

Walking in Authority – Part 2

Last time, having discussed 1 – our response to God’s direct authority, we now continue our discussion concerning: 2 – our response to delegated authority, and 3 – our position, responsibility and backing in exercising authority over the enemy, principalities, dominions, and rulers of darkness.

2. Our Response to Delegated Authority

God is Originator, Author, the One in overall authority. He has delegated this authority, or granted authority, to His created beings (spiritual as well as human beings). Spiritual authority is not something attained by effort; it is given by God to whomever He chooses. To resist the authority God has delegated to whomever He decides is to resist God, as He is the Authorizer. Rejecting delegated authority is rejecting the source of authority.

a. Authority delegated to people in leadership in the world

We will start with the authority delegated to people who may or may not necessarily be believers, and the response to them that God requires of us. After that, we will look at authority delegated specifically to believers.

Rom 13:1-2 ... *“Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves.”*

1 Pet 2:13-14, 17 ... *“Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right” ... “Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honour the king.”*

1 Tim 2:1-4 ... *“First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”*

One of the reasons we’re having this discussion relating to delegated authority is because, in recent months in the run up to elections in the USA, I was being somewhat disparaging and derogatory concerning the proposed candidates for president. I also, quite often, have not been too complimentary about our governing authorities here in Australia. Very quickly the Lord pulled me up and directed me to His word and reminded me that He and He alone establishes authority, and that there is no authority except from Him (Rom 13:1-2), and to reject authority is to reject Him. God and His delegated authorities are inseparable. It’s not a matter of whether we think the person or persons are suitable for leadership or high positions, it’s simply that God uses who He desires in accomplishing His will, and they are the ones to whom He delegates authority. Subjection to authority is not being subject to a person, but being subject to the authority God granted that person. Even if a delegated authority messes up and is subsequently rejected by God, as king Saul was (1 Sam 15:23), and you could easily dethrone them, doing so would be rebellious and wrong. Until God finally removes that delegated authority, we should regard them as authority figures and grant them the respect we would

give to God. It is God and God alone who raises up or puts down authority. Even though he had been anointed as successor to Saul, David did not dare kill king Saul in order to expedite God's plan and will for him to take over as king, even though he easily could have done so. He waited for God to work, and respected Saul as God's delegated authority until God finally disposed of him. David recognized and submitted to the delegated authority in Saul, because David's heart operated in quiet submission and obedience to God's will. Saul disobeyed God's specific command and was rejected by God; but this was something between Saul and God. Not all authority figures obey God. Very often they do the opposite, but they are still the delegated authorities. It's up to God, not us, to deal with their disobedience or poor behaviour. God will deal with them in His time. David's responsibility was to be subject to the Lord's delegated authority. Because David constantly honoured the authority of God, God acknowledged him as a man after His own heart.

We are to be subject to delegated authority as well as to God's direct authority, for ... *"there is no authority except from God" (Rom 13:1).*

However, we are to submit to and obey the delegated authorities, unless they require of us to comply with something that violates God's word or moral values. An example is the three young men we read of in Daniel chapter 3. They served and obeyed Nebuchadnezzar in everything except bowing to his graven image, because God expressly forbids us to do so (Ex 20:3; Ex 34:14). Even fully understanding the consequences of disobeying the king's edict, they still honoured the king, and put themselves in subjection to his law that they would be cast into the furnace if they disobeyed. They went willingly, trusting God's higher authority. As a result of their submission to delegated authority in this way, God honoured them and saved them from the heat of the furnace. If we are to serve God, subjection to His ordained authority is an absolute necessity. Leave it to God to do His part of the deal, to protect and empower you through the consequences of honouring His delegated authorities.

Backbiting, bad manners, judgementalism, rejection or inward resistance to delegated authority all originate from a rebellious spirit. Serving without submitting to delegated authority is rebellion, because doing your own thing is rebellion. Being obedient to God individually while at the same time not being subject to God's delegated authority is the same as partial obedience, which in God's eyes is simply disobedience. So, let us be certain to honour the authorities around us, and by doing this we honour God. So, let us, as instructed by God in His word, submit to the authorities and pray for them. Praying for authorities is a vital part of our walk in Christ.

1 Tim 2:1-4 ... *"First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."*

Pray for, not against, the authorities. Pray God's will be done in and through them.

b. Authority resident in every believer

Now we turn to the authority invested in every believer. We will first look at how we are to respect this authority in each and every believer, then, finally, we will look at how we apply this authority to the enemy and his hosts, the hosts of darkness.

We have established that Christ is the One in Authority above all, and He is the Head of the church, His body.

Col 1:27 ... ***“Christ in you, the hope of glory.”***

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.”***

That’s what it means to be a believer; one in whom Christ lives and is the life. And that means even more.

Col 1:16-20 ... ***“For in Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. **He is also head of the body, the church**; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything. For it was the Father’s good pleasure for **all the fullness to dwell in Him**, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.”***

Col 2: 9-10 ... ***“For in Him (Christ) 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 and authority.”***

John 1:16 ... ***“For **of His fullness we have all received**, and grace upon grace.”***

Eph2:4-6 ... ***“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), and raised us up with Him, and **seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus**.”***

The One who is head over all rule (archēs) and authority (exousia) is resident in every believer; He is the life in us, and we are seated in Christ in heavenly places, the place of ultimate authority. In essence, living the Christ-life means living and carrying His authority. We are His ambassadors.

2 Cor 5:21 ... ***“Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, **as though God were entreating through us**.”***

So, knowing that each and every believer in Christ is a container of Christ and of everything He represents, is that what you see and recognize whenever you look at or interact with another believer, no matter how long they have been in Christ, no matter how mature they are in Christ, no matter their intellectual state, no matter their colour, no matter their nationality, no matter their present behaviour, no matter their age? Do you see an authority figure you are to respect?

So, what is our response when the word of God declares things such as:

Eph 5:21 ... ***“and **be subject to one another in the fear of Christ**.”*** Reverential respect of Christ.

Gal 5:13 ... *"For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love **serve one another.**"*

Phil 2:3 ... *"Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind **regard one another as more important than yourselves.**"*

Rom 12:10-11 ... *"Be **devoted to one another** in brotherly love; **give preference to one another** in honour; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, **serving the Lord.**"*

Serving the Lord is simply honouring Christ in them.

So, when we see other believers, in whom Christ dwells, do we comply with these scriptures and treat those folks with utmost respect and honour? Do we submit to them in love? Being bearers of Christ, means they bear His authority, for Christ and His authority are inseparable.

Our responsibility, in honouring God, is to outdo one another in showing honour, submitting to one another, giving preference to one another, and serving one another in love. Nothing else will do. Any other response to other believers is to disobey and go against Christ in them. As the Rom 12:11 verse says, by submitting to one another and honouring one another we are actually serving or honouring the Lord. This does not mean we have to agree with bad behaviour, or dogmatically expressed poor doctrinal beliefs, it simply means we are to honour and respect them as bearers of the life and authority of Christ in them.

When we, who have come to a revelation of Christ as our life and as our all, look at others who love the Lord but are still caught up in legalism and comingling of the gospel, do we see Christ in them and submit to Him and His authority in them, or do we look down on them? There are many different denominations, with varying individual emphases on doctrine, yet most of which believe in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. This means many, possibly most, of the folks in these different denominations are born again, even though they have not yet come to a full revelation of Christ, and Christ alone, as their life and their all. Now the very sad thing is that there is such division between these denominations. This is simply because folks are seeing their doctrinal differences as more important than seeing Christ and His authority in one another. By rejecting others, or looking down upon them reveals an absence of submission to the authority of Christ in them. This is nothing less than rebellion against Christ.

I am sure that the unity of the believers in Christ which Jesus spoke of in His prayer of John 17:20-23 will only come into being when we all see Christ in one another and submit to His authority in one another in love. As this happens the body of Christ, in union with the Head, will function as one and this expression of the love for Christ, and love of Christ, will get the attention of the world, and they will know Christ came to redeem them and that the Father loves them.

John 17:20-23 ... *"I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me."*

So, let us ... *"be subject to one another in the fear of Christ."* In the reverential respect of Christ.

Now we move on to the third point concerning authority.

3. Our position, responsibility and backing in exercising authority over the enemy, principalities, dominions, and rulers of darkness

God has purposed to manifest His authority to the world, and to spiritual beings, through the church, the born again, the body of Christ. To back up the authority He has vested in believers, He has also empowered us. A few verses from His Word verify this for us.

Eph 1:18-23 ... *"I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the ... surpassing greatness of His power (dunamis) toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength (ischus) of His might (kratos) 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 (arché) and authority (exousias) and power (dunamis) and dominion (kurios), and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection (hupotassō) 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."*

Eph 2:4-6 ... *"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 in Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus."*

Between the physical and material sphere in which we dwell, and the unseen and intangible realm which surrounds and interpenetrates the physical and material realm, no veil exists except the inability of humans to see the immaterial, because our eyes are made for the viewing of the material world alone. But, throughout the unseen realm spirit beings, some good and some bad, move about. This is the realm of the heavenlies. This is why prayer for a spirit of wisdom and revelation (Eph 1:17) to know Christ and receive knowledge, directions, encouragement from Him is so important.

Now, it's clear from God's word that, as believers, we are seated in the heavenly places in Christ. This is the place of highest authority. As we submit to Christ, the one whose authority is above all authority and dominion, as his ambassadors we stand in His authority. For it is only the person who is under authority can be an authority.

Now, for us to walk in authority and to exercise this authority over the enemy, is for us to walk in Christ in every respect. Humility, trust and obedience must be our hallmark. Anything else will be our undoing. The scriptures make this clear.

Matt 10:1 ... *"Jesus summoned His twelve disciples and gave them authority (exousia) over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness."*

But then, Mark 9:14-29 tells us about the demon possessed boy, and that the disciples failed to cast out the demon from the child. But Jesus immediately cast it out. Then, when the disciples asked Jesus why they could not cast out the demon His reply (v29) was ... *"This kind cannot come out by any other thing but prayer and fasting."*

In saying this what Jesus really meant was that they needed to pray and fast for one thing only; to do some inward searching to deal with pride, unbelief, or whatever else it was that hindered them from standing in the authority He had delegated to them. That's all the prayer and fasting was to attain.

Now the principle here for us today is that, while it is **believing** in Christ's finished work on the cross that brings us to salvation and to being seated in Christ on His throne, the place of highest authority, only **humility** ensures we retain and employ this authority backed by His power. Satan's most effective weapons against believers exercising their God given authority is spiritual pride and unbelief.

Prov 8:13 ... *"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth, I hate."*

Prov 16:18 ... *"Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before stumbling."*

Prov 11:2 ... *"When pride comes, then comes dishonour, but with the humble is wisdom."*

Prov 29:23 ... *"A man's pride will bring him low, but a humble spirit will obtain honour."*

It is far too often that believers have this consuming desire to be independent. Allowing success to go to their heads, and that's just pride which is the opposite of humility. To be effective against the enemy we need to understand that the only place of safety and surety is the occupation of the seat in the heavenlies in Christ. Seated in Christ in the heavenlies we are *"far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named"* (Eph 1:20-21). We have no authority and power of our own, we are simply privileged to be containers of Christ who is the ultimate authority figure and who is the Omnipotent One. Ours is simply the duty to be His ambassadors, to represent Him, obey Him and bring Him glory.

Eph 6:10-18 ... *"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armour of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, 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. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints."*

We stand in His strength 1 Cor 1:24 ... *"Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."*

The full armour we are to put on is Christ.

- Gird your loins with truth. Christ is the Truth. John 14:6 ... *"I am the way, the truth and the Life."*
- Put on the breastplate of righteousness; 1 Cor 1:30 ... *"But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption."*
- Feet shod with the gospel of peace; Eph 2:14 ... *"For He Himself is our peace."*
- Taking up the shield of faith; Gal 2:20 ... *"we live by the faith of the Son of God."*
- Take the helmet of salvation; Ps 140:7 ... *"O God the Lord, the strength of my salvation, You have covered my head in the day of battle."*

- Take up the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God; John 1:1, 16 ... *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" ... "For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace."*

Putting on the full armour is putting on Christ; it's fixing our eyes on Him, keeping in constant communion with Him, putting on the mind of Christ, trusting and obeying Him. Doing this with an attitude of humility Phil 2:5, 7, 8 ... *"Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus" ... "He emptied Himself ... "He humbled Himself."*

As we put on Christ, as we stand firm in Him, the enemy will see Christ in us and shudder. On the other hand, if we go out in pride and with an independent spirit we will be in for a hiding.

Acts 19:11-16 ... *"God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were even carried from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out. But also some of the Jewish exorcists, who went from place to place, attempted to name over those who had the evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, 'I adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preaches.' Seven sons of one Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. And the evil spirit answered and said to them, 'I recognize Jesus, and I know about Paul, but who are you?' And the man, in whom was the evil spirit, leaped on them and subdued all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded."*

It's as we live by the life of Christ, as we put on Christ in our daily walk that demons will see Christ in us, and they know He is the Authority above all authority, and they are afraid of Him. As we stand firm in Christ, and in humility exercise the authority we have in Christ, demons and the forces of darkness have to obey, because we are backed up by the Almighty One.

This is the time we must step up in Christ. Every believer in Christ who is fully yielded to Him, who is walking in Christ, is increasing the consternation and fear of the hosts of darkness. They are fully conscious of their impending overthrow and assignment to eternal destruction, and for this reason they are seeking by all means to attempt to bring about our downfall. We can expect attacks on every front. It's time for us to be strong in the strength of His might, to be clad in Christ, to stand firm in Christ, to keep our eyes on Him so we can operate at His beckoning, and from our place seated with Him to walk in authority.

Concerning casting out of demons, if we are not walking in Christ in every respect, it's not saying or shouting *"in the name of Jesus"* or *"the blood of Jesus"* anything else that will dispel the demons. Demons will only fear the manifest presence of Christ in you. If you're walking in Christ as you speak you speak as His ambassador as if God were entreating through you (1 Cor 5:21). 1 Pet 4:11 ... *"Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever."*

Col 1:12-13 ... *"giving thanks to the Father, who has **qualified us** to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. For **He delivered us** from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son."*

The kingdom, the seat of authority of His beloved Son. The seat of highest authority. And we are seated in Christ in the heavenlies!

He has **qualified us** and He has **delivered us**! These are two privileges we possess! We are authorised and empowered. Let us walk in that authority a power to the Glory of our heavenly Father!