

SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY 03

AUTHORITY AND SUBMISSION OUTLINE

By Watchman Nee

CHAPTER 1

THE IMPORTANCE OF AUTHORITY

- The throne of God established upon authority

God's throne is established upon authority... In the whole universe only God is authority. All other authorities are appointed by God. Nothing is greater than authority in the universe; nothing can surpass it. (p. 109)

- The Principle Of Satan

Rebellion is a matter of principle; it is not easy to be forgiven of rebellion. Satan, in trying to set up his throne above that of God's violated God's authority. The principle of Satan is the principle of self-exaltation. (pp. 109-110)

- The greatest demand in the whole Bible being the submission to God's will

Our service to God is not a matter of voluntary sacrifice or of denial of our self. It is a matter of accomplishing God's will. It is not a matter of picking up the cross. Rather, it is the submission to God's will. This is the basic principle. (p. 113)

CHAPTERS 2-3

EXAMPLES OF REBELLION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

- Seeing Authority Everywhere

Wherever we go, we should first know who is the authority. If you know who you have to submit to, you will spontaneously know what position you should occupy in the Body, and you will stand in your proper position. (p. 120)

- Training in Submission

In order to restore authority, submission must be restored first. Many are accustomed to acting as the head; they have never known submission. But we must learn submission. It must become our reaction. (p. 121)

- Learning To Be A Deputy Authority

A worker of God must not only learn submission to authority; he must also learn to be God's deputy authority in the church and in the home. (p. 123)

- Relationships To God's Deputy Authority

The flesh loves to see authority exposed to shame so that there can be freedom from restriction. (p. 125)

Service to God originates from God. It is man serving God through submission to His authority. The result is acceptance. Strange fire, however, originates from man. [With strange fire,] there is no need of obedience to God's will or submission to His authority. (p. 127)

- God's Judgement On Rebellion

Whenever there is rebellion and reviling among us, God's presence is gone, and the tent will not move.... If the matter of authority is not settled, all other matters will remain unsettled. (p. 130)

Once rebellion appears, however, God cannot tolerate it, for rebellion is according to the principle of death. It is according to the principle of Satan, For this reason, the sin of rebellion is more serious than any other kind of sin. Whenever someone opposes authority, God immediately comes in to judge. How solemn a matter this is! (p. 135)

CHAPTER 4

DAVID'S KNOWLEDGE OF AUTHORITY

- Submission Being Higher Than Our Work

David was a man that denied his self. He would rather see his kingship postponed and God's plan delayed than to become a rebellious one. (p. 138)

- David Upholding God's Authority In An Absolute Way

Submission to authority is not submission to a person. It is submission to the anointing upon the person.... Hence, he [David] could only seek for his own escape; he could not put forth his hand to hurt Saul. (p. 139)

CHAPTER 5 THE SON'S SUBMISSION

- The Lord Creating Submission

In the Godhead the Lord voluntarily chose to be the Son, submitting Himself to the authority of the Father.... The Father became the representation of authority, and the Son became the representation of submission. (pp. 141-142)

In the Godhead there was a harmonious decision that authority would be established first within the Godhead. From that time on, there was a distinction in operation of the Father and the Son. (p. 144)

- The Lord Bringing Submission Into Creation

One day the Son willingly emptied Himself to become a created man as the representation of submission to authority. It was the creature that had rebelled. Therefore, only submission of a creature could establish God's authority. (p. 144)

CHAPTER 6 HOW GOD ESTABLISHES HIS KINGDOM

- Through The Obedience of Christ

When the Lord came to the earth, He came empty-handed; He did not bring obedience with Him, He learned obedience through the sufferings He went through. (p. 147)

He did nothing that opposed God's authority. Everything was in submission, in perfect cooperation with the authority of God. In this realm the Lord set up the kingdom of God and executed His authority. (p. 148)

- The Church Must Become The Kingdom Through Obedience

She [the church] is to be the sphere of God's kingdom, the place where God executes His authority.... There must be an absolute

submission and an absolute position for God so that His authority can be perfectly carried out. (p. 150)

CHAPTER 7

GOD INTENDS THAT MAN SUBMIT TO REPRESENTATIVE AUTHORITY

- The God-established Systems Of Authority - In The World, In The Family, And In The Church

There are four signs of submission to authority on earth: (1) paying tax to whom tax is due, (2) custom to whom custom is due, (3) fear to whom fear is due, and (4) honor to whom honor is due.

For a Christian, to abide by the law is not something done out of fear of punishment but out of the exercise of his conscience before God. (p. 158)

- We Should Have Confidence In Submitting To The Delegated Authority

God is confident in the authority that He establishes.... We should be confident in submitting to the authority which God is confident in establishing. (pp. 162-163)

Whether the authority makes mistakes or not has nothing to do with us. In other words, whether the deputy is right or wrong is a matter for which he has to be responsible before the Lord directly. (pp. 163-164)

CHAPTER 8

AUTHORITY IN THE BODY

- The Highest Expression Of Authority - Spontaneous And Harmonious Submission Being Easy With Life

With Christ and the church there is an absolute submission and an absolute authority which are far above all other authorities and submissions. (p. 170)

God desires that our submission be like that of the body submitting to the head.... As soon as the head has a little intention, there is a harmonious submission. (p. 171)

The oneness of the body with the head does not depend only on a conscious submission, but on an unconscious submission. (p. 172)

Therefore, it is not a difficult matter to submit, for within we are all one, sharing the same life and the same Holy Spirit. (p. 176)

- To Receive The Authority In The Members Is To Receive Their Riches Through Their Function

God set up His authority in order to dispense His riches to us and fill up the lack of all the weak ones. (p. 174)

Authority is the riches of Christ. To receive others' function, which means to receive their authority, is to receive the riches of the whole Body. If we submit to the authority of every member, we obtain the riches of every member. (p. 174)

CHAPTERS 9-10

THE MANIFESTATION OF MAN'S REBELLION

- Words - Being the Outlet Of The Heart

If a man is rebellious, his words surely will reveal rebellion... because out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. (p. 180)

The oneness and power of the church are broken through man's careless words. Today the majority of the problems in the church come from evil speakings. (p. 184)

There are only two things that cause a Christian to lose his power. One is sin, and the other is speaking evil of those above him. (p. 183)

- Reasons - In Man's Heart

Reasoning in the heart is the first cause of rebellion. Hence, if we do not deal thoroughly with reasons, it is impossible to stop words. (p. 185)

Every time the Lord commanded the Israelites to do something in Leviticus 18–22, He inserted the words, 'I am Jehovah,' in between commands. There is not even the word because. I speak in this way, for I am Jehovah. There need be no other reason. 'I am Jehovah' is the reason. If we see this, we will not live by reason from this day on. (p. 189)

- Thoughts - Needing To Be Taken Captive

Man uses reasonings to build a fortress around his thoughts.... Spiritual warfare involves storming this fortress and recapturing the thoughts. (p. 191)

If we want to submit to God, we must touch God's authority and break through all the strongholds of reasons. (p. 192)

Refraining from opinion, stopping all reasonings, ceasing from all evil speaking, and submitting to God completely are the beginning of the kingdom. (p. 197)

CHAPTER 11

THE PROPER LIMIT OF SUBMISSION TO AUTHORITY

- Obedience is a matter of conduct; it is relative. Submission is a matter of attitude; it is absolute.

This is like the apostles preaching the gospel. When the Jewish synagogue stopped them, they were submissive in their attitude, but in practice they went according to the commission of the Lord. They chose to preach the gospel rather than to be restricted by the synagogue. It was not a defiance with quarrels and shouting, but a defiance with calmness. (pp. 199-200)

- Definite Marks Of Submission To Authority:

A man who has met authority:

- 1) will look for authority everywhere*
- 2) has become fearful of making mistakes; he is a truly soft person*
- 3) will not like to be authority*
- 4) will not dare to speak carelessly, for he has the consciousness of authority with him*

*5) will be the only one able to lead others to learn submission
(cf. p. 201)*

- Life And Authority

The church is maintained by two things: life and authority. The life of submission is for us to submit to authority. (pp. 202-203)

The way of oneness in Ephesians 4 seems far off now. But if men meet authority, the way is not far away... If all the churches take the way of submission, these glorious facts will unfold before our eyes. (p. 203)