

Our Authority in Christ

Part 2

Introduction

In the first part of this study, we looked at several aspects of Jesus' authority. In this second half, we will look at the principle of delegated authority and how it applies to us.

Our Study

Power and Authority

We need to make a distinction between power and authority. Some translations, in particular the King James Version, do not always make a clear-cut distinction between them, and we sometimes make this same mistake in our everyday use of the words.

Jesus had both power and authority. He delegates to us the authority to call for the power. Let us give some simple examples. The policeman who directs traffic by using his hands is using authority rather than power. Obviously, he doesn't have the physical power to stop a car whose driver disregards him. However, if there is resistance to his authority, he can call for the power that stands behind his authority - more policemen, cars, weapons, etc. If the driver still will not be obedient, then power may be used to stop him.

In the case of a person in charge of a company or even heading a nation, he can delegate his authority to anyone he chooses, even someone very insignificant; then that person will be able to move in that authority. Should someone not respect that authority, then the representative will have all the power that stands behind the original authority.

Delegated Authority

The servant of a centurion who was highly thought of by the Jewish elders was dying. The centurion sent some elders to Jesus to ask Him to come and heal his servant. Jesus agreed to come.

Jesus was not far from the centurion's home when the centurion sent word to Him.

The Scripture: Luke 7:6-10

"Lord...I don't deserve to have You come under my roof---But say the word and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes, and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'do this,' and he does it.' When Jesus heard this, He was amazed...and He said, 'I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel.' Then the men who had been sent returned to other house and found the servant well."

1. How did the centurion explain authority? _____

2. What was Jesus' reaction? _____

3. What did he say? _____

4. What was the servant's condition when the men returned? _____

No wonder Jesus was amazed at the centurion's faith. None of His Jewish followers had truly grasped this idea. Yet here was a heathen soldier, who understanding the nature of earthly authority, realized that heavenly authority worked in the same way.

On several occasions Jesus delegated His authority to His disciples.

The Scripture: Matthew 10:7, 8

"Preach this message, 'The kingdom of heaven is near! Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons.'"

5. What instructions did Jesus give His disciples? _____

The Scripture: Luke 10:8, 9

"When you enter a town and are welcomed...heal the sick who are there."

6. What instructions did Jesus give the seventy-two? _____

The Scripture: Luke 10:17

"The seventy-two returned with joy and said, 'Lord, even the demons submit to us and to Your name.'"

7. What did these disciples say? _____

Throughout His lifetime, Jesus demonstrated His authority over Satan.

The Scripture: Have your instructor reread Matthew 8 and 9 to you.

8. List some of the miracles Jesus performed. _____

Even after His death, Jesus maintained His authority over Satan.

The Scripture: 1 Peter 3:19 in The Living Bible

"Though His body died, [Jesus'] spirit lived on, and it was in the spirit that He visited the spirits in prison, and preached to them - spirits of those who, long before in the days of Noah, had refused to listen to God."

9. How did Jesus show His authority after His death? _____

10. Who were those spirits? _____

After His resurrection, Jesus reappeared to the eleven disciples.

The Scripture: Matthew 28:18-20

"Then Jesus...said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.'"

11. What did Jesus tell the disciples about Himself? _____

12. He also gave them a commission. What was that commission? _____

The Scripture: Mark 16:17, 18

"These signs will accompany those who believe: In My name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people and they will get well."

13. What else did Jesus tell the disciples? _____

The Scripture: John 14:12

"Anyone who has faith in Me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these."

14. What had Jesus previously told the disciples? _____

The Scripture: Acts 1:4

"On one occasion...He (Jesus) gave them this command, 'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised.'"

15. Although the disciples had been promised Jesus' authority, why didn't they immediately go out and use the authority they had been given?_____

The Scripture: Acts 2:1, 4

"On the day of Pentecost...all of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

16. When did this happen?_____

After His resurrection, Jesus reappeared to His disciples on many occasions. Before He ascended to heaven, He had one final meeting with them.

The Scripture: Acts 1:9

"He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid Him from their sight."

17. What happened at that meeting?_____

But that is not the end of the story. Scripture has more to tell us.

The Scripture: Ephesians 1:20-22

"He (God) raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and title...God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be head over everything for the church."

18. Where is Jesus today?_____

19. What is His position?_____

The Scripture: Ephesians 2:6

"God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus."

20. What is our spiritual position today?_____

The Book of Acts is filled with the deeds the Christians performed in Christ's authority in the early days of Christianity. Their many miracles demonstrated their authority over Satan's works.

The secret to having the authority of God is faith and obedience. We have Christ's authority to use in ways He would use it, not according to our own ideas or whims. The representative of any ruler must know his king's will, what the king thinks, what he wants to accomplish and how he would act if he were personally handling the situation.

The Answers

1. He said he was under authority and had others under his authority. When He told one to do something, he did it.
2. He was amazed.
3. He hadn't found such great faith even in Israel.
4. He was well.
5. "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons."
6. To heal the sick
7. "Lord, even the demons submit to us and to Your name."
8. He healed a leper; restored a demon-possessed man to his right mind; healed a paralytic; healing a woman who was hemorrhaging; brought the synagogue leader's daughter back to life; healed a blind man; healed every disease
9. By preaching to the spirits in prison
10. The spirits of those who refused to listen to God in the days of Noah
11. That all authority in heaven and on earth had been given to Him
12. To make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything He had commanded them.
13. These signs would accompany those who believe; they would drive out demons, speak in new tongues; pick up deadly snakes and drink poison without being harmed; they would heal the sick.
14. That anyone who believed in Him would do greater things than He did
15. Jesus told them to wait for the gift He had promised them (the in filling of the Holy Spirit).
16. On the day of Pentecost
17. Jesus was taken up before their eyes.
18. Seated at the right hand of God in the heavenly realms
19. Far above all rule and title. God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be head over everything for the church.
20. We are seated with Christ in the heavenly realms.

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