

DOCTRINE OF AUTHORITY

April 29, 1984

I. Introduction.

- A. Authority is that legal right delegated by God, whereby certain members of the human race have jurisdiction over, 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 believer's duty, apart from which there can be no spiritual progress (cp. 1Pet.2:13ff).
- C. All authority is derived from God. Those who exercise it will answer for the way they use it (Jn.19:11; Rom.13:1,2).
- D. The primary N.T. word is ἐξουσία, exousia (103X), meaning the inherent right to exercise authority; whereas δύναμις, dunamis, simply means power exercised.
- E. Some useful verbs dealing with the exercise of authority in the N.T.
 1. ἐξουσιάζω, exousiazō, 4X: to have authority over (Lk.22:25; 1Cor.6:12; 7:4).
 2. κατεξουσιάζω, katexousiazō, 2X: to exercise authority over (Mt.20:25; Mk.10:42).
 3. ἐπιτάσσω, epitassō, 10X: to command, order (Mk.1:27; Lk.8:25). Cognate ἐπιτάγη, epitagē, 7X: command, order (Ti.1:3; cp. 2:15 where it is translated "authority").
 4. διατάσσω, diatassō, 16X: to command, order, give instructions, arrange; emphasizes the principle of the chain of command (Mt.11:1; Lk.8:55; Acts.18:2; 24:23; 1Cor.7:17). Cognates include διαταγή, diatagē, 2X, and διατάγμα, diatagma, 1X: a decree (Acts.7:35; Rom.18:2; Heb.11:23).
 5. ὑποτάσσω, hupotassō, 40X: primarily a military term meaning to put in subjection (act.) or be subject to (pass.; Lk.2:51; 10:17,20; Rom.10:3; Eph.5:21; Jam.4:7). The cognate is ὑποταγή, hupotagē, 4X: obedience, submission, subordination (1Tim.2:11).
 6. ὑπακούω, hupakouō, 21X: to listen and so to obey (Acts.12:13; cp. Mt.8:27; Acts.6:7; Rom.6:12,16,17; Eph.6:1; 2Thess.1:8; 3:14; 1Pet.3:6). Cognate ὑπακοή, hupakoe, 15X: obedience (Rom.5:19; Heb.5:8).
 7. παραγγέλλω, paraggello, 30X: to command, used of a superior to an inferior (Lk.5:14; Acts.17:30; 1Cor.7:10; 2Thess.3:4; 1Tim.1:3; 6:13,17). The cognate παραγγελία, paraggelia, 5X: command, order (1Tim.1:18).
 8. ἐντέλλομαι, entellomai, 17X: to enjoin upon, to charge with (Acts.1:2; Heb.11:22). Cognate is ἐντολή, entole, 71X: commandment (Mt.5:19; Jn.13:34; 2Pet.2:21).
 9. πειθαρχέω, peitharcho, 4X: to obey one in authority (Acts.5:29; Ti.3:1).
 10. πείθω, peithō, in the passive followed by the dative has the sense "to obey". The basic idea is to persuade (Acts.5:37; Gal.5:7; Heb.13:17; Jam.3:3).
 11. προϊστημι, proistemi, 8X: to be a leader, have authority over, manage (Rom.12:8; 1Thess.5:12; 1Tim.3:4,5,12; 5:17).

- II. The authority of God.
 - A. God's authority is immutable, universal, and eternal as King over His creation (Ex.15:18; Ps.29:10; Ps.93; 146:10; Dan.4:17,34-37).
 - B. God's authority extends to angels (Dan.4:35), planet earth and all it contains (Ex.9:29; 1Sam.2:8; Ps.103:19-22; Ps.104), and the course of human history (Acts.17:24, 31).
 - C. We obey His authority by knowledge and application of Bible Doctrine (Heb.12:9; Jam.4:7).
 - D. All authority among men is derived from God (Jn.19:11; Rom.13:1,2).

- III. Authority of Christ.
 - A. As God, He has always been King (1Tim.1:17; 6:15,16).
 - B. As the son of David, He is King of Israel (Jn.1:49; 12:13).
 - C. As the glorified God-Man, He has been given supreme authority over (Phil.3:20,21):
 - 1. The Church (Eph.1:20-23; 5:23).
 - 2. Nations (Ps.2:7-9).
 - 3. Angels (1Pet.3:22).
 - 4. All creation (Heb.2:5,8).
 - 5. Each believer (1Cor.11:3).
 - D. As the eternal King, all His enemies will be neutralized (1Cor.15:20-28; Heb.2:5-10).
 - E. Christ is subject to His Father's authority (Mt.28:18; 1Cor.11:3; 15:28).

- IV. The man is the authority in the divine institution of marriage (Eph.5:22-25).
 - A. The woman is to be obedient in everything (Eph.5:24).
 - B. Even to those husbands who are negative and unreasonable (1Pet.3:1,6).
 - C. Her inner badge is the quiet and gentle spirit (1Pet.3:4).
 - D. Her obedience must not cause her to violate the authority of Christ (Col.3:18; example: if he denies her GAP, asks her to participate in carnal or criminal actions, beats her).
 - E. His badge of rulership is his short hair; hers is her long hair (1Cor.11:10).
 - F. She should strive to acclimate to the wife/mother/homemaker niche (Ti.2:4,5).

- V. Parents are the authority in the divine institution of the family (Eph.6:1; Col.3:20).

- VI. Believers are to obey the authorities established by Divine Institution #4, nationalism (Rom.13:7; Ti.3:1; Eccl.8:29; 1Pet.2:13,14).
 - A. Even if their laws and policies are unjust.
 - B. Civil disobedience is only for extreme cases, as when the state prohibits GAP or demands participation in idolatry, genocide, etc. (Acts.5:29; Dan.3:6; Ex.2:15-22).

- VII. Believers are to obey the authority structure within the societal institutions of which they are a part (business, academic, military, athletic, etc.; Eph.6:5-9; Col.3:22-25; Ti.2:9,10; 1Pet.2:18-20; 1Tim.6:1).
1. Be obedient even if the order is not the best way to go about it.
 2. Do not argue (Ti.2:9).
 3. Do not pilfer (Ti.2:10).
 4. Do not take advantage of believers for whom you work (1Tim.6:2).
 5. Take whatever undeserved suffering comes your way, knowing the Lord will reward you (1Pet.2:18-20; Col.3:22-25).
- VIII. God has established in Scripture a royal chain of command for the local church.
- A. The Pastor-Teacher is the highest ranking member of the local body because of his responsibility to shepherd (1Pet.5:1-4 "*allotted to your charge*"; Heb.13:17 "*Obey your leaders and submit (to them); for they keep watch over your souls, as those who will give an account*"; Ti.2:15).
 - B. The office of deacon constitutes the next level within the royal chain of command (see Doctrine of Deacons).
 - C. God has put certain believers in charge of others in the body of Christ (1Thess.5:12,13).
- IX. Authority will be rejected in the last days (Ps.2:13; 2Tim.3:2; 2Pet.2:10 "*despise authority*"; noun κυριότης, kuriotes).
- X. Arrogance rejects the authority established by God (Jam.4:5-7).

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