

HOW AUTHORITY WORKS

- A. Introduction: For several weeks we have been discussing our God-given dominion and authority.
1. God made men to reign as His under rulers in the earth. The Bible begins and ends with God reigning through men who exercise God-given dominion in the earth. Gen 1:26; Rev 5:10; 22:3-5
 - a. When Adam sinned in the Garden he turned his God-given dominion over to the devil. The devil and his followers now wreak havoc in an earth that has been corrupted by sin, resulting in all the hell and heartache present in this world. Luke 4:6; II Cor 4:4; etc.
 - b. Jesus came to earth -- God became a man -- in order to, as a man, break the power of the devil over the human race and over the earth and restore to man his God-given authority. Gen 3:15; Heb 2:14; Col 2:14,15
 1. During His earth ministry, prior to the Cross, Jesus demonstrated how men with God-given authority are supposed to live. Matt 9:6,8; Mark 1:27; Luke 4:36; etc.
 2. Then Jesus went to the Cross and, through His death, burial, and resurrection, He regained man's lost authority and dominion. Eph 1:19-2:6
 2. When a person is born again he is given the same authority that Jesus exercised when He was on this earth -- with an additional element added to it.
 - a. Authority is delegated power. The authority is only as good as the power that backs it. The power that backs us is the power that raised Christ from the dead -- the power that has already conquered the devil -- all his forces and all his works.
 1. Jesus' resurrection was opposed by all the powers of darkness. Because of the tremendous opposition, the resurrection of Jesus involved the greatest display of the power of God ever.
 2. Eph 1:19--Four different Greek words are used to describe the power demonstrated in the resurrection: power (DUNAMEOS), working (ENERGEIAN), and mighty power which is literally the strength (KRATOUS) of His might (ISCHOUS).
 - b. Jesus went to the Cross for us as us. When He defeated the devil, broke his hold on humanity, and was raised from the dead, we defeated the devil through and with our substitute and we were raised up with Jesus to the same position of authority He now holds at the right hand of the Father.
 1. When we are born again our God-given authority is restored to us and we are now authorized to reign as kings in life by Christ Jesus. Rom 5:17
 2. Jesus has commissioned believers to do the works that He did in His name with the promise that they will be backed by the power that raised Jesus from the dead. Mark 16:17,18; John 14:12-14
 3. We are authorized to exercise dominion in this earth. It is done through issuing commands in the name of the Lord. It is done through speaking the word of God. It is done through faith, through believing that what you say will come to pass. In this lesson we want to talk more about how and why our God-given authority works.
- B. While Jesus was on earth He demonstrated how authority works and He also taught about how it works.
1. When you have authority it means you have permission to act for another. Jesus acted for His Father while He was on earth. John 4:34; 5:19, 36; 11:9; 12:35; 17:4; etc.
 - a. Jesus is God become a man without ceasing to be God. While on earth He did not live as God, He lived as a man in dependence on the Father. He lived by the life and power of the Father. John 6:57; Acts 10:38; John 14:9,10; etc.
 - b. Jesus issued commands in the name of His Father because He was authorized by His Father to destroy the works of the devil. Jesus believed that what He said would come to pass because He knew His Father in Him would do the work by His power.
 2. We exercise or demonstrate our authority in the same way Jesus exercised authority. John 14:12-14

- a. We issue commands in the name of the Lord because we are authorized to continue the works of Jesus and we know that Jesus in us will do the work by His power.
 - 1. In v13,14 Jesus said whatever we ask in His name He will do. Ask has the idea of demand.
 - 2. These verses are not talking about demanding something from God. The word is used in the context of doing the works of Jesus -- what you demand of devils and disease. Acts 3:1-8
 - b. Believers are authorized to use the name of Jesus. His name is not a magic charm. It is like power of attorney. The right to us the name of Jesus means we have the right to act representatively, to act in His place. Authority means you have permission to act for another.
 - 1. The fact that we are authorized to use His name means we are authorized to speak for Jesus and to act for Jesus as He would in the situation.
 - 2. Jesus has promised that when we act in His name He, by His power, will do what we demand in His name.
 - 3. Acts 1:1--When Jesus was on earth He began to do some works which we are to continue. Because we are sons of God we have the same authority Jesus had and we are authorized to issue commands which release power that destroys the works of the devil.
- C. In Mark 11:12-14; 20,21 Jesus spoke to a fig tree, commanded it to die, and what He said came to pass. When His disciples expressed surprise at this, Jesus told them: You can do what I did. v22-24
- 1. A quick side note. We could do an entire lesson on this, but there are some conditions on who can do what Jesus did, even though Jesus says “any man” and “whatsoever you desire”.
 - a. You must be a son of God, obedient to His word, and desire His glory and the good of others.
 - 1. Jesus is speaking here to His disciples, committed followers who have left all to follow Him. Any man, in context, means a committed follower of Jesus.
 - 2. If the chief desire of your heart is not to bring honor and glory to God and good to men in, through, and with your life, you will not be able to exercise your authority as a son of God.
 - b. In John 15:7 (in the same discussion where we find John 14:12-14, the Last Supper) Jesus put a limit on “whatever” you ask or demand in my name.
 - 1. Desire in Mark 11:24 and John 15:7 is the same Greek word as ask in John 14:13,14. Not only must you abide in Christ (be born again) His word must abide in you.
 - 2. Authority will work for those who know the word of God, those who know from the word of God what and when they are authorized to speak in Jesus’ name.
 - 2. The point for our discussion today is this: In order to effectively exercise your authority Jesus said you must believe that what you say will come to pass (Mark 11:23). How can you believe that what you say will come to pass?
 - a. You must understand that this is how God works. God works through words. He releases His power through His word of power. Heb 1:3
 - 1. Authority means permission to act for another. We are to act as God would in the situation. God speaks when He wants something done. When God wanted a material, physical world to come into being He spoke His word. Gen 1:3; etc.; Heb 11:3
 - 2. The world was not made out of nothing. It was made out of the word of God which is an expression of God’s power.
 - b. You must understand that authority is exercised through words (Matt 8:9). We are authorized to speak in the name of the Lord as His representatives. Words that release power produce results.
 - 1. We are to say what He says, say what He would say if He were here. We are authorized to act as Jesus would in the situation.
 - 2. In Mark 11:22, in explaining what He did to the fig tree, Jesus told His followers to have faith in God, or literally, “Have the faith of God”. (A.S. Worrell). God speaks and believes that what He says will come to pass. We as His authorized representatives are to do the same.
 - c. We, too, “release” power through words because Jesus said: What you command in my name I

will do. When you command His power, His word, goes to work to bring results.

3. Jesus further said in Mark 11:24 that you must believe you receive when you exercise your authority. Faith is involved in exercising authority. I John 5:4
 - a. "Believe you receive" is literally: believe you have received (Alford); believe that it is yours (Knox); believe you have got it (Moffatt).
 - b. The word receive, in the Greek, means to take. The word take has many shades of meaning, one of which is to accept. Accept comes from two French words: to take.
 1. When you understand how authority works and issue your word of command you accept what Jesus said: That His power goes to work to bring to pass what you have said.
 2. You believe that what you said will come to pass because you accept that the power of God is at work. You accept it by faith. Your evidence is the word of Jesus Christ.

- D. Some people criticize the things we are saying about faith. Others have misunderstood what we are saying. Faith that overcomes, faith that releases power, faith that effectively exercises authority, is not a formula (just say the right words) or a magic charm (the name of Jesus). It is a mind set that sees reality as it truly is and then testifies to that reality.
 1. There are two realms of existence -- the seen world and the unseen world. The unseen produced the seen, will outlast the seen, and can change the seen. II Cor 4:18; I Tim 1:17; Heb 11:3; Mark 4:39
 - a. Faith and sight are opposites (II Cor 5:7). What is faith? One thing is for sure: It's not sight. It's not based on information given to us by our physical senses.
 - b. Faith looks past what it can see with physical eyes to what it can't see through the word of God and then testifies to that reality.
 - c. When God created the world He "saw" it before it existed. He saw it by faith and then He spoke it into being. God saw darkness but He spoke light. He released His power to create, to change, through His word.
 2. Faith sees past the storm. Faith talks the end result. Consider these examples of people who were speaking, walking, accepting, acting, by faith.
 - a. In II Kings 6:15-17 Elisha and his servant were greatly outnumbered by the Syrian army according to sight, the information given to them by their senses.
 1. But, Elisha said he and his servant had more on their side. Elisha wasn't denying what he could see. He was talking by faith.
 2. When you talk about something by faith, or take something by faith, it means one of two things: You are talking about something that is real, but invisible -- like God, like the angels -- or you are talking about something that does not yet exist but is as good as done because God who is faithful has promised -- like calling Abraham a father before Isaac was born.
 - b. In II Kings 4 Elisha promised a Shunammite woman who was kind to him that she would have a son. She did bear a son but he died unexpectedly and the woman went to Elisha to get help.
 1. Her son was dead, yet she said, "All is well" (v23,26). She was speaking by faith not sight. She had the word of the Lord through the prophet that she would have a son.
 2. The word well in the Hebrew is SHALOM which means health, prosperity, peace; nothing missing, nothing broken.
 - c. In Mark 5:39 Jesus, speaking of Jairus' daughter who had just died, said: She's not dead. She is sleeping. He was not speaking by sight He was speaking by faith: This is a temporary condition subject to change by the power of God.
 3. To exercise authority you must mix faith with the word of God. Faith activates the power of God to produce results in our lives.
 - a. At the Cross God provided salvation for every man. Yet that salvation does not become operative in a person until they mix faith with the word, the gospel, the good news of salvation. Eph 2:8
 - b. Faith that accesses the power of God involves the heart and the mouth. Rom 10:9,10--With the

heart man believes and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

1. To believe with the heart means to believe without any physical evidence from the senses based solely on what God says.
 2. The word confess is HOMOLOGIA which means to say the same as. The confession that results in salvation says what God says despite what it sees or feels.
4. The word belief comes from two Anglo-Saxon words: BE which means to live or exist and LIFAN which conveys the thought of accordance. To believe means to live in accordance. To believe means to live in accordance with.
- a. Faith and believe are two sides of the same coin. Faith, at its most basic level, is agreement with God -- agreement expressed through words and actions.
 - b. The kind of faith that moves mountains and kills fig trees in the name of the Lord with its God-given authority speaks the words of God, speaks in agreement with God.
 - c. We overcome or exercise our authority through faith (I John 5:4). Rev 12:11 says it this way: We overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony.
 1. The blood of the Lamb paid for our sins, making possible the new birth which makes us overcomers or conquerors who are capable of demonstrating the authority of God.
 2. But we must add the word of our testimony to what God has given us. Testimony is authoritative evidence based on observation or knowledge. When you give testimony in court you tell what you know to be true to the best of your knowledge.
 - d. Faith is not a formula. It is a view of reality which is expressed through words. Faith is an action. To believe is to act on the word. The number one way you act is by speaking.
- E. Conclusion: We are authorized to exercise dominion in this earth. It is done through issuing commands in the name of the Lord. It is done through speaking the word of God. It is done through faith, through believing that what you say will come to pass.
1. You must know how to talk about your situation by faith. You don't deny what you see. You look past what you see with the help of God's written word.
 - a. Learn to say what you want not what you see. Learn to talk about what is beyond the storm. Learn to talk about the end result.
 - b. Understand that it is not the words themselves that produce results. It is not a formula, a magic charm, or a parrot-like imitation. Your words must express, must be in agreement with reality as it truly is according to God.
 2. You believe the word of God, you speak the word of God, and the word of God produces results.
 - a. Heb 10:23--We are to hold fast to our profession of faith (saying the same thing God says) because God is faithful. He will do what He said.
 - b. Jesus, as a man, used the power of God to do the work of God. At the Last supper Jesus said this same privilege would be given to those who believe on Him. Behind our authority stands the word of Jesus: What you demand in my name I will do.