we should obey authority. That we should submit ourselves to authority.

And that authority is my friend. And it's a gift from God. Do you believe that? How do you view authority as you sit here today? Just ask yourself.

Is authority a good word to you? Is authority a word that makes you cringe a little bit? Or that makes you struggle? Or when you think of authority, does that put in your heart good thoughts, good feelings? It should. It should put within you good thoughts and feelings. Now I know some of us here have had unjust authority in our lives.

And so there may be some of those thoughts too. So I understand that. But one of the great dangers that we can have is that when we are hurt by unjust authority, is that we can then withdraw and hold ourselves back from authority because of our pain.

Because of our hurt. And not come under the authority of God like He wants us to. And so we want to speak about that today.

We talked also, and let me say this. In the Godhead Himself is very clear authority. Who is on top, you might say? The Father.

And then? The Son and the Holy Spirit. There is a sense of authority. Even though God is God.

He is one God and He is all equal in essence. But in place, God Himself has chosen in the three parts, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, to have a submission to authority. Jesus said, I don't do anything except what I see my Father do.

The words that I speak to you, they are not my own, but they are what the Father gives to me. Jesus was totally a man under authority. Absolutely.

Absolutely. From the time He was a boy and it said that He went back to His parents, to Nazareth, and He subjected Himself to them. He lived subject to His parents up until His death.

He was a man that was completely under God's authority in His life. And because of that, the Father gave Him a place higher than any other place. See, that's how authority works.

Whatever we have is given to us from above. The Father gave Jesus the highest place of honor, that every knee shall bow, every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. And now it says that the Holy Spirit, Jesus left earth and He said, I'm sending you the Holy Spirit.

And He said, He shall not speak of Himself, but He shall speak of Me. The Holy Spirit didn't come here to show how great the Spirit is. He came here to magnify the Son.

So do you see how beautiful that is? Even in God's own nature, there's this submission. There's this humbling, coming under, and everybody has their place. Everybody has their spot.

There's the Father. There's the Son. There's the Holy Spirit.

We're not in competition with each other. We're not needing to be better. We all just function in our places.

Jesus said the most amazing man of faith that He saw, He said it was in a Roman soldier, centurion. He said, I have not seen faith as great as this in Israel. In other words, I have never seen in God's people, all the people of God, the people who grew up knowing about God, the people who, you know, had the law and the testimonies and all these things.

He said, I have never seen such faith as this man has. And why was that? If you look in Luke chapter seven, he said, I have not thought myself worthy to come to you, but say in a word and my servant shall be healed. And then he says this amazing statement.

He says, for I also am a man set under authority. This guy saw something. First of all, he saw that Jesus was a man under authority.

He said, I see that. And he said, I'm like you. I'm also a man under authority.

He somehow saw in the spiritual realm that Jesus was under the Father and did whatever the Father said for Him and that whatever therefore He got from the Father, it had to be done in the earth when He spoke it. And this centurion said, I'm just like you. He said, I'm also a man under authority.

The Roman government is my authority, Caesar ultimately. And if he says we're going to do this and thus in Palestine or wherever, and I get that order and I tell my soldiers to do it, they have to do it. Not because I say so, I'm just one man, but because I have Rome, the entire Roman Empire behind me.

Do you see how authority works? And that's what God wants in every one of our lives. He wants us to be so under His authority that when we speak words, they will come to pass. When we speak up for Him, He's going to do something about it.

He's going to honor those words because they're not our words. They're words we got from God. So authority is our friend.

We want to kind of turn the corner here. I call this practical humility. Humility is something that sometimes people have a hard time defining.

And it sort of seems like something way out there. What does it mean to be humble or how do you humble yourself or whatever? Well, this is practical humility we're going to look at. But I'd like to just mention one thing.

I had unexpected visitors this week. They didn't know I was teaching about authority, but it was very interesting. I think it was Monday, Monday night, Monday afternoon.

I got the word these folks are coming to visit with us tonight. They're from Colorado. And it's interesting, this boy, well he's 38 now, but I knew him when he was 8. And he was the pastor's son in the church.

In fact, his dad married us 26 years ago. So now he's grown up and he's the pastor, not of that church but of a different one in the same area. Jason is his name and his wife Carmen.

So they came over and they didn't come to see us. They came to see Grandma. That's one of the blessings of living with such a well-loved and famous individual.

We get a lot of visitors now that we didn't get before. But they came and he was on a sabbatical, a little mini-sabbatical, six weeks, just to be with his family, just to get away from it all kind of thing. And we got to talking about the old days and different things.

And his wife was a missionary's child, grew up in Africa. And so one of the questions I think it was that I asked her, I said, how did you find it when you came back to America? She said, yeah, we came back when I was 10. And she said it was really hard for me to adjust to the culture.

So I was curious. I said, well, what was so hard? I said, what was the hard part? She said, well, my parents said they wanted us to get used to the American culture somewhat because they knew probably we'd live here sometime in our life. So our parents said, look, we're going to send you to public school.

You don't have to stay there. But I want you to just go there for as long as you can. And just learn a little bit about American culture.

And so here's this young girl. She goes to the school and she said none of us could stand it for more than like a week. We said, please homeschool us.

Get us out of there. I said, well, why? What was it? You know what it was that she said bothered her? She said, what bothered me, what made it so I couldn't stand it, was I had been raised in a culture where if you fooled around in school, they would cane you. They'd get the cane out.

And she said, when I came to school here, there was such a disobedient spirit. So much so that this young girl, she couldn't stand it. She actually said, please teach me at home, Mom.

Teach me at home. I don't think we realize how disobedient the spirit around us is in our age. I don't think we have any idea because, see, we just grew up in it.

If you told a fish about water, what would he say? What's that? What's water? I just, that's what I live. Right? There's nothing, there's no specialness about that. And so we all have grown up in that culture, all of us.

Some maybe more so than others. It's a disobedient generation. And the Bible says in the last days, that would be one of the great marks of the last days, was people would be disobedient, disobedient on every hand.

So I'm going to talk a little bit more about some of the things they shared with me because it was very interesting. Very interesting. But God has purposed that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God

would be made known to the authorities, the principalities and powers.

That's Romans chapter three, Ephesians chapter three, if you want to turn there. Here's where we're going to turn a little corner. Ephesians chapter three.

We'll start in verse nine. And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world has been hid in God who created all things by Jesus Christ, to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. So hear what he's saying there.

God has purposed that we, those who are under this authority, the humility, the obedience, the freedom through Jesus Christ, we are going to demonstrate to all these fallen powers the manifold wisdom of God. He wants to show through us what God will do and can do for people who trust him. People say, Lord, you're Lord, you're the boss.

So that's our calling, at least part of it. He would like to make known the manifold wisdom of God. The principalities and powers fell because they disobeyed God.

He wants to show, we're to be the platform that God demonstrates what he will do through those who obey him. He's going to put all them to shame through our lives. You should have obeyed me.

These souls, these people who chose to come under my authority, look at how they are blessed, look at how they prosper, look at all the things that are good and right that I have given them because of that. That's what God wants to show. And so that obedience is demonstrated, first of all, as we obey his word, right? That's the bottom line, the word of God.

But then, also, as we honor and obey the human authority that he has placed over our lives. Here's where we're going to turn the corner a little bit. Because we all, we all, I believe, in this room understand that when God says something, it's final, right? It is to be obeyed.

Remember what he said in the lesson today? You shall obey, how many of my commandments? All the commandments which I command you this day, not 95%. All of them. We all understand that God's word is the final authority.

I hope for everybody in this room today that the word of God is your final authority. That if God says it, that settles it. I'm going to do it by his help, with his grace.

That's what it means to be a Christian. That's the attitude of a Christian. Where it gets sticky is when human authority comes into our life.

We don't like that near as well because they're not God. They're not like God. He's perfect.

He's on the throne. He's high and lifted up. He's everything that I would want to be.

And he's a perfect leader. But people, they're not like that. In fact, they're just like me.

And it doesn't feel good that I need to obey people. Because why should I? And so here we go. But who tells us to obey the human authorities in our life? God says it.

We're going to look at those verses today. It's God himself. We cannot be under the authority of the word of God and not be under the authority of the human authority structures that God has put on this earth.

It's impossible. Because God's the one who told us to bring ourselves underneath those things. And so I want to look at five areas today.

There's probably more we could look at, but I just want to look at five of them and see what the Bible says about it. See, how should we live our life? The truth is, this is our kingdom. Jesus is our king.

We have chosen the road of humility to submit to him and to be under him. That truth has to be lived out. And that's why I call this practical humility.

Bringing ourselves under the earthly authorities in our life, as God has said, is just practical humility. It's just saying, God, I choose to submit myself to the government, to my parents, to my husband, to my boss, to my church. That's practical humility.

I mean, how else does humility show itself? Is it not how we act towards the people in our life? And so this is a very real thing that hits home with us here. Let's first of all look at the government. Christians should be the most honoring people toward the government in all the world.

True or false? True. Christians should be the most obedient people toward their government in all the world. True or false? In other words, we who are not of this kingdom, but of this kingdom, we should be the most obedient and honoring towards our government.

Now we can read some scriptures. Let's look at a couple. There's many we could read, but let's just look at Romans chapter 13.

It says here, verse one, 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. Whoever therefore resists the power, resists the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

I'm going to read that in a newer translation. It says, everyone must submit to governing authorities, for all authority comes from God, and those positions of authority have been placed there by God. So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished.

You see, if we rebel against our government, we are really rebelling against God. We come from a nation that lifts up the war of independence. Do you know what they call that war in England? Anybody? They call it the war of the rebellion.

Isn't it interesting how different countries call things different names? It's known as the war of rebellion. Taxation without representation is tyranny. You know, let's throw all that tea in the Boston Harbor.

We've got to stand up for our rights. We've got to push off the king. How dare he do that? That's our American blood.

That's deep within our culture and our thinking. That's not biblical. Now, they may have had unrighteous authority there, and that's another subject for another day.

I'd like to actually do another message on what to do with unrighteous authority. How do you deal with that? Because I'm sure many of you will think of questions today as I share this, but we can't get into all

that today, so maybe another time we'll do that one. But see, it's in our very culture, the idea that it's right to throw all that tea in the harbor that somebody harvested, that somebody worked for, that somebody else owned, because they're doing me wrong.

And their authority is not authority that I recognize as being righteous authority in my life. So England, they call it the War of Rebellion. We call it the War of Independence.

It's very interesting to me that when this scripture was written by Paul, does anybody know who the emperor of Rome was at the time? Nero. If you know anything about Emperor Nero, he makes Donald Trump, Vladimir Putin, whoever you want to put in there today, look like the greatest people that ever walked the earth. Emperor Nero hated Christians.

Emperor Nero, in fact, he lit them up on fire at his parties. He poured tar on them and lit them up to kill them at his parties. It's believed that he burned down the city of Rome to build his palace and he blamed it on the Christians.

Nero was not a good guy. But the inspired writer, at the time when Nero was in charge, said, everyone must submit to governing authorities for all authority comes from God. And those positions of authority have been placed there by God.

Do you know, if I'm not mistaken, Nero was the one who commanded Paul's execution. There was going to come a day when that man, that he said we should obey, was going to say his head comes off. He's a Christian.

We've had enough of him. You see, when you understand authority, you don't see people so much. But you see the Lord behind it all.

When the government comes into your life to hinder something, I think about this. Somebody just said they went to the Creation Museum. He told the testimony, the starter of the Creation Museum.

I read it just this month. They had a piece of property all picked out that they were going to do this thing on. And some atheists stirred up the government entities and so forth and the government refused to allow them to do it on that property.

Now, the man of God doesn't say, OK, we're cooked now, it's over. You know, we had this great property and the government has ruined it. The man of God says, OK God, you've got something better.

He said because they denied that property, he said we were able to get a much bigger, better, closer to the highway, property that could accommodate way more people. Do you see that authority is not our enemy? Yes, God allowed that authority to be moved and to say no Creation Museum here. You may not build it.

But no authority could stop when the Lord said they're going to build one here and it's an even better spot. So that earthly authority only served to move them along to the fulfillment of a greater vision. And that's what faith says.

You know what? There's no human authority that's going to ruin my life. Even if he chops my head off, I'm going to go be with the Lord. And the Lord must be saying it's my time.

I believe Paul lived that way. So faith is, this is really an exercise of our faith, brothers and sisters, to believe that the authorities that God has put in my life, He is over them. And He can release me from their authority in a moment, or He can keep me under that thing for weeks and months if He has a greater purpose to accomplish through that.

Now Peter got really plain in 1 Peter 2.13. He says, Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king as supreme or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by Him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of them that do well. God said submit yourself to every ordinance. How many of you like the ordinances around your township? I don't see one hand.

There's one. Alright, we got one. It's just a little one.

Every ordinance. See, what is our testimony? Do we have the testimony that I'm a child of God? I'm serving Him. If this thing that I want to do on my property is of God, He can open the door.

And if it isn't, and if my township says no, then I'm not going to do it because I don't want my testimony to be, yeah, those Christians, you know what, they just do whatever they want. They don't care about the rules. They don't get permits.

They don't get building permits or this or that. They just do whatever. They think that, you know, because they serve God, they can just do anything they want.

You know, they're not subject. No, that's not a good testimony. I believe the testimony is that we are submitting ourselves to every ordinance of God.

That's what it said. And believe me, I know there's a lot of them that I don't like. And there's more and more every day.

God says we're supposed to demonstrate our faith by doing it. By doing it. I will submit myself to these people, even if it's Nero.

OK, so I'll say it one more time. Faith does not see the person. It doesn't see that building inspector, that township supervisor, that zoning officer, that governor, that Supreme Court.

Faith sees the position that that man is filling under God. That's why I'm obeying. That's why I'm honoring.

And by the way, the Bible, there's our times when we do not have to obey. Aren't there? Yes or no? Yes. Is there ever a time when we do not have to honor authority? Never.

You see that? There are extreme times where we must disobey because God said this is forbidden. OK, in Russia this week, they passed a new law that said it is illegal to be a Jehovah Witness. They seized all their properties.

They just took it away. They said you can't be Jehovah Witnesses anymore in our country. Now, let's just say that was us.

You know, we're Christians, so we might think, well, praise God, you know, they're not allowed. But hey, we could be the next ones, right? OK, you cannot witness for Jesus anymore. You can't meet together with other Christians.

Can we obey that? We can't obey that. The Bible says don't forsake the gathering of the saints. Now, we may not meet in a big building like this someday, but we must get together.

No, we have to do it because God, well, that's not one He forbids, but you know, we could say the government says you need to steal something. OK, no, God says you may not steal. That's something forbidden.

OK, then there's these other things over here. These are things God commands. OK, what are some commands of God? Honor your parents.

Do good as much as lie within you. Do good to all men. You know, there's hundreds of them.

It's funny we can't think of any when we're on the spot. But these are the things that God commands. And then in between here, there's a whole lot of stuff that God neither commands nor forbids.

Now, I was reading from John Wesley's journal just a week ago. I got this from him and it really struck me as the truth. What is God, when He tells us to obey, government, parents, church, husband, boss, which category is He referring to? Is He saying that we should obey them in the things that He forbids? Obviously not, right? We can't do that.

Is He saying that we should obey them in the things that God commands? That's a little trickier. That wouldn't make sense, would it? Would it make sense for God to say, children, don't steal, don't kill, don't swear, because your parents tell you not to. Would God say something like that? In other words, God would be actually, in a way, putting Himself under this human being.

No. The things that God has already commanded, they stand on their own. Those are commands of God.

He doesn't need any human authority to tell us that. Now, our parents should tell us to do what God says. But as John Wesley brought out, the thing that God is telling us to obey our human authorities in is this whole class of things that God neither says are forbidden or that are commanded.

That's what He's telling us to obey. And that doesn't feel very good in 2017 in America, does it? I mean, I don't mind obeying God. If God told something to do, He's God.

You know, I can handle that. But you mean I've got to do all these things that some other human being says? That doesn't sit real well with us. But that's exactly what God is talking about.

The ordinances that you can't have your... like on my property, you can't be within six feet of the property line if you want to have a shed. Or ten feet, I forget. Okay, God doesn't say anything about that.

That's neither here nor there to Him. That doesn't matter. But the township says we think that's important.

In fact, we think it's so important that you're not allowed to put a shed within ten feet. And if you do, you're in trouble. So that's an example.

We could think of a hundred of them if we wanted to here today. Many, many examples. The government does many things like that.

Many things that God doesn't say a thing about. He doesn't talk about lead paint, does He? You know, I'm a remodeling contractor, so the government talks to me a lot about lead paint. It tells me I have to do these

certain things and get all these forms filled out and I have to do it just right.

Well, God doesn't have a thing to say about lead paint, but He has something to say about obeying your authority. And so that whole category of things fits underneath the command to obey our human authorities. It's this way in the home.

God doesn't say you need to brush your teeth three times a day, right? I don't know of any verse that says that. Is it okay if your parents say that? Yeah, that's something that God's indifferent about. And some families say you've got to brush them three times a day and other families say I don't care about that.

And you're in whatever family you're in. And guess who put you in there? God did. Don't forget that faith.

So it's those things indifferent. Somehow today there's this lie that I don't appreciate that says nobody has a right to give me any rules except it's either something forbidden or commanded by God. And if they do, they're out of their place.

They have stepped across a line that nobody has a right to step over. And essentially what that's saying is the only thing that I'm bound to do is that what God says. That I don't need to obey human authority.

And this is in the church too. We're going to look at that one later. That whole idea.

Nobody has a right to do that, but that's not what God says. He says, yes, they do. Your parents have a right to give you rules that are not in the Bible.

They have no right to tell you to go steal so that we can eat supper tonight. Right? They don't need to tell you don't kill people because it's wrong. God already says that.

But there's a whole bunch of these rules that earthly authorities have to make to make their places function. To make that home function. Our home has rules.

And they're not... That's not unusual. Every home does. They're the rules that Laura and I decided that we wanted to have in our home.

Because guess what? We got that given to us from above. God said, you are the parents. You're the authorities.

You seek me and you run your home as you feel like I would have you to. Okay? So I'm getting a little ahead of myself here. But why don't we go right into parental authority.

I thought about starting with that one because really that's where it all starts, isn't it? The first command with a promise is what? Honor your father and your mother that it may go well with you. That you may live long in the land which the Lord your God gives you. Okay.

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Children, listen to me. Those of you who are under the roof of your parents, under their authority, God says that you are to obey them.

Not just in the things that He commands. Not in the things that are forbidden, obviously. But you are to obey them in those things that they tell you to do.

That God doesn't spell out. Everything. In everything.

Parents, do your children a service and teach them to obey. When we do not teach our children to obey, we are setting them up for this. We're setting them up for this kingdom right here.

I mean, they're obviously all going to need to be saved anyway. But a child who's learned to obey as a carnal young person who needs to be born again is very different than a child who never learned to obey. I guarantee you.

Do your church a favor. Because as pastors, you know, what a difference to deal with somebody, a young person. Yeah, they were lost.

They did not know the Lord. But they were under the authority. How much easier it is to be a pastor, to be a shepherd, to guide somebody when they've learned that lesson.

Authority is something that I recognize and I yield to. If we tell our children to do something five times, that's four times too many. Johnny, get down from there.

Johnny, I said get down from there. Johnny, you better get down from there. This is the last time, Johnny.

That is pathetic. And brothers and sisters, don't lead your home that way. Let your word be yea and amen.

When we teach our children that way, we're actually teaching them to disobey. You know, God lifted up this family in the Old Testament, the Rechabites. How many of you remember them? Rechabites.

I just want to look at that again. Jeremiah 35. Okay, you know, I think most of us know that story.

There was this group of people that their forefather told them two things. He said, I don't want you to drink wine and I don't want you to build houses. Now, where do those things fit here? Is any of those forbidden? Is any of those commanded? No, it's in this group right here.

That group that God didn't say anything about. In fact, if anything, these children could have said, wait a minute, that's not biblical. You know, God says He's bringing us into a land of wine.

They could have thought of 30 verses. And I don't know how this worked, but for 300 years, the descendants of this man didn't drink wine and didn't build houses. Is that amazing or what? That blows my mind that there could have been such an obedient spirit in that family.

It says, and you know, what did God think about that? God Himself, when He looked upon this family, did God say, you guys are just puppets. Can't you think for yourself? You're going to follow that old man that just, you know, 300 years ago. You all need to get some grit.

Did you let that man put you under some extra biblical commands? A bondage? Is that what God thought? But we hear that kind of stuff today. It was an extra biblical command not to drink wine. God gave them wine.

They were all allowed to drink wine. But Daddy said, I don't want you to drink it, y'all. This family actually obeyed for 300 years.

It was an extra biblical command. Don't build houses. So they lived in tents for 300 years.

No, God was so blessed with them that He actually gave a test for them to come and offer them wine and see what they would do with it, but then to give them a blessing. Listen to what it says here. In verse 16 of

chapter 35.

Because the sons of Jonadab, the son of Rechab, have performed the commandment of their father which He commanded them, but this people has not listened to Me, therefore, I'll bring upon them this curse on the people who did not obey. But then in verse 18, Jeremiah said unto the house of the Rechabites, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, because you have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab, your father, and kept all his precepts and done according unto all that he has commanded you, therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Jonadab, the son of Rechab, shall not want a man to stand before Me forever. I don't totally understand what that means.

It sounds to me like there's going to be somebody serving Me from this family on earth forever. Or, you know, in eternity. Whatever it means, it's something extra special.

You know, God said, I love that. I am so pleased with that. That these children would so honor their father.

To do something that was not commanded by Me. God didn't tell them to not drink this wine. But those people said we'll do it because, I assume, because, you know, the Lord says to honor your parents.

He highly commended them and lifted them up as an example for all ages. And I would say here to the parents today, I think every one of us wants our children to obey. I know we do.

This is where many parents get off. We tell our children to obey, but we don't obey ourselves. See, our children look at our life.

They hear what we say. They hear what we say about the boss. They hear what we say about the government.

They hear what we say about our husband. They hear what we say about our church leaders. And so our children look on and guess what they're going to follow? They're not going to follow what we say to them.

They are going to do what we do. And so many people make this mistake. We think we can have obedient children, but in our own life, there's disobedience.

There's dishonor to authority. It doesn't work that way. If your life is not under the authority of God in every area, your children are going to look on that and they're going to follow you.

They're not going to listen to what you say. And so the challenge here today is what do our children see when they look upon me? Dad, do they see a man who's under authority in my life? Do they hear me talking bad about my government? Do they hear me disrespecting my church leaders or my boss? No, God says to honor and obey. And if we want our children to grow up and do that, we have to model it for them.

We've got to do it. Let's look at another one. How about workplace authority? Okay, 1 Peter 2.18. It says, Servants, be subject to your masters.

1 Peter 2.18. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. I think there's a reason God put that in there. It's not hard to be subject to people that are decent, right? Treat you good.

You know, they honor you. But it is hard when somebody is froward, when they're perverse, when they are, you know, wicked even. But God said do it for them also.

For this is thankworthy if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. Christians should be the most submissive, helpful, honoring people in the workplace, should they not? In all the world. We should be the most honoring.

We should be the most obedient in the workplace. But so many times we don't like the way the boss does it. We think it's stupid.

We're smarter than him. He doesn't know what he's talking about. I can't believe he wants to do it this way.

And so we think that that somehow gives us a right now that I don't have to obey him because it's a dumb idea. Instead of God's idea that says, you know what? If he says to you to paint the house with a toothbrush. Go ahead and do it.

He's paying you. It's job security, right? OK, if you're an accounting firm and he says, look, guys, I want you to use an abacus to add up your numbers. Go ahead and do it.

It doesn't matter how slow it is. That's not your concern. Just do what he says.

But I've heard people that just refuse. I will not do that. I will not do it that way.

That is such a wasteful and a dumb way. I'm not doing it. Brothers and sisters, where is the spirit coming from? It's not coming from there.

We think that if I have a smarter idea than that somehow negates God's command to obey my boss. You obey him no matter what he tells you to do unless it's something forbidden. Then you need to respectfully say, I'm sorry, but I can't do that.

You know, I know you're my boss. You know, you're honoring. I'm sorry, I just can't do that.

And that happens in the workplace, doesn't it? You know, just fudge the numbers a little. Just say this, but it's really not that. No, I'm sorry, I can't do that.

You know, I'll serve you. I'll work for you. I'll do whatever you... you know, to be a good employee, but I can't be dishonest.

But so many times Christians can get this all confused and we think because the boss's idea is stupid that I don't have to obey him. Instead of taking that attitude that says, God, you gave me this boss. And that's a question I want to ask.

When you think of your boss here today, what do you see? Are you thankful? Are you grateful that you have a boss? When your boss tells you something in your life that he says, you know what? I see a need in your life. I see that you're not diligent enough or this or that. Do you see that as a gift of God to you? Or do you see that, man, he's in my way.

He's in my way. He's hindering me. He's standing in my way.

Or do you say, thank you, God. Thank you for putting another authority structure in my life who cares enough about me to speak into my life and help me be an overcomer and help me to learn my lesson.

See, faith doesn't see that boss.

It sees God. Now, if you're self-employed here, I'll share a story from my life. Okay, I'm self-employed, so does that mean I don't have any bosses? I got a lot of them.

Right? I get a new one every week. Sometimes a new one every day. How'd you like to get a new boss every day? Like, you don't know what's coming.

Well, last summer I got a boss, and when I look back, I wish I would have not gotten that boss. She told me, she said, I have OCD. I just want you to know it.

Okay? I wasn't sure what that was exactly, but I found out. She said, I have OCD, and I want you to remodel my kitchen. I want you to, you know, we're going to tear everything up, and I'm going to get, and I made some mistakes.

You know, she wanted to order all these things, you know, and she ordered the wrong things, and anyway, it was a big fiasco. But through that, at one point, I realized that the devil was using this lady. Okay? Like, it wasn't within the realm of reason.

It was so outrageous, so far-fetched, that you know, I just knew, okay, this is a spiritual attack right now. This is not just a person I'm dealing with. This, my boss today, this month, for some reason, God gave me this boss.

I don't know why, God. And the Lord said to me, you humble yourself to your boss. Don't get angry.

Okay? When she sends you these midnight emails about how you're ruining her life, and how you're the worst person in the world, and just outrageous things like this, you know. Don't get mad. Don't get upset.

See me. I felt like the Lord said that. I gave you this boss, okay? I gave you this boss.

I want to do something in your life. And if you will come under this boss, and if you will be a doormat, go ahead, take it all. Just take it.

All that garbage, all that. Don't take the condemnation, which is, you know, I did struggle with that. Because that was from the enemy.

But take the humbling. Okay, fine, we can do it. I will tear it out and do it over again.

No problem. We can do it. I just want to make sure you're happy.

You know, all this kind of stuff. And the Lord spoke to me and said, if you do that, you know, I'm going to bless you. And you're going to, the verse he gave me was Jesus and the temptation, you know.

When he was tempted of the devil for those 40 days, he returned in the power of the Spirit. And so I saw God in that. Okay, I didn't like what I saw, really.

I wasn't real happy with God. Lord, why are you giving me this? This does not feel good. I don't like this.

Give me a better customer next time. But I went ahead and I stayed under that. Submitted myself to that and we made it through and you know what? It was a miracle.

We did, but we made it through. Actually, the lady and the lady asked me this spring if I would come and remodel her master bedroom. I politely declined.

I still honored her, but I said, no, I'm not going to do that. I'm sorry, I can't. I think the words I said was, you know, I don't think we're a real good fit for each other.

And so that was that. But see, do we see the hand of God in all of all these things in our life? I didn't pick that lady. God wanted to do something.

He wanted to humble me. He wanted to test me and prove me to know what was in my heart, whether I would keep his commandments or no, like we heard about today. And brothers and sisters, I guarantee you that some of you here today that have are going through that with your boss or with your family, with your parents or with whatever.

And God's looking and saying, what are you going to do? Do you see your boss as a gift from God to you, not just someone who gives you work, not just someone who gives you money, but someone to help you become more like Jesus? That's what God wants you to see. All right, let's move on. How about marriage? I'm not going to spend a long time on this one, but Ephesians chapter five.

Does God have an order of structure in the home? He does, doesn't he? Who's supposed to be the head of the home above all? Jesus Christ, right? God, Jesus Christ, and then the husband, it says right here in Ephesians five, we're going to read it. He says in verse twenty two, wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands. No, it doesn't say husbands, make your wife submit to you.

It says, wives, submit yourselves and men, it's not our job to make them as unto the Lord, for the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church and he is the savior of the church. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. So God said, how many homes are reaping results because the wife is not coming under the authority of her husband? He doesn't do it right.

He's not as spiritual as I am. He doesn't see things as well. He's not as good of a Bible student.

He's not a this or that. That doesn't matter. You can still be under his authority and respectfully honor and support.

Just heard the testimony two weeks ago of a sister whose husband moved her family, wanted to move their family somewhere, and she did not believe it was of the Lord. And she didn't want to do it. She wanted to stay where she was.

And she said the Lord spoke to her. And this was a lady from a standard American background. How do I say it? What's the right word? Not an innate background or something who was very much of a independent woman who did who was a leader in different ways.

But the verse came to her. Your people are my people. Your God will be my God.

Wherever you go, I'll go. And she said that to her husband in spite of the fact that she didn't feel it was a good move. Now, 10 years later, speaking with her, she says, I'm so glad I did that.

She said, God gave me back what I gave up. God gave it back to me through the circumstances of what was going on, that which she felt was God's will. She went through 10 years of yielding, of giving that to

her husband.

It was not an easy road either. But her testimony was God has given me back that which I gave up. And as I thought about that, as I look on their family, you know what? Every single one of their children is serving God today.

Even though they went through, you know, rocky roads, church problems, difficulties, bad things, none of them lost their way. And I do not attribute that in any small measure to the fact that the mother said, I am with my man. Where you go, I'll go.

I'll support you. I guarantee you that had a tremendous effect on all those children because that's an attitude that they have. They are under authority as well.

So I want to encourage you, sisters. I know it's not easy sometimes. Some of us are not very, very good to follow.

It has to be done as unto the Lord. And I know there's exceptions and things like that that we could talk about. Maybe, like I said, another time we can get into that.

But be under authority if you want your children to be under your authority. Mothers, if you want your children to be under your authority, you need to be under your authority as best as you can in the circumstances that you're in. If you don't model it, they're not going to follow it.

You can talk to your blue in the face, but they're going to do what they see you do. Guaranteed without fail. All right, we got one more to go.

And this is this is church authority. All right, Hebrews 13, 17, it says, obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves. Why? Because they watch for your souls as they that must give an account that they may do it with joy and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you.

God says, I want you to obey your leaders, want you to follow your leaders, want you to do what what they say. And he's not talking about things forbidden and he's not talking about things that he's already commanded. That's that's assumed he's talking about these other things that your leaders in your particular church feel strongly about promoting.

OK, here's where this visit comes in with my friend Jason, young guy. OK, he's in a Pentecostal church, Assemblies of God. All right.

Why do you think he's taking a sabbatical? Can anybody guess that time of this family? He's burned out. What burns pastors out? Church troubles, right? Church problems. I was really curious to say, you know, what are the problems that you all would have in your church? This is the Assemblies of God, Pentecostal church.

What do you think the problems are they have in their church with the pastor? Anybody? Well, I'll tell you. The Spirit's not moving enough. People aren't prophesying and speaking in tongues enough.

And you as the pastor are shutting it down. Well, he explained to me, had to shut some of it down. He said, there's this lady prophesying and she was saying things like, yeah, that's the Lord and saying things that were undermining his authority.

Like, don't say the Lord, don't listen to your pastor. I mean, that's an exaggeration. But so he had to speak into that and say, you know, sister, that's not that's not appropriate to give direction to a church.

Under the guise of prophecy. OK, so here he is in this Pentecostal church. And he's dealing with this issue, the Spirit's not moving enough.

We don't like the way pastors doing it, you know, he's just he's not leading the spiritual enough. I remember the way it used to be in the old days. It was way better.

So this poor, you know, poor pastor, he's just trying to lead God's people the best he knows how. And that's what comes up in his church. Well, you know, in our church, we'd probably deal with that one, too, here.

But we might deal Mennonites and Amish folks. What's the big thing that we deal with? Come on. Legalism.

OK, that's a big one because we come from backgrounds, some of us come from backgrounds where that was a huge thing. Right. And we don't want to go back to that.

And we're afraid of that. And some of that's good, but some of that isn't good. We deal with, you know, clothes is a big deal to us, isn't it? Isn't that the big thing? We get all excited about that.

We get all. It's a big thing in our church. I can't believe our pastors are saying this and this and this.

Well, I don't like that. That's that's extra biblical. That's not they don't have a right to say any of those things.

And it just struck me talking to this brother, you know, as a pastor to pastor, just realizing, you know what? It's the same everywhere. The issues might be different and they are different, but it's still the same. And you got people in church who don't like the way this human being or this group of human beings called elders are doing stuff and it breaks the wrong way.

And we don't want to we don't want to come under that authority because it doesn't they're human beings like I am. Why should I listen to them? Well, I want to read to you, you know, I said I was reading from John Wesley. The Bible says he that walks with wise men shall be wise.

And one of the ways I walk with wise people is I read the things they wrote. John Wesley, how many of you know who he is? OK, he was the founder of Methodist Church, a great man of God. Was he a well-loved man of God during most of his life? He wasn't.

He was a respected man by people who love God. But guess what? He had a hard life. People hated him.

They tried to kill him a few times. And after I read what I'm going to read today, you'll know why. Listen to the sermon he preached here.

I just want to read a little excerpt. This was a sermon on obedience to pastors. OK, this is the title of the sermon.

He says it may be of use yet again to consider in what instances it is the duty of Christians to obey and submit themselves to those that watch over their souls. Now, the things which they enjoy must be either

enjoined of God or forbidden by him or indifferent. That's where I showed up here.

OK, in things forbidden of God, we dare not obey them, for we are to obey God rather than man. In things enjoined of God, we do not properly obey them, but our common father. Therefore, if we are to obey them at all, it must be in things indifferent.

The sum is it is the duty of every private Christian to obey his spiritual pastor by either doing or leaving undone anything of an indifferent nature. Anything that is in no way determined in the word of God. OK, that was the non-controversial part of his sermon.

And he says, I would now apply myself to a more particular matter to you who desire me to watch over your souls. Do you make it a point of conscience to obey me for my master's sake, to submit yourself to me and things indifferent, things not determined in the word of God, in all things that are not enjoined nor yet forbidden in scripture? Are you easy to be entreated as by men in general? So by me in particular, easy to be convinced of any truth, however, contrary to your former prejudices and easy to be persuaded to do or forbear any indifferent thing at my desire. You cannot but see that all this is clearly contained in the very words of the text, and you cannot but acknowledge that it is highly reasonable for you.

So to do if I do employ all my time, all my substance, all my strength, both in body and soul, not in seeking my own honor or pleasure, but in promoting your present and eternal salvation. If I do indeed watch over your souls is one that must give account. Do you then take my advice? I ask in the presence of God and all the world with regard to.

What do you think he's going to talk about with regard to dress? He said, I published that advice 30 years ago. I've repeated it a thousand times since I have advised you not to be conformable to the world here in to lay aside all needless ornaments, to avoid all expense, to be patterns of plainness to all that are round about you. Have you taken this advice? Have you all men and women, young and old, rich and poor laid aside all those needless ornaments, which I particularly objected to? Are you all exemplary playing in your apparel as plain as Quakers, so-called or Moravian's, if not, if you are still dressed like the generality of people of your own rank and fortune, you declare hereby to all the world that you will not obey them that are over you in the Lord.

You declare an open defiance of God and man that you will not submit yourselves to them. Many of you carry your sins on your forehead openly, as in the face of the sun. You harden your hearts against instruction and against conviction.

You harden one another, especially those of you who are once convinced and have now stifled your convictions. You encourage one another to stop your ears against the truth and shut your eyes against the light, lest happily you should see that you are fighting against God and against your own souls. If I were now called to give an account of you, it would be with groans and not with joy and sure that that would be unprofitable for you.

The loss would fall upon your own head. Perhaps you will say this is only a little thing. It is a mere trifle.

I answer. If it be, you are more inexcusable before God and man. What will you disobey a plain commandment of God for a mere trifle? God forbid, is it a trifle to sin against God, to set his authority at naught? Is this a little thing? They remember there can be no little sin till we can find a little God.

Meantime, be assured of one thing. The more conscientiously you obey your spiritual guides, the more powerfully will God apply the word which they speak in his name to your heart. Did you hear that? The more plentifully will he water what is spoken with the dew of his blessing and the more proofs will you have.

It is not only they that speak, but the spirit of your father who speaketh in them. I have to say I was shocked when I read that. I was amazed that that man would have such boldness to say those things.

I don't know. I don't think I could say it. Where are we at here today? Before God, where do we stand? Are we under his authority? Are we embracing a life lived under the authority of God and under those earthly authorities that God has put? Or are we doing our own thing? Are we making excuses for why we don't need to obey our boss? Why we don't need to obey my parents? Why I don't need to obey my church rulers, leaders? I'm telling you, it's all around us.

If you want to find excuses for any of those things, they're everywhere. You can find them. We live in a disobedient age and I'm a shepherd of this church and I haven't had a burden for a long time.

I'm watching for your souls and I see things that I know are not going to turn out right if something doesn't change. Whenever I see a disobedient spirit, it will not be blessed of God. It cannot be blessed of God.

And so this morning I pray that we could take this to heart. I pray that we could take it before God. If you're kicking against the human authority in your life, you're kicking against God's authority.

I'm just going to say it that way. It's very simple. If you're kicking against your parents constantly, you're kicking not against them, you're kicking against God.

And listen, there's many a young person who fancies that they're obedient to their parents. What has actually happened is their parents stopped giving them direction because they got tired of the fight. They got tired of going through all the hassle.

And so that young person may even think, yeah, my parents are fine with what I do. They never say anything. I want to challenge you today.

Go home and ask your parents what they really want you to do. Is this really what you'd want me to do? Is this really the way you'd like me to live my life, the way you want me to dress? Don't fool yourself. It happens a lot.

And authority sometimes just gets tired. We don't want to fight. But you're the one who's going to suffer for it if you're kicking against God by kicking against the authority of your life.

You all know where you stand here today. Is your heart clear with God? Do you know that you're someone who's under God's authority, the best that you know how? Or has God spoken to you and said, there's some areas that you need to make right? You and God need to answer that. I believe I've told you the truth this morning.

What are we going to do with the truth? Let's embrace it. Let's say, yes, Lord. I love your ways.

I love your truth. Even when it hurts. Even when it feels bad.

Let's embrace God's truth.

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