

THE AUTHORITY OF THE BELIEVER

Over these past several weeks, God has been speaking to me about the authority of the believer. There are several principles I believe God wants to remind us of as it relates to our authority on this earth.

1. Our authority is rooted in and qualified by our personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. Authority is granted by God, and He is responsible for increasing the level of authority you hold. You cannot earn a greater level of authority by doing good deeds, or being successful, or even by time in service.
3. There is a purpose in our authority and that purpose is to please God through our obedience.
4. Authority increases with every trial. God told me that what He takes me through, He gives me authority over. So, if He has taken me through covid or cancer or any other sickness, disease or infirmity, He has given me a greater level of authority for healing.
5. When God told me that He wanted me to be ordained, I asked Him why. His response was “credibility”. I knew in my spirit that He wasn’t talking about my standing before men; He was talking about increasing my level of authority over the demonic realm.
6. Faith and authority go together. Without faith, you won’t be able to exercise the authority you have been given.
7. The exercise of authority begins with submission.

Luke 7:1-10 (TPT)

Jesus...went on to Capernaum. There he found a Roman military captain who had a beloved servant he valued highly, and the servant was sick to the point of death. When the captain heard that Jesus was in the city, he sent some respected Jewish elders to plead with him to come and heal his dying servant. So they came to Jesus and told him, “The Roman captain is a wonderful man. If anyone deserves to have a visit from you, it is him. Won’t you please come to his home and heal his servant? For he loves the Jewish people, and he even built our meeting hall for us.”

Jesus started off with them, but on his way there, he was stopped by friends of the captain, who gave this message: “Master, don’t bother to come to me in person, for I am not good enough for

you to enter my home. I'm not worthy enough to even come out to meet one like you. But if you would just release the manifestation of healing right where you are, I know that my young servant will be healed. Unlike you, I am just an ordinary man. Yet I understand the power of authority, and I see that authority operating through you. I have soldiers under me who obey my every command. I also have authorities over me whom I likewise obey. So Master, just speak the word and healing will flow."

Jesus marveled at this. He turned around and said to the crowd who had followed him, "Listen, everyone! Never have I found even one among the people of God a man like this who believes so strongly in me."

Jesus then spoke the healing word from a distance. When the man's friends returned to the home, they found the servant completely healed and doing fine.

This passage is not only a teaching on Jesus' ability to heal and deliver from death, but also on the power and responsibility that comes with authority. **All authority begins with submission.** Jesus submitted Himself to the will of His father and so received all the authority of the universe in Himself.

How did this Roman captain submit?

1. He had observed what Jesus was doing and considered carefully the implications demonstrated through Jesus' actions. As a Roman captain, he was steeped in the cultural tradition of multiple gods who practiced every kind of immorality and had no love for the people of the earth. And yet, by the way he lived his life, the way he honored others, the things he had done for his community, and his concern for his servant, he demonstrated a morality more in line with that of the God of the occupied peoples of Israel.
2. He took a cultural risk - he humbled himself - a proud representative of an even more prideful occupying government in Israel asked for help from a Jewish teacher.
3. He didn't presume Jesus would come at his beck and call because of his status. He didn't presume that his position as an authority in the Roman world of that day, gave him permission to do things any way he pleased and expect that everyone should submit to his demands.
4. Even though he went to the Jewish leaders and asked them to intercede on his behalf, he remained engaged in the process. We have this entire conversation between him and Jesus even though it is delivered through emissaries. It was not important that he present himself before Jesus in a face to face encounter; what was really important is that he went to Jesus

because he believed Jesus had the answer for his dilemma. In so doing, he demonstrated a level of faith Jesus said He had not seen in anyone in Israel! I don't think Jesus was embellishing the truth; rather I believe he was delivering a commentary on the state of the Jewish nation: that a Gentile was capable of displaying such a level of faith as to move the heart of Jesus to act on his behalf.

Strong's defines the faith demonstrated by the Roman captain in this passage as: *Persuasion*. Faith (*pistis*) is always a *gift from God*, and *never* something that can be produced by people. In short, faith for the believer is "God's *divine persuasion*" – and therefore distinct from human belief (confidence), yet it involves this human component. The Lord continuously *births faith* in the yielded believer so they can know what He prefers.

In Scripture, faith is God's warranty, certifying that the revelation He inbirthed in the receptive believer will come to pass *His way*.

And finally, the object of our faith must be the bedrock belief that God is who He says He is. He says He is sovereign over all creation. Sovereign is defined as "one who exercises supreme authority." That means He is the highest authority there is; that means there is no power in hell, or on the earth or above the earth that is greater than His authority. That means He alone is sovereign over the chaos going on in our world today, and He is sovereign over every sickness, disease, infirmity and even death that attempts to steal our lives and our joy. He guaranteed He will do what He has promised when He sealed the covenant with the blood of His own Son! Our part is to keep our attention focused on who He is and not on our circumstances.

That is what the Roman captain did. The faith he demonstrated had been birthed in him as he had observed all that Jesus was doing and recognized the divine component within Him. The Roman captain submitted himself to the authority he saw in Jesus. No wonder his servant was healed!

Luke 10:19-20 (TPT)

I have imparted to you all my authority to trample over (satan's) kingdom. You will trample upon every demon before you and overcome every power Satan possesses. Absolutely nothing will be able to harm you as you walk in this authority. However, your real source of joy isn't merely that these spirits submit to your authority, but that your names are written in the journals of heaven and that you belong to God's kingdom. This is the true source of your authority."

All authority begins with submission. One of the key principles of inner healing ministry is learning to appreciate and fully embrace the authority you have as a believer. It is in recognizing, accepting and exercising this authority that you can walk in the confidence and the ability to prevail against whatever obstacles the enemy uses to work against you. And just as with the Roman captain, the exercise of your faith is a key component. *Hebrews 11:6 – Without faith, it is impossible to please God.*

Faith is both a defensive position and an offensive weapon. It is not something we work up in any given moment; it is not something we develop over time with practice. Rather it is produced by the Spirit of God living in us and is released through our obedience to do what He says. James 4:7, 8, 10 - *Submit yourselves to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you...humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.*

Exercising faith in difficult circumstances involves submitting our will, our rights and all control to the Lord Jesus Christ. With that submission, we are empowered to exercise the authority we have been given in Jesus Christ and be God's agent of change in the earth.

What, then, is the authority you have as a believer? Genesis 1:26 - *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."*

The level of authority God had given Adam sent chills through the demonic kingdom. Satan's focus turned from his own disenfranchisement to how he could vent his fury on the man of God's choosing. Joseph Prince writes: "When God created man, He gave man authority to have dominion over everything on earth, but when man sinned, he abdicated his authority to Satan. When man's authority was transferred to Satan, Satan brought in diseases, poverty, strife, bitterness, pain, loss and death. He messed up everything on earth for man. Such is the power of authority; and we can see what happens when authority rests with someone who is not submitted to the Lord Jesus Christ.

"It was a man who gave away his authority to Satan, so it had to be a man who would legally take it back. By His death on the cross, Jesus righteously restored all that man had lost. That is why, just before He went back to heaven, He said, '*All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore...*' (Matthew 28:18)

“Those words tell us that He has transferred His authority to us. The same authority that He had over the storm, evil spirits, sicknesses, diseases and even death is now ours to use. The authority which has been restored to us is not just the authority on earth which man had before the fall, but Jesus’ unquestionable and complete authority in heaven and on earth!”

What an incredible level of authority has been conferred upon us by our Heavenly Commander! The authority you have received is purposely linked to your destiny. You were intended to rule over all the created order and the assignment you have received requires you to fully appropriate the authority you have been given.

1 John 4:17 - *As He is, so are we in this world.*

Isaiah 61:1-2 - He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor, bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim freedom for the captives and release for the prisoners, and comfort all who mourn.

That is your assignment while you live in this earthly realm, and the authority you have received is exactly the level necessary for you to complete your assignment. Your level of authority *has* to be greater than all the demonic forces combined, in order for you to fulfill your mission. And your level of authority is commensurate with your level of submission to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The disciples learned this lesson the hard way. Mark 9:14-29, tells the story of the father who brought his son to the disciples to deliver him from a demon. The father told Jesus *“I brought him to your disciples, hoping they could deliver him, but they were not strong enough, i.e., they were not able to conquer the demon.”* Jesus commanded the demon to come out of the boy and never return. Afterwards, his disciples asked him in private, *“why couldn’t we cast out the demon?”* Jesus response was, *“This type of powerful spirit can only be cast out by fasting and prayer.”*

This event occurred before Jesus defeated Satan at the Cross, and before He released His authority into his disciples; but it demonstrates that submission to God’s authority and God’s ways is absolutely necessary in order to operate in the greater authority over the demons we have been given in Jesus Christ!

Luke 12:48 - When someone has been given much, much will be required in return; and when someone has been entrusted with much, even more will be required. With authority comes responsibility and accountability. You were given this authority; it is part of your DNA as a blood-bought believer in Christ. It is not something you can choose to accept or reject. You

already have it! Since you have been given this greater level of authority, you are responsible for not only walking in that authority, but also how you operate in it; and you are accountable for every result – both negative and positive. We are to use this authority to bring glory to God as we work alongside the Holy Spirit to accomplish all that God has given us to do.

Why do you think Jesus delegated this level of authority to us, His church? Ephesians 3:10 - *His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms.* By giving us, His church, this level of authority, His intent was that the wisdom of God should be revealed to the unseen realm, both angelic and demonic beings.

David Guzik in his commentary on Ephesians 3 writes: “God is a being of infinite wisdom and glory; and He wants His creatures to know His great and manifold wisdom. One purpose in His great plan of the ages is to reveal this wisdom. God does this for the glory of His creatures, because the glory of the creature is directly connected to the glory of the Creator. God will reveal His wisdom by His work in the church; and He will reveal it to angelic beings (principalities and powers). This reminds us that we are called for something far greater than our own individual salvation and sanctification. We are called to be the means by which God teaches the universe a lesson.”

The authority you have received is purposely linked to your identity. You were made in the image of God. The word “image” means “representative figure”. When you received Christ (Colossians 2:6), you were clothed in Christ (Galations 3:27) and you no longer live, but Christ lives in you (Galations 2:20). Jesus has all authority and we know how He used His authority while He was here on earth: He healed the sick, cast out demons, and raised the dead. This is now *your* identity; this is who you are.

This is what you are here for! You have been called. You have been chosen. You have been trained, equipped and armed for battle. You are God’s army on the earth fighting alongside the heavenly host against the spiritual forces of this dark world. This is how you are known in heaven.

You did not choose me, but I chose you to go and bear fruit – fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. (John 15:16)

And God raised you up with Christ and seated you with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus. (Ephesians 2:6)

Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know. (Jeremiah 33:3)

God is saying to every one of you who have received His grace and the eternal life you now have in Jesus:

“You have been chosen to be a bearer of My glory. This is how the angels see you. This is how you are known in heaven. This is your identity in Christ. Your identity is therefore linked to authority, because I have given all authority to Jesus, so that you will have all you need to accomplish My purposes, for I am sending you as My representative on the earth. And not only have I given you authority in the earthly realm, but I have also placed you in the heavenly realms and seated you in the place of honor at my right hand. Nothing in heaven or on the earth or under the earth can harm you. No weapon forged against you will be able to prevail. What I have promised you, I am faithful to deliver. I desire to include you in all of my plans; you will receive Divine strategies for battle when you ask of me and wait for my instructions. I am making great and unsearchable riches – wisdom, understanding, counsel, power, and knowledge available to you so that you always have everything you need to carry out the assignments I have given to you.”

God has invited you to partner with Him in the work of His Kingdom. He is inviting you to a relational experience of Him

- so that you grow in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man (Luke 2:52),
- so that you grow from glory to glory and faith to faith until you become spiritually mature and complete not lacking in anything (James 1:4),
- so that your spiritual senses become sharpened through constant practice (Hebrews 5:14), and
- so that you may be about your Father’s business, seeing what He is doing, and then doing what you see Him doing (John 5:19).

And the gates of hell will not prevail against you, the church. Such is the authority of the believer.

Have you ever thought of yourself in this way? Now that you know what God thinks about you and what He has planned for you, are you willing to partner with Him in walking in the authority you have been given, both on the earth as well as in heaven? All that is required of you is that you daily submit your will, your rights and all control to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because all authority begins with submission.