

Authority Through The Cross

The difference between “Authority” and “Power”:

Luke 10:19 ... “Behold, I have given you **authority** (ἐξουσίαν – exousian) to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the **power** (δύναμιν – dunamin) of the enemy, and nothing will injure you.”

Example: Traffic policemen at a busy intersection. Crowds of people waiting to cross the road; numerous cars, trucks, busses and motorcycles are shooting through the intersection. Suddenly the traffic policeman raises his hand and instantly the traffic comes to a halt. He signals to the pedestrians to cross and they do so in safety while the vehicles remain stationary. What is the explanation? The traffic policemen has very little “**power**”, the cars and trucks could have easily run over him and injured or even killed him. Even his most strenuous efforts could never have withstood their great momentum.

But what he has is far better. He is invested with the “**authority**” of the State and of the Police Force. The drivers and pedestrians recognize his **authority** and obey. If they fail to obey, then the law enforcement **powers** of the State come into action and the driver is fined or jailed.

So **authority** is delegated **power**. The value of the authority depends on the force behind the authority figure.

For the believer, his or her **authority** has the backing of the **Divine Power**, God Himself, and so he or she can face the enemy without fear or hesitation.

Eph 6:12 ... “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the **rulers** (ἀρχάς - archas), against the **authorities** (ἐξουσίας - exousias), against the **world forces** (κοσμοκράτορας - kosmokratoras) of this darkness, against the **spiritual forces** (πνευματικά - pneumatika) of wickedness in the heavenly places”.

ἀρχή (archē) – a beginning, first place, headship, high estate, eminence – the first or preeminent ones – the principalities – those of the higher order in Satan’s forces

ἐξουσία (exousia) – authority, rule

Κόσμος (kosmos) – world, the material universe, the present order of things

κράτος (kratos) – strength, power, might, force, display of might, dominion – think of the might of a volcanic crater erupting in an immense release of energy and power

πνευματικός (pneumatikos) – spirits (here refers to evil spirits – spirits of wickedness)

Behind the “**authority**” of the believer there is a “**Power**” infinitely greater than the power that backs the enemies of darkness, and the forces of darkness recognize and fear the “Power”, Almighty God Himself, who backs the believer.

There is no question that God's power is infinitely greater than that of Satan. When Satan rebelled he was cast down out of heaven in an instant. He had no power to resist the power of God.

Isa 14:12 ... *"How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn!
You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations!"*

Luke 10:18 ... *"And He said to them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning".*

In our Almighty God is all power, and strength and dominion. There is none to compare with Him! You have awesome backing!

The believer's authority is delegated power and is one of the "Spiritual blessings" that is ours in Christ, spoken of in Eph 1:3.

Eph 1:3 ... *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ".*

When Did Man Lose the Authority to Govern?

Man lost his God given authority to rule when he disobeyed God and believed Satan's lie. In submitting to Satan's lie he handed authority over to Satan.

Rom 6:16 ... *"Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness?"*

Rom 5:12 ... *"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned".*

So all of mankind lost the God given authority to rule and ended up as slaves to sin.

Recovery of the Believer's Authority:

Man had sinned and lost the right to rule in the earth. Satan became the "god or ruler of this world", which is what Jesus referred to him as in Jn 12:31

John 12:31 ... *"Now judgment is upon this world; now **the ruler of this world** will be cast out".*

And this was the beginning of the end for the devil, he was about to be stripped of the authority to govern this world, that he had gained through deception.

In order to restore authority to man God had to send His only begotten Son to be incarnated in the flesh, to become a man, so he could pay the price for our redemption, restore our relationship with God and return our authority to rule.

Redeem – means to "Buy back", "to recover by paying a price".

The price tag for our redemption was the life of a sinless man. Jesus, the Son of God, was that sinless man. We were redeemed through the shedding of His blood, the yielding up of His life.

Our Identification with Christ in His Redemptive Work of the Cross

By “identification” we mean that God identified us with Christ in His redemptive work – in His death, burial and resurrection. He considered us to have died with Christ, to have been buried with Him and to have been raised up with Him and to have been seated with him in heavenly places.

In the same way that all of mankind lost the authority to rule by one man’s rebellion, so it was that the authority was restored by One Man’s act of obedience. In both cases we were identified with our representatives – Adam and Jesus.

Rom 5:19 ... *“For as through the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous”.*

Jesus was our substitute – as a sinless man was required to be offered up in our place to redeem us from sin. So he took our place, he represented us. God viewed Him as being us. We were identified with him.

What He accomplished was attributed to our account, since it was done for us (on our behalf).

Let’s step through the scriptures concerning our identification with Christ in the work of the Cross:

1. We were crucified with Christ

Gal 2:20 ... *“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me”.*

Rom 6:6 ... *“knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin”.*

2. We Died with Christ

Col 3:3 ... *“For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.*

Rom 6:8-11 ... *“Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. Knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.”*

3. We were buried with Christ

Rom 6:4-5 ... *“Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in*

newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection”.

Col 2:12 ... *“having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through the faith of the working of God, who raised Him from the dead”.*

We were buried with him. Our past was buried with Him. Our weaknesses, our failures, our bondages were all buried with Him.

4. We were made alive with Christ

Col 2:13 ... *“When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions”.*

Eph 2:5 ... *“But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)”.*

5. We conquered with Christ

Col 2:13-15 ... *“When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having cancelled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through the Cross”.*

Heb 2:14 ... *“Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives”.*

6. We were raised with Christ

Col 2:12 ... *“having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through the faith of the working of God, who raised Him from the dead”.*

Col 3:1 ... *“Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God”.*

Eph 1:19-21 ... *“that you may know what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come”.*

7. We were seated with Christ

Eph 2:6 ... *“and God raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus”*

Anecdote from history – The Hollywood movie of the Japanese surrender at the end of World War 2.

The scene was aboard USS Missouri on 2nd Sept 1945 in the Bay of Tokyo. What took place was the signing of the surrender of Japan and its allies. The two main characters were actors representing:

General Douglas McArthur – supreme Commander of the Allied forces of USA, UK, Australia, NZ, etc

General Yoshijiro Umezu – Chief of Army and General Staff of Japan and its allies China, Russia, etc

General Umezu signs the surrender document and agrees to abide by all orders given by General McArthur and the forces he represents. Finally, Gen McArthur steps around the desk and strips off the medals and insignias of authority on General Umezu’s shoulder epaulettes. The final scene is General Umezu walking off with his head hung low while Gen McArthur and his aides held their heads high as USA and Allied forces aeroplanes flew over in a show of victory.

We may draw an analogy between this and the events that took place when Satan was stripped of all authority.

In Summary:

Recalling and substituting the various terms used for principalities, rulers, might, strength and power let us put a few passages together paraphrasing and applying these terms and picture Jesus Christ stripping Satan of all authority and see what is ours in Christ through the work of the Cross:

Col 2:8-15 ... *“See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule (all principalities and preeminent ones) and all authority; and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through the faith of the working of God, who raised Christ from the dead. When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having cancelled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. When He had disarmed the rulers (the principalities and preeminent ones) and the authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through the Cross”.*

Eph 1:18-21 ... *"I now pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His explosive power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the energetic working of the strength of His eruptive might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule (principalities, preeminent ones) and authority and destructive powers and dominion of darkness, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come..."*

Eph 2:6 ... *"and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus..."*

Eph 1:22-23 ... *"And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all".*

2 Cor 5:18-20 ... *"Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were entreating through us".*

Eph 6:10, 13 ... *"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might ... take up the full armour of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm".*

Jas 4:7 ... *"Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee".*

Our heavenly Father is calling us to walk in the authority that Christ, through the work of the Cross, has given us.

Take authority over all sickness, failure, oppression or anything that is raising its ugly head against you. Take authority over the forces of evil that seek to rob, kill and destroy. Bring hope to the unsaved, healing to the sick and deliverance to the oppressed. Be the church triumphant! Walk in victory in Christ. Rejoice in Him.