

## Lesson 3

### Understanding Spiritual Authority

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#### Romans 13:1-2

<sup>1</sup> 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. <sup>2</sup> Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

#### Hebrews 13:17

<sup>17</sup> Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

### God's Structure of Authority on Earth:

1. The Lord our God is the **SOURCE** of all power and authority.

**Matthew 28:18** *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*

**Colossians 2:10** *And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:*

- Our Lord Jesus Christ is the HEAD and He occupies His throne in Heaven.
- We are the Lord's BODY, whom He has enlisted to become the conduits for His authority to continue to flow here on earth.

2. As the body of Christ, we are called to be His **DELEGATED authority**. (2 Cor. 5:20)

**Luke 10:19** *Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.*

**Mark 16:17-18** <sup>17</sup> *And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;* <sup>18</sup> *They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*

#### NOTES:

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### God gives us His power and authority over:

- 1) devils/enemy
  - 2) our own humanity (as a result of our flesh - James 3:1-8)
  - 3) nature and its threats
  - 4) men and their efforts to harm or oppose
  - 5) sickness
3. The only way for His authority to flow through us is by our **SUBMISSION to God's authority.**

**James 4:7** *Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.*

**Hebrews 13:17a** *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls ...*

The Centurion's example of what submission to authority means: **Matthew 8:8-10**

<sup>8</sup>*The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.* <sup>9</sup>***For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.***

**Submission** = the act or action of yielding to a superior force or another person.

- To **God = His Lordship** in our lives
- To **God's Delegated Authority** = your Pastor or spiritual covering (*Heb. 13:17, Jer. 3:15, 23:4*)

Our submission to God's delegated authority enables God to give us His **power and authority.**

- **Authority** – having the RIGHT to do or fulfil it
- **Power** – having the ABILITY to do or fulfil it

### 4. Delegated Authority Provides **DIVINE Order** and **Communication.**

For any organization, family, or church to succeed, there must be ONE HEAD. There can be many helpers, workers, leaders, and assistants but there can only be one head. **ONE person must occupy the position of highest authority, a person whose word is final in any matter of importance.** If this is not carried out properly, it will inevitably result in confusion.

For example, other members or leaders can claim to “hear from God,” then the differences in opinions will eventually result into confusion or division.

For it’s not about how perfect or righteous God’s delegated authority is, but it’s about His principle of authority wherein God protects every decision made by His delegated authority for His will to be fulfilled (i.e. Moses, Abraham, David, etc.). And for any possible mistakes made by God’s delegated authority, that is not for man to judge but that is between them and God.

5. The opposite of being submitted is **REBELLION**.

Since God uses His **delegated authority** to enforce and communicate His will on earth (*Rom. 13:1-2*), if we choose to ignore or disobey our spiritual leader’s rule over us, then that means that we are going against God’s will in our lives.

And once we choose to disobey God’s delegated authority or if we step-out of His appointed authorities, we expose ourselves to the realm and power of Satan’s control.

***1 Samuel 15:23** For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry.*

Therefore, we need to make a conscious choice of submission to our spiritual leader (Pastor) who watches over our soul.

### **Illustration: Moses was God’s Chosen Leader**

In the Old Testament, you will read about God’s calling upon Moses to lead His chosen people, the Jews. God needed a humble and willing servant who would follow His instructions and would communicate His will to His people. Then God required all of His people to be submitted to His chosen leader, Moses. That meant that anyone who would oppose or rebel against Moses, would receive the rebuke or judgement of God.

- **The rebellion of Miriam and Aaron against Moses received the judgment of God.**

***Numbers 12:1–12** And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses ... And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only*

### **NOTES:**

*by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it.*

*<sup>5</sup> And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. <sup>6</sup> And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.*

*<sup>7</sup> My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. <sup>8</sup> With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?*

*<sup>9</sup> And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed. <sup>10</sup> And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous. <sup>11</sup> And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned. <sup>12</sup> Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother’s womb.*

- The **rebellion of Korah** against the leadership of Moses is another example of God's judgment on those who come against His ordained authority.

The story is found in *Numbers 16* wherein Korah led a revolt against Moses and then on the following day, Korah died, along with his co-conspirators, when God caused the earth to open her mouth and swallow him and all that appertained to them (*Numbers 16:31-32*).

## The Principle of DIVINE ORDER

### I. Divine Order of the FAMILY

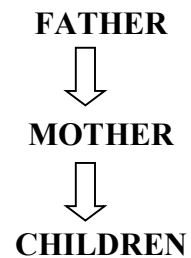
It is significant that the family is the first authority structure that God established. Success in your personal walk with God will depend in great measure upon establishing scriptural relationships with the other members of your family. For this reason, the enemy will seek to cause confusion and strife in the house of a new Christian to discourage and bring him to failure. However, the Word of God has clear and powerful teaching which can help us to build solid, spiritual lives and homes.

*God has structured the family along clear-cut lines of authorities and responsibility:*

1. The HUSBAND is the head of the wife: Chief authority over the children. (*Ephesians 5:23*)  
The husband is to be submitted to Christ as He leads His family.
2. The WIFE is the help meet to the husband and the secondary authority over the children. (*Col. 3:18*)
3. The CHILDREN are to be respectfully obedient to their parents. (*Ephesians 6:1-3; Proverbs 15: 5, 30:17; Col. 3:20*)

## NOTES:

### **FAMILY STRUCTURE:**



### RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Husbands to be the spiritual leaders of their home, as they submit to God.
- Husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church. (*Eph. 5:25-33*)
- Husbands to honor and protect their wife (*1 Peter 3:7*).
- Wives to submit to and respect their husband (*Eph. 5:22,33; 1 Peter 3:1-2*)
- Wives to give priority to their husband, children and home.
- Children to respect and obey their parents.

## II. Divine Order & Communication in the CHURCH

God governs His Church organization by **theocracy**, the rule of God. This is different from democracy or the rule of man by majority. For theocracy, God uses the Pastor as His chosen leader over the congregation. This is very vital to ensure divine order and communication within the Church organization. Otherwise, the absence of having ONE tangible leader in the congregation will eventually result into confusion, as more than one person can claim to “hear from God.”

### **The PASTOR is Your SPIRITUAL COVERING**

To have a spiritual covering means **to have the protection of God’s WILL, AUTHORITY and POWER over your life**. Possessing the protection of God’s will give you the assurance that God has already filtered out anything that is not according to His will (i.e. hindrances or attacks of the enemy). And possessing God’s power gives you the confidence that He provides everything that you will need, according to His will (i.e. His grace, resources, deliverance, etc.).

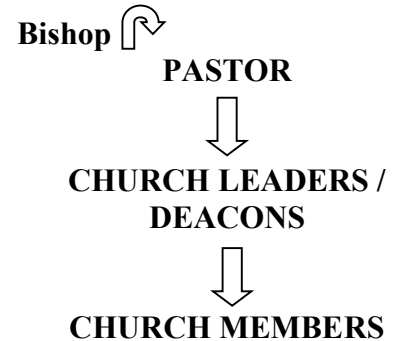
If we choose to live a submitted life in Christ then it will require for us to **be submitted to our spiritual covering**. Obeying your Pastor should not be any different from obeying the Word of God since your leader is expected to follow the leading of God (versus his own will) and to make decisions based on the principles of God’s Word. You may not always agree with him but that’s where true submission is often tested.

#### His Responsibilities to You:

1. Equip (*Ephesians 4:11-12*)
2. Feed/Teach & Protect (*Acts 20:28-29; Heb. 5:13-14*)
3. Lead & Correct (*1Thess. 5:12*)
4. Watch & Pray (*Heb. 13:17*)

## NOTES:

### CHURCH STRUCTURE:



#### Acts 20:28–29

<sup>28</sup>Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. <sup>29</sup>For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

Your Responsibilities to the Pastor:

1. **Esteem** (*I Thess. 5:12-13*)
2. **Listen to** (*Heb. 10:25, Rom. 10:14*)
3. **Support Financially** (by tithes)  
(*I Timothy 5:17-18; I Cor. 9:13-14*)
4. **Submit/Obey** (*Hebrews 13:17*)

Your Pastor is responsible to **pray** for you, to **lead** and **direct** you, to **equip** you, and to **correct** you, as needed. Your responsibility is **to be submitted to him in the fear of the Lord.**

**1 Thessalonians 5:12-13**

*<sup>12</sup>And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are **over you in the Lord**, and **admonish** you; <sup>13</sup>and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.*

**Hebrews 10:23-25**

*<sup>23</sup>Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) <sup>24</sup>And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: <sup>25</sup>**Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together**, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

**1 Timothy 5:17-18**

*<sup>17</sup>Let the elders (Pastors) that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. <sup>18</sup>For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.*

**1 Corinthians 9:13-14**

*<sup>13</sup>Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? <sup>14</sup>Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.*

***1 Peter 5:1-3** The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: <sup>2</sup>**feed the flock of God** which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; <sup>3</sup>neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.*

**NOTES:**

### Basic Concepts behind the Principle of Authority:

- God is the source of all authority and He establishes the structure of authority for our own good.
- **God establishes a balance of power through the chosen authorities in our life** (*family, church, government, etc.*)
- Your authorities cannot make you submit; you must do it voluntarily.
- **You are responsible for every decision you make while under authority.**
- **Under the chain of command you are responsible to obey every command as long as it does not violate Scripture.**
- There are many REWARDS promised to those who get under His authority.
- God **builds character** within us as we learn to be submitted to His human authorities (i.e. Joseph)

**Additional scriptural references:** *Hebrews 12:9-14; I Peter 2:17 – 3:7; I Timothy 2:1-5, Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 3:23-24; Romans 13:5.*

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### Application:

**Do you choose to be SUBMITTED to God's authority in your life?**

- To **God** - to become the **LORD** of your life?
- To your **Pastor** – to be submitted to your spiritual covering?
- As a Wife - to be submitted to your **Husband**?

### NOTES: