

What Is Authority?

DICTIONARY DEFINITIONS

Dictionary.com Unabridged – Based on the Random House Dictionary, © Random House, Inc. 2009

1. the power to determine, adjudicate, or otherwise settle issues or disputes; jurisdiction; the right to control, command, or determine.
2. a power or right delegated or given; authorization: Who has the authority to grant permission?

authority. (n.d.). *Dictionary.com Unabridged (v 1.1)*. Retrieved April 25, 2009, from Dictionary.com website:

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/authority>

The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition

1.
 - a. The power to enforce laws, exact obedience, command, determine, or judge.
 - b. One that is invested with this power, especially a government or body of government officials: *land titles issued by the civil authority*.
2. Power assigned to another; authorization: *Deputies were given authority to make arrests*.

authority. (n.d.). *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*. Retrieved April 25, 2009, from Dictionary.com website:

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/authority>

Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary, © 1996, 1998 MICRA, Inc.

1. Legal or rightful power; a right to command or to act; power exercised by a person in virtue of his office or trust; dominion; jurisdiction; authorization; as, the authority of a prince over subjects, and of parents over children; the authority of a court.

authority. (n.d.). *Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary*. Retrieved April 25, 2009, from Dictionary.com website:

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/authority>

WordNet® 3.0, © 2006 by Princeton University.

1. the power or right to give orders or make decisions; "he has the authority to issue warrants"; "deputies are given authorization to make arrests"; "a place of potency in the state"

authority. (n.d.). *WordNet® 3.0*. Retrieved April 25, 2009, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/authority>

Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Law, © 1996 Merriam-Webster, Inc.

- 1** : an official decision of a court used esp. as a precedent
- 2 a** : a power to act esp. over others that derives from status, position, or office *authority* of the president>; *also* :

[JURISDICTION](#)

authority. (n.d.). *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary of Law*. Retrieved April 25, 2009, from Dictionary.com website:

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/authority>

1828 Webster's Dictionary

1. Legal power, or a right to command or to act; as the authority of a prince over subjects, and of parents over children. Power; rule; sway.

BIBLICAL DEFINITION

The God-assigned right to control, command, or direct others within the context of God's defined realm or assigned jurisdiction, and according to God's revealed will, for the benefit of those led.

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| <p>1 God</p> | <p>Matt 9:6 "But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins" -- then He said to the paralytic, "Arise, take up your bed, and go to your house."</p> <p>Matt 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.</p> <p>Luke 9:1 Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases.</p> <p>Luke 12:5 "But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!</p> <p>John 5:27 "and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.</p> <p>John 10:18 "No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."</p> <p>John 17:2 "as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.</p> <p>1 Cor 15:24 Then <i>comes</i> the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.</p> <p>2 Cor 10:8 For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave us for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed --</p> <p>2 Cor 13:10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction.</p> <p>Eph 1:21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.</p> <p>Col 1:16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.</p> <p>Col 2:10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.</p> <p>Rev 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.</p> |
| <p>2 Given</p> | <p>Matt 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.</p> <p>Luke 9:1 Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases.</p> <p>Luke 19:17 "And he said to him, 'Well <i>done</i>, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.'</p> <p>John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:</p> <p>John 5:27 "and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.</p> <p>John 17:2 "as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.</p> <p>John 19:11 Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin."</p> <p>Acts 8:19 saying, "Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit."</p> <p>Acts 26:10 "This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against <i>them</i>.</p> <p>2 Cor 10:8 For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave us for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed --</p> <p>2 Cor 13:10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction.</p> <p>Rev 2:26 "And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations</p> <p>Rev 13:2 Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like <i>the feet of a bear</i>, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.</p> |

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| <p>3 Meaning</p> | <p>Matt 8:9 "For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this <i>one</i>, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does <i>it</i>."</p> <p>Luke 12:5 "But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!</p> <p>John 19:10 Then Pilate said to Him, "Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?"</p> <p>Acts 5:4 "While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."</p> <p>Acts 9:14 "And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name."</p> <p>Acts 26:10 "This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against <i>them</i>."</p> <p>Rom 9:21 Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?</p> <p>1 Cor 7:37 Nevertheless he who stands steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but has power over his own will, and has so determined in his heart that he will keep his virgin, does well.</p> <p>1 Cor 9:4 Do we have no right to eat and drink?</p> <p>1 Cor 11:10 For this reason the woman ought to have a <i>symbol of</i> authority on <i>her</i> head, because of the angels.</p> <p>Heb 13:10 We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat.</p> <p>Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy <i>is</i> he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.</p> <p>Rev 22:14 Blessed <i>are</i> those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.</p> |
| <p>4 Purpose</p> | <p>1 Cor 8:9 But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak.</p> <p>1 Cor 9:18 What is my reward then? That when I preach the gospel, I may present the gospel of Christ without charge, that I may not abuse my authority in the gospel.</p> <p>2 Cor 10:8 For even if I should boast somewhat more about our authority, which the Lord gave us for edification and not for your destruction, I shall not be ashamed --</p> <p>2 Cor 13:10 Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction.</p> <p>2 Thes 3:9 not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us.</p> |
| <p>Positions</p> | <p>1 Cor 15:24 Then <i>comes</i> the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.</p> <p>Eph 1:21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.</p> <p>Eph 3:10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly <i>places</i>,</p> <p>Eph 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual <i>hosts</i> of wickedness in the heavenly <i>places</i>.</p> <p>Col 1:16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.</p> <p>Col 2:10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.</p> <p>Col 2:15 Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.</p> <p>Titus 3:1 Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work,</p> <p>1 Pet 3:22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.</p> |

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| Reward | <p>Rev 2:26 "And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations</p> <p>Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy <i>is</i> he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.</p> |
| Right (of leadership) | <p>1 Cor 9:5 Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as <i>do</i> also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?</p> <p>1 Cor 9:6 Or <i>is it</i> only Barnabas and I <i>who</i> have no right to refrain from working?</p> <p>1 Cor 9:12 If others are partakers of <i>this right</i> over you, <i>are</i> we not even more? Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ.</p> |
| Right (to teach) | <p>Matt 21:23 Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?"</p> |
| Satan | <p>Luke 22:53 "When I was with you daily in the temple, you did not try to seize Me. But this is your hour, and the power of darkness."</p> <p>Acts 26:18 'to open their eyes, <i>in order</i> to turn <i>them</i> from darkness to light, and <i>from</i> the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'</p> <p>Eph 2:2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,</p> <p>Col 1:13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed <i>us</i> into the kingdom of the Son of His love,</p> <p>Rev 13:2 Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like <i>the feet of</i> a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.</p> |

- Differs from Dunamis
- Levels of authority (e.g. Michael the Archangel...)
- Purposes of authority – to instruct, to correct, to provide, to protect, to direct