

# DOCTRINE OF AUTHORITY AND LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

## I. Introduction:

- A. Authority is that legal right delegated by God, whereby certain members of the human race have jurisdiction and responsibility for other members of the human race.
- B. Authority exists within the Establishment and Royal Chains of Command. Submission to all authorities is the believers' duty, apart from which there can be no spiritual progress.
- C. This doctrine is especially apropos today since Scripture reveals it to be a major issue of rejection in the last days. Psa.2:1-3; 2Tim.3:2; 2Pet.2:10
- D. Arrogance is the underwriter to rejection of authority. Cp. Jam.4:6-7
- E. All authority is derived from God. Those that exercise it will answer for the way they use it. Joh.19:11; Rom.13:1,2

## II. Vocabulary:

### A. Hebrew:

- 1. **dA** – hod; Majesty, authority. Num.27:20
- 2. **dy"** – yad; Hand, power, authority. Gen.16:9
- 3. **hSK** – kiss<sup>e</sup>h; Seat of honor, official seat, authority. Est.3:1
- 4. **lvnm** – mim<sup>e</sup>shal; Ruler, person in authority. Dan.11:3
- 5. **hl'vnm** – m<sup>e</sup>mishalah; Rule, dominion, authority. Isa.22:21
- 6. **lvn** – mashal; To rule, to exercise authority. Exo.21:8
- 7. **jl** – sh<sup>e</sup>let; To rule, to have authority. Dan.5:7
- 8. **@qTo** – toq<sup>e</sup>ph; Power, authority. Est.9:29
- 9. **hw'** – tsawah; To give a command or order. Gen.3:11

### B. Greek:

- 1. The primary NT word is *exousia* – *exousia* (102x); It means the inherent right to exercise authority/power, the right to use power, domain, jurisdiction. Another Greek word for power is *dunamis* – *dunamis* and simply means power exercised. Mat.7:29; 8:9; 9:6
- 2. Other useful verbs that denote the exercise of authority include:
  - a. *exousiazw* – *exousiazw*; 4x; To have authority over. Luk.22:25
  - b. *katexousiazw* – *katexousiazw*; 2x; To exercise authority over. Mat.20:25; Mar.10:42
  - c. *epitassw* – *epitasso*; 10x; To command, order. Mar.1:27; Luk.8:25. The cognate *epitagh*, - *epitage*; 7x; Command, order. Tit.1:3 cp. 2:15 where it is translated “authority”.

- d.** diatassw – diatasso; 16x; To command, order, give instructions, arrange. It emphasizes the principle of the Chain of Command (COC). Mat.11:1; Luk.8:55; Act.18:2; 24:23; 1Cor.7:17. Cognates include diatagh, - diatage; 2x; and diatagma – diatagma; 1x; Meaning decree. Act.7:53; Rom.13:2; Heb.11:23
- e.** upotassw – hupotasso; 38x; It is primarily a military term meaning to put in subjection (active) or be subject to (passive). Luk.2:51; 10:17,20; Rom.10:3; Eph.5:21; Jam.4:7. The cognate is upotagh, - hupotage; 4x; Obedience, submission, subordination. 1Tim.2:11
- f.** upakouw – hupakouw; 21x; To listen and so to obey. Act.12:13 cp. Mat.8:27; Act.6:7; Rom.6:12,16,17; Eph.6:1; 2The.1:8; 3:14; 1Pet.3:6. The cognate is upakoh, - hupakoe; 15x; Obedience. Rom.5:19; Heb.5:18
- g.** paraggelw – parangelo; 30x; To command and is used of a superior to an inferior. Luk.5:14; Act.17:30; 1Cor.7:10; 2The.3:4; 1Tim.1:3; 6:13,17. The cognate is parangelia – parangelia; 5x; Command, order. 1Tim.1:18
- h.** entellomai – entellomai; 17x; To enjoin upon, to charge with. Act.1:2; Heb.11:22. The cognate is entolh, - entole; 67x; Commandment. Mat.5:19; Joh.13:34; 2Pet.2:21
- i.** peiqarcew – peitharcho; 4x; To obey one in authority. Act.5:29; Tit.3:1
- j.** peiqw – peitho; 54x; In the passive voice followed by the dative case it has the sense “to obey”. The basic idea of this verb is to persuade. Act.5:37; Gal.5:7; Heb.13:17; Jam.3:3
- k.** proisthmi – proistemi; 8x; To be a leader, have authority over, manage. Rom.12:8; 1The.5:12; 1Tim.3:4,5,12; 5:17

### III. Categories of authority:

#### A. The authority of God:

- 1.** God is the ultimate authority and His authority is not derived from any other source.
- 2.** His authority is immutable, universal and eternal as King over His creation. His authority is known as His Sovereignty. Exo.15:18; Psa.29:10; 93; 146:10; Dan.4:17, 34-37
- 3.** His authority extends over:
  - a.** Angels. Dan.4:35
  - b.** Mankind. 1Sam.2:6-10
  - c.** Planet earth and its creation animate and inanimate. Psa.103:19-22; 104
  - d.** Human history. Act.17:24-31

4. God delegates His authority to mankind via: Joh.19:11
    - a. The Establishment COC. Rom.13:1-2
    - b. The Royal COC. 1Tim.3:1,8; Heb.13:17
    - c. Family. Eph.5:23; 6:1
  5. We obey His authority by knowledge and application of BD. Heb.12:9; Jam.4:7
  6. Failure to submit to God's authority brings judgment. Deu.28:45; Rev.2:5
- B.** The authority of Christ:
1. As God He has always been King. 1Tim.1:17; 6:15,16
  2. As the son of David He is King of Israel. Joh.1:49; 12:13
  3. During the incarnation He was Himself subject to legitimate authorities:
    - a. God the Father. Joh.5:19,30; 15:10
    - b. The Establishment COC. Mat.17:24-27 cp. 22:21; Joh.19:10-11
  4. As the glorified God-man He has been given supreme authority over all things. Joh.3:35
    - a. The Church. Eph.1:20-23; 5:23
    - b. The nations. Psa.2:7-9
    - c. All creation. Heb.2:8
    - d. Each believer. 1Cor.11:3
    - e. The bestowal of eternal life. Joh.5:21
    - f. Judgment. Joh.5:22,27
    - g. Forgiving sins. Luk.5:24
    - h. Physical life and death. Joh.11:23,43-44
    - i. Controlling the elements. Mat.8:24-27
    - j. His atoning death. Joh.10:18
    - k. His own resurrection. Joh.10:18
    - l. Resurrection of all believers. 1Cor.15:50-57
  5. As the eternal King all of His enemies will be neutralized. 1Cor.15:20-28; Heb.2:5-10
- C.** The authority of Divine institutions 2 and 3, Marriage and Family:
1. The husband is the authority over the wife and family. Eph.5:22-25
  2. The wife is to be obedient in everything. Eph.5:24
  3. Even to those husbands that are –V and unreasonable. 1Pet.3:1,6
  4. Her inner badge is a quiet and gentle spirit. 1Pet.3:4
  5. Her obedience must not violate the authority of Christ. Col.3:18
  6. His overt badge of authority is his short hair; hers is her long hair. 1Cor.11:10
  7. The wife should strive to acclimate to the wife-mother-homemaker niche. Tit.2:4,5
  8. The parents are the authority over their children.

9. Children are to obey their parents as long as they are living under their roof. Eph.6:1; Col.3:20
  10. Children are to apply honor parents for the entirety of their life. Eph.6:2
  11. Fathers are responsible to enforce disciplinary actions and spiritual guidance for their children. Eph.5:4
- D.** The authority of Divine institution #4, nationalism, and the Establishment and other domestic COC's.
1. God established nations with their independent governments on behalf of +V. Act.17:26-27
  2. We are to be obedient to our civil authorities. Rom.13:1-7; Tit.3:1; Ecc.8:2-9; 1Pet.2:13,14
  3. Even if their laws and policies are unjust.
  4. Civil disobedience is only for extreme cases such as the state prohibiting GAP or demands participation in idolatry, genocide, etc. Act.5:29; Dan.3:6; Exo.2:15-22
  5. We are to obey the authority structures within domestic societal institutions of which we are a member of or affiliated with such as work, academic, clubs, etc. Eph.6:5-9; Col.3:22-25; Tit.2:9,10; 1Pet.2:18-20; 1Tim.6:1
  6. We are to be obedient even if the order isn't the best way to go about something.
  7. Don't argue with authorities (keep your mouth shut). Tit.2:9
  8. Don't pilfer. Tit.2:10
  9. Don't take advantage of believers that you work for. 1Tim.6:2
  10. Don't engage in "eye-service". Eph.6:6
  11. Take whatever undeserved suffering that comes your way, knowing the Lord will reward you. 1Pet.2:18-20; Col.3:22-25
  12. The believer should approach membership to any organization with discernment, since participation in this manner binds the believer to their rules, policies, philosophies, etc.
- E.** The authority of the local church via the Royal COC.
1. Jesus Christ is the ultimate authority over the Church and reveals His will for the church via BD. Eph.1:22; 5:15-27
  2. The office of Apostle was established next in the Royal COC, possessing authority over as many local churches as existed in their canon. This office was temporary during the infancy of the church and is no longer extant.
  3. The remaining communicative office extant today is that of the Pastor-Teacher (P-T), whether in an evangelistic or pastoral mode.
  4. In the pastoral mode he has authority over only one local church.
  5. The P-T is the highest ranking member of the local body because of his responsibility to shepherd. 1Pet.5:1-4; Heb.13:17; Tit.2:15
  6. The office of deacon constitutes the next level within this COC. See Doctrine of Deacons.

7. God puts certain believers in charge over others in the body of Christ. 1The.5:12-13

**IV.** Leadership principles applicable with authority.

- A.** The proper exercise of authority should be foremost in the minds of all that have been delegated any level of authority. 2Cor.10:8; Eph.6:9
- B.** With all authority comes the responsibility to exercise it appropriately and consistent with the Word of God. 2Cor.13:10; Eph.6:4
- C.** Failure to exercise authority justly may result in discipline for the one in authority. Joh.19:11
- D.** All leaders should recognize that they are held to a higher standard and that God will evaluate them with a stricter judgment. Jam.3:1
- E.** A leader is defined as one that has the authority and responsibility to go before others to guide, show the way, or direct in some course of thought or action, which they are to follow. Heb.13:7,17
- F.** Effective leadership is the art of influencing and directing individuals in such a way as to obtain a willing confidence, obedience, respect and cooperation of others in order to accomplish an objective.
- G.** Leadership is both a science, since there are rules that govern it, and an art, since it is a skill that is acquired by study, experience and observation.
- H.** To lead, supervise or manage demands a leader, but it also demands cooperation by those under their authority and that both leader and “team” are necessary to accomplish goals and objectives.
- I.** Supervision is the art of checking on the progress of individual(s) under one’s authority, without undue harassment. Act.20:28
- J.** While supervision should be as unobtrusive as possible, the authority must not be reticent to address areas of weakness when necessary. Jer.29:26
- K.** Further, good authority recognizes that someone under authority may have a better idea or method for doing something and should not be dismissed. Gen.21:9-12
- L.** The idea behind authority and those under authority is to be united and committed to a common purpose and willingly work together to accomplish the objective. Jud.20:11; Ezra 3:9
- M.** Responsibilities of a leader include:
  - 1.** To accomplish the objective at hand.
  - 2.** He must identify the objective clearly in his own thinking.
  - 3.** He should obtain all available facts related to the task.
  - 4.** He must make an overall assessment of the situation and consider the alternatives available and the relative merits of each alternative, evaluating the ramifications of decisions.
  - 5.** He must form a strategy if necessary.
  - 6.** The leader must communicate the objective in such a way that those under his authority understand it.

7. Those under authority must orient to the strategy and orders of planning in assisting the implementation of commands to accomplish the objective.
- N. The authority is to look out for the welfare for those under his authority, not merely their own interests. Neh.5:14-19
1. Keep your subordinates informed, as well as any authority over you, since very few people enjoy working without some sort of feedback.
  2. Set the example in application, recognizing that those under your authority will be more inclined to follow and trust you. 1Tim.3:1-12; 1Pet.5:3
  3. Those under authority can hardly complain when the leader asks them to do something he has done himself.
  4. Make sound and timely decisions so those working under you are not waiting on something you should have provided in order for them to perform their task.
  5. Don't treat them like a baby and give subordinates latitude to work out details and issues on their own if they are so inclined.
  6. On the other hand, don't expect a child to do a grown up's work.
  7. In addition, recognize that any task may be an opportunity for one under authority to learn and profit from your expertise or experience.
- O. Certain traits and personal qualities are of great value in the exercise of authority and in gaining loyal cooperation of others.
1. Adaptability: the quality to be flexible enough to make necessary changes in order to accomplish one's objective.
  2. Bearing: creating a favorable impression in carriage, appearance and personal conduct at all times. (This is not designed to promote legalism, hypocrisy or hierarchy, but to encourage respect for authority.) 2The.3:7
  3. Consistency: to be uniform in attitude and actions from day to day to include demeanor and regiment of one's own duties.
  4. Courage: the mental quality that recognizes fear, danger or criticism but is able to faith-rest the danger or opposition with calmness and firmness.
  5. Decisiveness: the ability to make decisions promptly and then express them in a clear and forceful manner according to Divine viewpoint solutions. Make a decision and stick with it.
  6. Dependability: The certainty of performance of duty. (Attendance in Bible class, function of gift, etc.)
  7. Endurance: the spiritual and mental stamina measured by the ability to handle the common human problems of life without throwing in the towel. Jam.1:3-4; 5:11

8. Foresight: discernment of a prudent approach of looking ahead and seeking to minimize or avoid potential pitfalls or problems. Pro.6:8
  9. Humility: the lack of arrogance that can blind any leader. This demands to ability to forgive and forget and willingness to acknowledge one's own mistakes. 1Pet.5:5
  10. Initiative: the quality of seeing what needs to be done and the willingness to embark on a course of action without prodding or waiting to be told what to do or how to do it.
  11. Integrity: uprightness of character and soundness of moral principle. This demands intellectual honesty, forthrightness and truthfulness in the discharge of one's duties, obligations, etc., in dealing with others. 2Cor.8:21
  12. Judgment: the ability to critique and make wise decisions and conclusions based on fact or indications of facts even when all the facts are not present or available. We are not to judge based on appearance, but on the standards of BD. Joh.7:24; 1Pet.4:7
  13. Justice: the quality of remaining impartial and fair in the exercise of authority. You cannot be a respecter of persons, but must be willing to apply BD unilaterally.
  14. Knowledge: have acquaintance with and clear perception of the facts. 2Tim.4:14-15
  15. Loyalty: the sentiment of allegiance, especially toward superiors, but not at the expense or compromise of BD. Pro.20:28
  16. Patience: forbearance with regards to recognizing where others are at in terms of maturity, expertise, weaknesses, etc. 1The.5:14; 2Tim.2:24
  17. Tact: the ability to deal with others without creating offense, but again not at the expense of compromising Divine viewpoint. Eph.4:15
  18. Unselfishness: the quality of not providing for one's own comfort and personal advancement at the expense of others. The ability to sacrifice on behalf of others.
- P.** Authority should consistently evaluate himself and seek objective improvement, not blinded by arrogance of any kind and praying that one's own weaknesses might be demonstrated to you with the proper doctrine to handle them.
- Q.** Employ your authority within the prescribed limits of your authority and niche. To overstep your bounds even when you think it best can be devastating to others and the organization in general.
- R.** Seek and accept responsibility for your own actions. Blaming others for your shortcomings is not a demonstration of leadership, personal maturity or sound BD.
- S.** If one seeks to become proficient in their area of responsibility and executes these principles consistently, seeking to grow in areas of

weakness, they will begin to see the beneficial results of sound doctrine in their area of authority.

**V. Conclusion:**

- A.** Authority is a legal God given right to certain members of the human race to have jurisdiction over others.
- B.** All authority is established and derived from God. Rom.13:1
- C.** Those that are given authority over others are expected to exercise it with a MA of humility and servitude. Luk.22:25
- D.** Abuse of authority spans the extremes from tyrannical (to exercise one's power with unjust and oppressive severity) to a total passive or inactive approach.
- E.** Those with authority exercise its use through avenues of:
  - 1.** Commands/orders.
  - 2.** Providing direction and guidance via clear and precise instructions.
  - 3.** Overseeing that arrangements are provided for so that orders can be carried out.
  - 4.** Giving full support to the COC. Circumventing the COC causes dissension, instability and general unrest among the ranks.
  - 5.** Putting into subjection/control others, through Biblical means, in order to maintain that all things are done in a decent and orderly way.
- F.** Those under authority are enjoined to allow themselves to be passive with regard to authorities over them and not to be rebellious or indifferent.
- G.** The evidence of one's acclimation to authority is seen first in the willingness to listen to instructions given and second in the willingness to fastidiously carry out the imperatives/requests.
- H.** The principle of authority in and of itself creates order and is the prescription for chaos. God is the author of order, Satan of chaos.
- I.** All men and women are under authority and the mark of an adjusted believer in time is their recognition and acclimation to their place in the hierarchy of God's plan.
- J.** There is a major difference in an attitude of simply resigning oneself to being under authority and a willing zeal to accept one's authority and acclimate with obedience to it.
- K.** Those in authority commend themselves and persuade others under their authority to follow their directives through solid and consistent application of sound BD while themselves oriented to the chain of command.
- L.** Remember: **LEAD, FOLLOW OR GET THE HELL OUT OF THE WAY!**

*Remind them to be subject to rulers,  
to authorities, to be obedient,  
to be ready for every good work.*

*Tit.3:1*