

Kingdom Authority
Sunday, May 6, 2012
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House of Christ's Love

Pastoral Prayer - (Video): Matthew 6:9-13 – Pray like the one who taught us to pray.....“Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name. ¹⁰Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven. ¹¹Give us this day our daily bread. ¹²And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. ¹³And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power and the glory for ever. Amen.”

Turn with me if you would to Romans 13:1-5 and as you are doing that, let me remind you that we are continuing in our brand new sermon series on the topic of the Kingdom of God and today we're going to take a look at the idea of Kingdom Authority. I don't often recommend books to you but this one is one that you should pick up – it's about 10 years old and you can pick it up on amazon or half.com for almost nothing.....and it's titled “The Kingdom Agenda” by Tony Evans and for what I've read of it, it's an exceptional book!

READ Romans 13:1-5

Let me share some thoughts with you today on the Principles for Understanding Kingdom (biblical) Authority.....

III. When Christian Herter was governor of Massachusetts, he was running hard for a second term in office. One day, after a busy morning chasing votes (and no lunch) he arrived at a church barbecue. It was late afternoon and Herter was famished. As Herter moved down the serving line, he held out his plate to the woman serving chicken. She put a piece on his plate and turned to the next person in line. “Excuse me,” Governor Herter said, “do you mind if I have another piece of chicken?” “Sorry,” the woman told him. “I'm supposed to give one piece of chicken to each person.” “But I'm starved,” the governor said. “Sorry,” the woman said again. “Only one to a customer.” Governor Herter was a modest and unassuming man, but he decided that this time he would throw a little weight around. “Do you know who I am?” he said. “I am the governor of this state.” “Do you know who I am?” the woman said. “I'm the lady in charge of the chicken. Move along, mister.”

The lunch lady understood how authority works! And friends, you and I need to also understand how authority works as well.....

If we are going to understand biblical authority we have to start with principal #1.....

1. All Authority Comes from God

III. When the president puts his hand on the bible at a presidential inauguration and swears to fulfill his duties, that act reflects the fact that there is a recognized relationship between God and the person and the government. When a witness takes the stand in a courtroom, and places one hand on the bible and swears to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth, or when a couple gets married and they stand before the preacher or the justice of the peace and state their total allegiance to each other under God,

they are making a covenant and a statement by acknowledging that there is a higher authority that rules and governs over their lives. (Tony Evans – pg. 66 – The Kingdom Agenda)

- We see clearly right from the beginning of time that God has set up all authority Genesis 1:1- In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth and he spoke things into existence! God is the creator, he established all creation and has authority over it all!
- We find in Exodus 20 the creation of the 10 Commandments - a command establishes rule and order and power and control and absolute authority
- [Daniel 7:14](#) – **Daniel was having a dream and this is what he reported.....***“He (Christ) was given authority (If Christ, the Son of God, was GIVEN authority, it could only come from one other person – His Father, God!), glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion(kingdom) is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.”*
- [Matthew 28:18](#) - *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.*
- *Jesus said in John 18:36 that His kingdom (his authority) is not of this world, but of another kingdom (the kingdom of God)*
- *And we also know that Jesus' authority did not come from man but from God - Luke 22:29 – “And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me..”*
- *Here in our passage today we see that in Romans 13:1b – “there is no authority except that which God has established.”*
- *Ephesians 1:1-23– Paul was writing to the saints in Ephesus, and he was speaking about Christ’s authority and here’s what he said beginning with vs 18 - “I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church...”*

God, through scripture, helps us to know the reality that all Authority comes from him! As people who are on a spiritual journey (some of us are Christ-followers, some of us haven’t taken that step yet) we need to remember that we have no authority except that which God gives to us.

Principal #2

2. Authority is a Very Important Responsibility – The world that you and I live in is a world that is in absolute chaos!! As individuals, families, as governments, as communities, and as churches, we have to understand the importance of authority. God is NOT A GOD OF CHAOS AND CONFUSION!!! He has ordered this world in a manner that gives us freedom if we get this point.

Paul instructs us here in our passage on how we are to be responsible with our authority

Vs. 1 – “we are to submit to governing authorities” (to govern means to preside over, give instruction to, and to oversee) – we have people who are governing over us that we are required to submit to. Here’s how God has laid it out in scripture for us.....

- **First** we need to submit to Christ – it’s our personal responsibility – Ill. I like how Evans speaks of this personal responsibility as he summarizes his entire book. Here’s what he says, *“If you want a better world, Composed of better nations, Inhabited by better states, Filled with better counties, Made up of better cities, Comprised of better neighborhoods, Illuminated by better churches, Populated by better families, Then you have to start by Becoming a Better Person”*. And friends, becoming a better person begins with the personal responsibility of submitting to Christ. If we can’t succeed in this initial step, we will forever have problems with being in authority, and being under authority. **James 4:7-8** – “Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God, and He will come near to you.” We can come near to God by submitting to God.....But here’s a caution for those who can’t submit to God...**Romans 8:7** - “the sinful mind is hostile to God. Why? Because It does not submit to God’s law, nor can it do so.” Submission to God’s authority is a very important responsibility!
- **Second**, we need to submit to Government:. Not only does our passage here in Romans instruct us to submit to ALL governing authorities, but in 1 Peter 2:13-14 it says, “Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, ¹⁴or to governors...” Now I don’t need to make any political statement here, but I do need to say this, no matter what side of the isle you sit on in your political views, these passages say that we are to submit to ALL governing authorities and any authority instituted by men. The rest of the 1 Peter passage says this in verse 15 – “For it is God’s will that by doing good (submitting to authority) you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men.”
- **Third**, we need to submit to our Employer: Eph 6:5-9 – “Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ.” 1 Peter 2:18 - ¹⁸Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh.” And friends listen, I’ll say this for us here today, if your job is stressing you out so much, or if going into work and dealing with your boss is something that makes you critical of him or her, just get a new job! This passage tells us that we are to submit to our employer!!
- **Fourth**, for those who are married, ladies, you need to submit to your Husband – 1 Peter 3:1 (¹Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives) , Collosians 3:18 (Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord). This isn’t a sexist or chauvinistic statement, it’s just simply how God has ordered authority. And guys let me speak directly to you for a moment.....this does not mean that we have the right to “rule over”, to step on, to demean, or to think that women are “less than” us. That’s not the point at all!!! It just clearly gives us a chain of command that God expects us to follow.
- **5th**, we need to submit to our Parents: Eph 6:1-3 - ¹Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ²“Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise— ³“that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” That’s

pretty simple to understand, it's not always easy to follow, but God expects that from us, as our parents children, not matter what we might be.

- **And lastly**, we are to submit to our Elders: Heb 13:17 – “Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you”. Friends, I cannot tell you how important submitting to your leaders truly is..... What happens is this, if you can't follow the leader that God has placed in authority, you enter into rebellion against that authority and rebellion is sin. That leads us to the another area of responsibility that Paul instructs us in

Vs. 2 – Paul says that We must not rebel against authority – I don't really have to say much on this point because it speaks for itself, but here's what Paul says, “Those who rebel against authority are rebelling against what God has instituted and those who do so will bring judgement on themselves.” We can find this idea of rebellion addressed throughout the entire bible but I think that one of the most powerful verses in all of scripture – it's my opinion – about rebellion comes out of 1 Samuel 15:23 – “Rebellion is the seed of witchcraft” Other translations say that “rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.” But either way you look at it, Rebellion is a serious issue!!

The Paul instructs us in verse 3.....

Vs. 3 – we must do what is right – “Rulers hold no terror for those who do right.....do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you.” Doing right things is a matter of the heart and a state of mind. The bible says that out of the heart the mouth speaks (Matthew 12:34 – Jesus), and that “as a man thinks, so he is.” (Proverbs 23:7) We must do the right things.....and we will be commended for it!!

Principle # 3

3. Delegated Authority Directs Our Path. Let me just share a few verses with you that guides us in this point.

When you and I come to a place of full submission to God's authority in our lives, it engages other scripture that plays a significant role in our lives.

- **Matthew 10:1** - [*Jesus Sends Out the Twelve*] “He called his twelve disciples to him and ***gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.***” When we are submitted to God's authority, He then gives us authority to accomplish His will. He doesn't give it to us to accomplish our will, but His Will. When we say the Lord's prayer, we are asking God that His kingdom would come.....and that His will be done.....on earth, as it is in heaven! That's pretty powerful.....we're saying to God that we want Him, as he is delegating His authority to us, to direct our paths!
- **1 Thessalonians 4:2** – Paul writes, “For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.” Paul was saying that his instructions to the church in thessalonica

came because of the authority that Christ gave to them! We can understand then, that when we exercise our authority, it's to be used for instructing others in their spiritual journey!

- Acts 1:8 – “He (Jesus) said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸But you will receive power (delegated authority) when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Part of our directed path that God gives to us is to share our faith and to be His witnesses wherever we go!

Principle #4 - we need to address the characteristics of authority.....

4. Authority's best characteristics. – when you and I are in authority, we must be.....

- a. **Humble.** [Philippians 2:3](#) - **Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.**
- b. **Gentle** - [1 Peter 3:15](#) – “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with **gentleness** and respect”
- c. **Loving and Gracious.** - [2 John 1:3](#) - **Grace**, mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Father's Son, will be with us in truth and **love**.
- d. a **Servant** – [Mark 10:45](#) – **For even** the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve,
- e. **Content.** - [Philippians 4:12](#) - I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being **content** in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

Principle #5

5. Authority must Not Abuse or be abused

This doesn't really need a lot of explanation, but let me give you a couple of passages that speak to this idea....

2 Corinthians 13:10 – Paul writes to the church in Corinth and says, “This is why I write these things when I am absent, that when I come I may not have to be harsh in my use of authority—the authority the Lord gave me for building you up, not for tearing you down.” Paul recognized that although he had authority over the church, he could not abuse his authority by being harsh – his desire was to build people up instead of to tear them down.

Another passage that speaks to this idea is found in **Mark 10:41-45** – James and John were on a power trip, and they wanted a place of prominence, of power, and prestige, and they addressed Jesus with this idea. ⁴¹“When the other ten disciples heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. ⁴²Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. ⁴³Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you (have authority) must be your servant, ⁴⁴and whoever

wants to be first must be slave of all. ⁴⁵For even the Son of Man did not come to be served (as those in authority tend to have happen) but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

As people, in a variety of positions and responsibilities, we have to be very careful not to abuse the authority that comes with those positions and responsibilities. And Jesus is just making this simple for us here by saying, "Listen, do you want to be great? Serve. Do you want to do something significant with your life? Serve. Do you want authority? Serve."

Pray