

## Moving Forward - Authority!

Authority means the delegated right to rule or lead. It means the power to act, decide, command, and judge; it is the right to set policy and this means the responsibility to bring about controls in our children's lives within the limits of the authority given by God. God has absolute and complete authority and the right of complete control because of who He is as the sovereign Creator

The word authority used in the NT describes "the right and responsibility to exercise influence in people's lives by virtue of godly character, experience, and fulfillment of a God-given calling or ministry". F McClung

Right, power, influence, delegated.... FROM GOD.....

Understand-

In balance / see extremes & excesses.

## **Considerations and Questions Of what of:-**

Authority over self

Authority Under Christ

Authority in the role of Home, Marriage and Children

Authority of the Word

Authority in the Church

Leading v Driving Challenging v Bullying Motivation v

Manipulation Singular v plurality

Called / Receiving it / walking in it

Submitting to Authority

Apostolic Authority in the life of the Church fathering

## Some important Verses From the New Testament on the Subject of Authority

### **Authority and Jesus-**

Matt. 7:29 "... for He taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes."

Matt. 21:23 "When He entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as He was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?'"

Jesus had and has absolute authority from the Father!

### **Jesus delegates his authority to his people!**

"Jesus gathered his twelve disciples and imparted to them authority to cast out demons and to heal every sickness and every disease.

Jesus sent out the Twelve with these instructions: "Don't go into any Gentile or Samaritan territory. Go instead and find the lost sheep among the people of Israel. And as you go, preach this message: 'Heaven's kingdom realm is accessible, close enough to touch.' You must continually bring healing to lepers and to those who are sick, and make it your habit to break off the demonic presence from people, and raise the dead back to life. Freely you have received the power of the kingdom, so freely release it to others."

Matthew 10:1, 5-8 TPT

Matt. 28:18 "And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."

### **Authority to the Spiritual Church leaders-**

Titus 2:15 Declare these things; exhort and reprove with all authority.  
**Let no one look down on you."**

1 Pet. 5:5 "In the same way, you who are younger must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you must clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

NB Speaking to the church being infiltrated by falsehood / teachers  
When Jude was written in the last half of first century and there were already many false teachers who had infiltrated the ranks  
Jude 8 "Yet in the same way these dreamers also defile the flesh, reject authority, and slander the glorious ones."

Authority is needed to stand against the rising tide of false and erroneous teaching. Christless teaching!

### **Authority For Every Christ loving follower**

ALL Christ loving followers have been given various kinds of authority.

- These include the authority of a believer to cast out demons and live as an overcomer!!!

“And he said to them, “As you go into all the world, preach openly the wonderful news of the gospel to the entire human race! Whoever believes the good news and is baptized will be saved, and whoever does not believe the good news will be condemned. And these miracle signs will accompany those who believe: They will drive out demons in the power of my name. They will speak in tongues. They will be supernaturally protected from snakes and from drinking anything poisonous. And they will lay hands on the sick and heal them.””

Mark 16:15-18 TPT

2 Aramaic idioms Authority over enemies and attacks

“Pick up snakes” overcoming one’s enemies (snakes)

“Drinking poison” dealing with the attacks on your character from poisonous words.

Teach the people..... THESE TRUTHS.

- The authority of all parents to instruct their children and command their obedience

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise— “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.””

Ephesians 6:1-3 NIV

“He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect.”

1 Timothy 3:4 NIV

## **The submission to Governmental authority**

**“Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. For this is the will of God, Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.”**

**I Peter 2:13-17 NKJV**

**“Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.”**

**I Timothy 2:1-2 -3**

Called to Honour their Authority and to Pray for them

“honor and respect are not the same, though we sometimes mistakenly interchange these words. Respect is earned. Honor is appointed.

I can respect people because of what they have done or what they stand for; I honor people because of their position.

A great example is our political leaders. You may not be able to respect your president because you disagree with his decisions or his ideology. However because you are a citizen, you must honour his position”. Russell Evans Honour

**Spiritual Leaders Authority.**

Below is a list of scriptures that make it clear that spiritual leaders have been given authority to lead, albeit, with conditions and restrictions.

Some of the qualities EVERY SPIRITUAL LEADER should display:-

Called

Appointed by God

Diligent

Wise

Loving

Long suffering

Patient

An Example

Kind

Peter speaks about in 1 Peter 5 is the responsibility to serve God's people for God's purposes in God's ways.

1 Pet. 5:1-5 Now as an elder myself and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as one who shares in the glory to be revealed, I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it —not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory that never fades away. In the same way, you who are younger must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you must clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another, for God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”

1Tim. 5:17 Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching;

Acts 20:28-30 Keep watch over yourselves and over all the flock, of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God that He obtained with the blood of his own Son. I know that after I have gone, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Some even from your own group will come distorting the truth in order to entice the disciples to follow them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to warn everyone with tears.

1Thess. 5:12 But we appeal to you, brothers and sisters, to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work.

Hebrews 13:17 TPT. “Obey your spiritual leaders and recognize their authority, for they keep watch over your soul without resting since they will have to give an account to God for their work. So it will benefit you when you make their work a pleasure and not a heavy burden.”

2 Tim. 2:24 And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone, an apt teacher, patient, correcting opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth

It is clear from these passages and from others that there is a delegated authority to those who are called and gifted by God to lead the church, but that authority can only be exercised properly when “lived out” in a Christlike manner.

***In other words, spiritual authority is delegated by God, but derived through godliness.***

***So the real question on spiritual authority is not does it exist, but how is it to be exercised? That, in turn, depends on how one defines “spiritual authority.” Jesus made it abundantly clear that what He meant by authority was influencing the flock through serving and loving it.***

“Jesus interrupted their argument, saying, “The kings and men of authority in this world rule oppressively over their subjects, claiming that they do it for the good of the people. They are obsessed with how others see them. But this is not your calling. *You will lead by a different model. The greatest one among you will live as one called to serve others without honor.* The greatest honor and authority is reserved for the one who has a servant heart. The leaders who are served are the most important in your eyes, but in the kingdom, it is the servants who lead. Am I not here with you as one who serves?”  
Luke 22:25-27 TPT

The only right use of spiritual authority is to serve others: “Let...he who governs be as one who serves” (Luke 22:26-27).

***In this sense, authority is defined as the right to influence others. Jesus went to great lengths to re-define the meaning of that authority, both in word and deed looks like.***



***But how do we know if we are exercising spiritual authority in a Christlike way?***

***Floyd McClung speaks of spiritual authority with a 7 step test***

***Does My Spiritual Leadership and Authority:-***

- Restrict or does it liberate?***
- Lead to conformity or does it promote creativity?***
- Bring dependence on man or on God?***
- Servility (formal politeness) or servanthood?***
- Depend on law or grace?***
- Destroy or build a person's confidence?***
- Produce a unhealthy fear of touching God's anointed, or does it equip people to function with confidence in their gifts as priests and kings before God?***

## **FOR LEADERS**

Three Practical outworkings of Spiritual Authority:

By looking at the practical outworking of spiritual authority, we get a better feel of what authority is, and just as important, what it is not.

The three dimensions are:

- The Mark of spiritual authority is Christlikeness.**

**Spiritual authority is not taken, but offered. Its freely offered.**

Once you try to force people to do or believe something, you actually lose your right to influence them, you are no longer exercising spiritual authority, but operating in the flesh.

Jesus came 2,000 years ago as a suffering servant. He came to win the hearts of people by serving them, and ultimately dying for them. Spiritual leaders in His church are commanded to do the same.

Mark 9:35 “He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, ‘Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.’”

Spiritual authority does include persuasion. Paul is a good example of someone who employed every means possible to convince the churches he planted to do what he felt was right. He pleaded, cajoled, warned, and pressured, all to touch the hearts of God’s people and move them to obedience to the Lord. 2 Cor. 5:11 “Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others...”

But persuasion is opposite to coercion, manipulation and intimidation

• **The mandate of spiritual authority is to lead.**

I am at times a little concerned about some styles and examples of churches and their leadership. (Singular, given to excess, domineering, isolated)

But to be clear “I am calling for Leadership”.

Also very concerned by churches lead by committees but empowered teams

Consensual opinions and sentiments NOT Vision

It is going in front. Hearing from God. Leading the charge. Taking steps of faith. Believing for the Impossible. It is making decisions and persuading others to make decisions.

• **The ministry of those given spiritual authority is three-fold.**

a. Guard the flock:

- against wolves from within - Acts 20:28-30
- against false doctrine - 2 Timothy 4:1-5
- against deceivers - 2 John 7-11
- against those who cause divisions - Romans 16:17- • against immorality - 1 Corinthians 5:9-13

b. Govern the flock:

Titus 3:10

- By tending the flock - 1Pet. 5:1-5 "Now as an elder myself and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as one who shares in the glory to be revealed, I exhort the elders among you to tend the flock of God that is in your charge, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion but willingly, as God would have you do it —not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock."
- By correcting the flock - 2 Tim. 2:24 "And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kindly to everyone, an apt teacher, patient, correcting opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant that they will repent and come to know the truth"
- By bringing order to the flock - Titus 1:5 "I left you behind in Crete for this reason, so that you should put in order what remained to be done, and should appoint elders in every town, as I directed you"  
I Timothy 3:15 You know how the church ought to conduct itself

- By making decisions that affect the flock - 1Tim. 5:17 "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor..."

Acts 15:13-22 "James spoke up: brothers, listen to me, it is my judgment...then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided..."

c. Guide the flock.

- By teaching from the Word - 1 Timothy 4:11 "Command and teach these things"

2Tim. 4:1 "I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching."

John 3:34 "He whom God has sent speaks the words of God."

1Tim. 3:2 "Now an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach..."

- By equipping and preparing others for the work of ministry - 2Tim. 2:2 "And what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well."

Eph. 4:11 "The gifts He gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ..."

Eph. 4:12 "To prepare God's people for works of service."

- By imparting passion to others - Romans 15:20,30,16:26 "It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ is not known...I urge you, brothers...to join me in my struggle...so that all nations might believe and obey him - to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen."

**Cynicism, disrespect and disorder characterize this present evil age. Some teachers and leaders in the Body of Christ so gravely**

**misunderstand and misrepresent the issues of authority and obedience that we need to think very carefully about the Biblical issues and principles involved.**

**In the flesh people seek to avoid personal responsibility, pushing the responsibility for decisions up to a leader. The leader, also in the flesh, is all too eager to take responsibility that is not his or hers to take.**

**It is therefore of great importance that we distinguish between true spiritual authority and the abuse of authority.**

### **The Practical Outworking of Spiritual Authority on Leadership Teams/Elderships**

How does authority work on leadership teams, where there is a plurality of spiritual gifts? Because the nature of spiritual authority is to serve, it requires humility to recognize and receive what has been given by God to others, and receive those persons as gifts from the Lord.

*If God has given a person the spiritual gift of leadership, and if He calls him to give oversight to a leadership team/eldership, then it requires humility both in him to offer that gift, and in others to receive it.* Authority, in that context, is the call of God to lead the team with the vision, wisdom, values, perspective, etc., that God has deposited in that person.

Authority is delegated to the person called to lead, and is derived through their obedience to God. By leading, the person who is the “senior amongst equals” is offering to serve others with the gifts

God has given to them. Each person on an eldership has been given spiritual gifts that result in ministry to the body, and to the others on the eldership.

Each person on the eldership has something unique to contribute, each one has been gifted by God, and when He brings a group of people together, they are to honor those gifts and callings of their co-workers, and submit to them.

That includes the one chosen by God to be a senior amongst equals.

***\*God's normal pattern is to anoint one person to lead out, to be the senior on the team.***

That person plays the role of helmsman, like a captain on a ship. The analogy of a ship is a good one, because one person cannot single-handedly navigate, engineer, set the sails, and clean the decks for an entire ship. It requires a team effort. The role of each person is vital for the ship to be kept in tip-top condition and to reach its destination.

***The role of the helmsman is an important one, but no more important than anyone else in terms of value or function. And though each person has equal value, not every person has equal responsibility or authority.***

***It is the helmsman, the captain, who brings the crew together, makes sure each person on the crew is prepared to take up their responsibilities in sailing the ship, and helps chart the course they are to sail.***

God has provided for this role in the church by giving some the gift of helmsman (sometimes translated leadership). This gift is

mentioned in 1 Cor. 12:28, and comes from the Greek word kubernesis, which literally means to steer or pilot.

The same gift is referred to in Romans 12: 8. There Paul uses the word proistimi, which is translated as governorship, or oversight. It is translated in the English language as leadership.

As each person honors the gifts and callings of God in others, and is secure and clear about his or her role and calling, there will be unity. That unity in turn will flow out into the body and be a great source of inspiration to others to take up the place God has given them. As each person is functioning in his or her gifts, the body is joined together and grows into the likeness of Christ. Then the purposes of God for that fellowship of men and women are accomplished to the glory of God and the worship of His Son, Jesus, in the nations.

## **What of Apostolic Authority**

**Kristian disclaimer-**

**I / we are presently and have been for about 5 years working through this both in the interior world of my heart and Arena and also the exterior world of Campus planting and even more widely.**

The spiritual authority of a teacher flows from right use of the Scriptures to persuade and convince.

The prophet warns about sin in people's lives and reveals the heart of God.

But Apostolic authority is derived from the faith and vision one has for leaders, a people, a group of churches who are in relationship one with another .

It is vital to note that when Paul appeals to his authority as an apostle in correcting the saints in Corinth and Galatia, he is not thinking institutionally, positionally or strategically, but relationally.

The apostolic networks and chains of command we tend to see in the body of Christ today often operate in a manner that is completely foreign to what Paul had in mind when he spoke of his apostolic authority.

Paul appealed to his authority to see new Christians free from the control of false teachers, and to preserve the truth of gospel, not to establish a network of churches that reported to him at the top.

He was concerned about the believers being brought under the influence of false doctrine.

***\*There is no scriptural evidence that Paul set up a movement of churches with himself in charge as the “ruling apostle”.***

*It was all relational!!*

Theological dictionary of the NT regarding Apostle  
“Points out that apostello Verb means to send out or send forth  
underscores the thought of authorisation with AUTHORITY

It then goes further with the point that the apostle was a commissioned person sent with FULL authority.



Barney Coombs - Apostles Today

“There are a number of suggestions as to what the signs of a genuine apostle might be. Some think it is supernatural patience. Jack Deere believes it is suffering.

Another says it was the great number of people who responded to Paul’s preaching of the gospel. I believe it includes all of these, but I keep coming back to two phrases written by Paul in which he is placing a distinction between himself and others, namely: ‘I laid a foundation’ (1 Corinthians 3:10), and ‘I became your father’ (1 Corinthians 4:15).

**More than anything else, those two words - foundation and fatherhood - taken in the context of establishing relationally-based churches, sum up the uniqueness of apostolic ministry.”**

FOUNDATION + FATHERING

The heart of a true apostle WILL ALWAYS be directed to seeing Jesus established at the centre.

We have a right to be suspicious of anyone who claims to be an apostle but who turns out to be more concerned with promoting his own ministry than promoting the Lord Jesus.

Paul could claim with full integrity: ‘For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified,’ and again, For me to live is Christ. ’

Barney Coombs

1. He built theologically
2. He Built evangelistically
3. He built patriarchally

Paul was a spiritual father who took his responsibilities Very seriously, even if it meant defending his paternal role in the face of opposition. To the unruly Corinthians he writes:

" I am not writing this to shame you, but to warn you, as my dear children. Even though you have ten thousand guardians 9 in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. Therefore I urge you to imitate me.' (1 Corinthians 4:14-16)

4. He built relationally Paul was a relational man 70 people named and host of unnamed people.

Revelation of church as a body / family.

5. He built supernaturally
6. He built pastorally

2 Cor 11:28 "And besides these painful circumstances, I have the daily pressure of my responsibility for all the churches, with a deep concern weighing heavily on my heart for their welfare."

7. He built on a Strong faith and grace foundation

Eph 2:8 by grace you have been saved through faith.

8. He built on Prayer Eph 1:17-19

9. He built with Servanthood / sacrifice (SUFFERING)

1 Thes 2:7-9 "But we were as gentle among you as a mother feeding and caring for her own children. 8 We loved you dearly—so dearly that we gave you not only God's message, but our own lives too. 9 Don't you remember, dear brothers, how hard we worked among you? Night and day we toiled and sweated to earn enough to live on

so that our expenses would not be a burden to anyone there, as we preached God's Good News among you.

#### 10. He built towards mature discipleship

“He is the one we proclaim, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone fully mature in Christ. To this end I strenuously contend with all the energy Christ so powerfully works in me.”

Colossians 1:28-29 NIV

Healthy things grow but grow what is before you!

#### 11. He built dangerously

“By saying Paul built dangerously, I am saying that he took risks. Timothy was still a young man when Paul entrusted him with great responsibility. He was left in charge of the church at Ephesus which numbered many thousands. Then Paul sent him to Corinth to remind them of his ways in Christ. This was another large church with even more members than Ephesus, and with many more problems. (And remember, there was no opportunity to pick up the phone and have a quick chat with the boss!)

Much more could be said about this dimension of Paul's apostolic building, but suffice it to say that he followed the clear lead of the Chief Apostle, Jesus Christ, who also took the risk' of entrusting eternal matters to young men who were often uneducated and unprofessional, but who were teachable and had a heart for the kingdom of God.”

One other kind of authority that takes supremacy over human authority, is the Bible. Because it is inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:20-21), it has divine authority. The Bible was given by God with the intention that we submit to it and obey it, not look to it as one more influence in our lives.