

What Is Authority? (Part 2)

WORKING 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.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AUTHORITY (Summarized from Last Week)

God is the Ultimate Authority and Authority Giver

God the Father Is the Authority in the Godhead

- **1 Cor 15:24** Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.
- **1 Cor 11:3** But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

Jesus Has All Authority

- **Matt 28:18** And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
- **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.

Authority Is Given (Not Taken)

To Jesus (the Son of God)

- **Matt 28:18** And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

To the Apostles

- **Luke 9:1** Then He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases.
- **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 – (c.f. 2 Cor 13:10)

In Salvation

- **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:

To Rulers

- **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."

As a Reward to Believers in the Judgment

- **Rev 2:26** "And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations (cf. Lu 19:17)

Authority Means Control

Authority involves the right to tell people what to do

- **Matt 8:9** "For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."

Authority involves the power to control someone or something (to some degree or another)

- **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!
- **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?"
- **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?

Authority involves the privilege to do something

- **1 Cor 9:4** Do we have no right to eat and drink?

Authority Is Given to Help Others

Authority is given to build others up (to edify), not to tear them down

- **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. (cf. 2 Cor 10:8)

Authority is given by God to give an example for others to follow, not for personal benefit

- **2 Thes 3:9** not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us.

Authority is given to the benefit of others

- **1 Cor 8:9** But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak.
- **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.

AUTHORITY vs. ABILITY; RIGHT vs. MIGHT

The ability to do something is not the same as the authority to do something. Ability is the strength or skill to perform a job, duty, or task. Authority is the appointment to a position of responsibility over someone or something. Authority assumes ability, but requires appointment or assignment.

PURPOSES OF AUTHORITY

To Instruct Us

- **Deut 6:6-9** ⁶ "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. ⁷ "You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. ⁸ "You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. ⁹ "You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
- **Eph 4:11-16** ¹¹ And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ – ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.
- **Eph 6:4** And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.
- **1 Thes 2:10-12** ¹⁰ You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; ¹¹ as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, ¹² that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

To Correct Us

- **2 Tim 4:2-4** ² Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. ³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; ⁴ and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.
- **Titus 2:1** But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine:
- **Titus 2:15** Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.

To Direct Us

- **Eph 6:1-4** Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: ³ "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." ⁴ And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

To Provide For Us

- **2 Cor 12:14** Now *for* the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.
- **1 Thes 2:7** But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children.
- **1 Tim 5:8** But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

To Protect Us

- **Acts 20:28-31** ²⁸ "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. ²⁹ "For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ "Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. ³¹ "Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.
- **Rom 13:3-4** ³ For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. ⁴ For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to *execute* wrath on him who practices evil.
- **Heb 13:17** Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

To Structure or Order Life