

The Tree of Life is a weekly teaching summary.

The Tree of Life for week ending 09/21/03.

The Doctrine of Authority

Revelation 12:10

Revelation 12:10 *And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the deliverance [the Second Advent], and the power [Jesus Christ in hypostatic union], and the **kingdom of our God** [the Father’s plan for the Millennial reign of our Lord Jesus Christ] and the **authority of His Christ** have come...”*

The “kingdom of our God” is the Millennial reign and the perfect environment that comes with it. However, as we have seen in past studies, improved environment is not the answer in life, and the mature believer is happy in time of historical prosperity or historical disaster. Historical or personal circumstances make no difference in his viewpoint and attitude. Happiness has to do with the state of your soul, the doctrine in your soul, and the execution of the plan of God, all of which require respect and honor of *authority*.

We must have the proper attitude toward authority because all civilization demands the function of authority. If we are to have privacy, freedom, and property, we must respect authority. Under the principles of the word of God, property, privacy, and human life are sacred, but depend on respect for authority.

The Doctrine of Authority

Point 1: Authority and Human Volition. Authority is defined as the power to command, to judge (discern), or to act by a person or persons in whom authority is vested. Authority applies to certain persons having legal power to make and enforce the law, to make policy, or to make decisions. Under the laws of divine establishment, authority is defined as that legal power, delegated by God, whereby certain persons have jurisdiction over and responsibility for others.

Authority is also an accepted source of information, as in the case of the authority of the pastor-teacher to provide doctrinal information from the scriptures. Authority can also be defined in terms of an expert on a certain subject.

Heb 13:7,17 *Remember those who rule over you, who communicate the Word from God to you; carefully consider the issue of their way of life; imitate their doctrine... Keep obeying those [pastors] who themselves are ruling over you, and submit to their authority, for they keep watch over your souls, as those who will render an account. Keep obeying them, in order that they may do this [render an account] with happiness and not with groaning, for this is unprofitable for you.*

We “remember” pastors by being faithful to their teaching and attending Bible class, by praying for them, and by understanding that they lead an demanding, abnormal life.

All authority in life is divided into two general categories:

1. The **temporal realm**—the laws of divine establishment. There are four basic concepts of establishment freedom.
 - a. **Freedom:** the right of self-determination from human volition, apart from violation of law or authority.
 - b. **Privacy:** the right to hold opinions, make decisions, and engage in actions that do not interfere with the rights of others.
 - c. The sacredness of **property** and **life**.
 - d. **Enforcement of the law:** the guardian of freedom, privacy, property, and life.
2. The **spiritual realm**—the spiritual laws for the function of a particular dispensation. Spiritual freedom is the function of the believer while filled with the Holy Spirit inside the predesigned plan of God. This is taught in such passages as **Joh 8:32**, “*You shall know the truth [Bible doctrine], and the truth shall make you free [spiritually].*”

Psa 19:45 *I will walk in freedom; for I seek your doctrines.*

Gal 5:1 *It is for freedom that Christ has set you free. Keep standing fast, and do not become entangled again in the yoke of slavery [living in the cosmic system].*”

Illegitimate authority is illegal, unlawful authority, usually established by force, and the seizure of power without the lawful right to possess that power. This is authority established by Satan through the function of the cosmic system, such as what he promotes in the Koran and the Islamic religion. Illegitimate authority is delegated by Satan as the ruler of this world in three ways—tyranny, false doctrine, and power struggles.

Point 2: The realms of authority. God has delegated authority through His mandates in both the Old and New Testaments, **1Sa 15:22; Jer 11:4,7; Zec 6:15.**

Deu 11:26-27 “*See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you listen to the commandments of the Lord your God, which I am commanding you today.*”

There is blessing for respecting and listening to the voice of authority.

God also has authority over nature, and nature obeys Him, **Mat 8:27, Mar 4:41, Luk 8:25, Rom 8:20-22.** Angels are subject to divine authority, **Mar 1:27, 1Pe 3:22.** The pastor-teacher and church officers have authority over the congregation in the local church, **1Co 16:15-16; 2Co 10:8; 1Th 5:12; Heb 13:7,17; Isa 54:17.** Government has authority over its people to protect the sanctity of their freedom, property, and human life, **Rom 13:1-4.** The husband has authority over the wife, and this authority provides great happiness. In **1Co 11:10**, angels observe the attitude that the woman has toward her husband and the symbol of authority that it represents: “*But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.*” A recognition of the authority of Christ means recognition of the authority of the right man. Regardless of the kind of man she is married to, a woman who

recognizes the authority of Christ also recognizes the authority of her husband, **Eph 5:22**, **Col 3:18**.

In the divine order, God the Father has authority over the Lord Jesus Christ in hypostatic union (the God-Man) during His incarnation. While God the Father is not superior to Christ, as all three members of the Trinity are equal, He has authority over the humanity of Christ. While the man is not superior to the woman, in the divine order, the husband has authority over the wife. We read in **1Co 11:7**, “*For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God.*” The “glory of God” refers to the believer responding to doctrine. The system of perception, metabolization, and application of Bible doctrine and the resultant soul structure are a reflection of the glory of God. The Apostle Paul writes in **1Co 2:7**, “*But we speak God’s wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God predestined before the ages to our glory.*” When man is the glory of God it is because man has built an *edification complex* in the soul. The “image of God” has to do with the characteristics of his soul. Man has self-consciousness; God has self-consciousness. Man has mentality; God has infinite mentality. Man has volition; God has sovereignty. Man has emotion and appreciation; God has appreciation. Man has norms and standards; God has norms and standards.

“*The woman is [keeps on being] the glory of man.*” When the right woman is fulfilled by the right man, she reflects the glory of the man. First of all, he fulfills her soul. He fulfills her soul and then her body, and she becomes his glory. She can only be the glory for one man. This “glory” indicates the right woman both as a responder to her right man and as an illustration of God’s grace. It is a blessing from God’s grace when the right woman responds to her right man, and she reflects perfectly what he is. The woman is to “surround” or walk around her man, **Jer 31:22**. She is in **Gen 2:18** a helper suitable for him: “*Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper [ezer, meaning someone to aid, help, and respond to the man] suitable for him.’*” The woman was created for the man, and although man is the authority, he is incomplete without his woman. The greatest form of human happiness for a woman is to be fulfilled by her right man, and for a man it is to be completed by his right woman. There is nothing to compare with this happiness outside the spiritual realm.

The human race fell when the first woman had a conversation with an angel called “Heylel,” or Satan. The antediluvian civilization was destroyed because women rejected the plan of God and became victims of the fallen angels. Therefore, the woman should be under authority for her own protection. That is why the angels are observing how the woman treats her man. The right man and right woman are totally dependent upon each other. However, anything that is designed to be a blessing, when it is out from under the organizational structure that God intended, becomes a curse rather than a blessing.

Parents have authority over their children, **Eph 6:1**, **Col 3:20**. Those who are negative toward the authority of their parents become a vessel of dishonor, whether believer or unbeliever, while those who respond begin to shape up as a vessel of honor, as in **Rom 9:19-21**. Both the Jews (in **Exo 20:12**) and the Church (in **Eph 6:1-2**) have been given the command, “*Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you.*” Therefore, whether a person becomes a vessel of honor or dishonor depends on the function of their volition regarding, first, the authority of their parents, and later the authority in many other areas of life. The principle of authority is not only delegated, but invented by God as the

environment of freedom for the function of human volition. **Authority comes before human freedom.** The virtue of humility has to be acquired and learned, and it must be done before you step out into the world of freedom. The first responsibility of the child in the home is obedience to the authority and commands of the parents, whether they seem to be reasonable or unreasonable. What a child needs even more than love is discipline and training, **Pro 3:12, Pro 13:24, Pro 19:18, Pro 22:15, Pro 23:13.**

Authority is the key to freedom, humility, and honor. You cannot have authority without freedom, nor freedom without authority. Freedom without authority is chaos and anarchy; authority without freedom is oppression and tyranny.

Freedom is designed for adults, *not for children*. When children are allowed too much freedom and have no virtue and no respect for the authority of parents, then they become society's monsters, and society begins to degenerate. In the rearing of the child in the home, freedom is given gradually as trust and virtue builds. The child who does not respond to authority will inevitably come under demon influence. Therefore, children are not commanded to love but to *honor* their parents, and, later in life, respect for authority will develop into love.

Whether the child agrees or not is not the issue. If children, whether believers or unbelievers, are to be protected from demonization and ever learn any virtue, there must be a basic authority for all members of the human race. The home is the system of organized humility, and the parents are the authority designed to provide **enforced humility**. The parents have the authority for teaching, training, inculcating, and punishing. The child's volition determines whether he will be a vessel of honor or dishonor. Since virtue is not acquired instantaneously, but with many contacts with authority, the first stage of this virtue is enforced humility. Enforced humility at home eventually will develop into **genuine humility** in which there is response to the authority of parents, teachers, coaches, etc.

Point 3: Greek words for authority.

1. *Hupakouo* means to obey, or be subject to, **Rom 6:16, Eph 6:1, Col 3:20, Mat 8:27, Luk 8:25.**
2. *Hupotasso* means to be subordinate to, **Rom 8:20, 1Co 14:32, Eph 5:22, Col 3:18.** It has the connotation of voluntary submissiveness.
3. *Peitho* means to obey, **Gal 5:7, Heb 13:17, Jam 3:3.** It has the undertone of obedience.
4. *Peitharcho* means to obey rulers, **Tit 3:1.**
5. *Kuriotes* indicates authority, **Jud 1:8.**

Point 4: The role of human volition in accepting authority. Response to authority is a function of human volition. It is something that we either choose to do or not to do. Human freedom provides the option of accepting or rejecting authority in life, both legitimate and illegitimate. While God has delegated legitimate authority in life, these authorities are useless to us if our volition does not accept them. All **legitimate authority** in life is delegated by God through two categories of truth—the laws of divine establishment and Bible doctrine. All **illegitimate authority** in life is based upon the function of man's arrogance in Satan's cosmic system.

Arrogance results from the rejection of legitimate authority in life and is the basic mental attitude sin. Satan is the first creature guilty of arrogance. Satan's motivation of arrogance is found in one line of **Isa 14:14**, "*I will make myself like the Most High God.*" Arrogance is the antithesis of grace, a total blindness to the grace of God. Arrogance is synonymous with vanity, which is empty pride in regard to one's person, attainments, or possessions, coupled with an excessive desire to be noticed, a lust for attention, and a lust for approval and praise from others. Arrogance only brings destruction, **Pro 11:2, Pro 16:18, Pro 23:29**.

Arrogance rejects authority. Anti-authority arrogance begins in the home that emphasizes "love" rather than **training**. Many children are leaving the home today without any respect for authority. They will suffer under the law of *volitional responsibility*.

Rejection of authority causes people to degenerate, either morally or immorally. Predominant rejection of authority of parents destroys a society. The rejection of the authority of legitimate government is also destructive. Rejection of authority does carry responsibility, and results in a life of misery, unhappiness, disaster, and no human or spiritual self-esteem. Therefore, while God has delegated authority in life to such legitimate categories as government, husbands, parents, teachers, coaches, public officers, judges, and management, this authority is useless apart from human consent.

What makes authority work is human consent, where rational human beings understand the importance of the principle of authority, regardless of whether they like the personality or not. For example, the husband has legitimate authority over his wife. However, his authority is useless unless his wife, from her own free will, recognizes and accepts it. Regardless of whether she is motivated by love or not, she must accept his authority. Personal love does not accept human authority unless the authority agrees with it and does what it wants. Therefore, without **impersonal love**, the woman resents the authority of the man, and therefore becomes an uncontrollable woman.

While parents have authority in the home, this authority is useless apart from training and discipline, which eventuates in the child accepting the parents' authority. While young, children must recognize the authority of their parents. As a result, they will develop love and respect for their parents later in life. Legitimate government has authority over its citizens, but that authority is useless apart from human consent. One way in which human consent is expressed in this nation is in voting for someone you believe will do the job as a leader. Therefore, legitimate authority is only effective where human volition responds to it under the principle of freedom. When we choose for legitimate authority, we are blessed both individually and collectively.

For a more detailed study, order tapes IA11-316 to IA11-317.