

The Authority of the Believer

To have any understanding at all we must define what the word authority means. The Webster's dictionary defines it as the power to command, determine, influence, or judge. Scripture uses the word authority and power. The two words have two distinct meanings. Authority may be taken from the Greek word *exousia* (ex-oo-see-ah) which means delegated influence, where as *dunamis* (doo-nam-is) means the miraculous power given (the ability given). It is good to go to the Hebrew or Greek text to fully understand the meaning of the scriptures. In general authority means delegated power. In delegated power, there is a substance behind the user of that power. Everyone must know the source of his or her power. Where does it come from? Under whose authority do you live? In Proverbs 29:2, "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when a wicked man rules, the people groan." (NKJ) This scripture tells us that people rejoice when the righteous man rules but when the wicked rule they will groan with a complaint, criticize or grumble. When speaking of authority, it is interesting to note that there is a subscribed order that the scripture has laid out. In different social groups we find an order of status. If we start with the family the order is man, women and children. In the scripture the order is God, Christ, Man, Women, and children as stated in the following scripture in 1 Corinthians 11:3 "but, I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God." (NKJ)

With the establishment of this order we begin to see how relationships function, and we should remember to never take the role of dominating our will over another person. We live through the love of Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit. We are not to be abusive in our relationships. We must remember our position in Christ as stated in the following scripture:

Ephesians 2:4-6, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for **his great love** with which he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath **made us alive** together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath **raised up** together, and **made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.**" [KJV]

Christ has made us alive in him and made us to sit with him in heavenly places. Notice that this is a seated position of authority, so we accept the position of Christ without adding any effort on our part because we live by the grace of God. There is another scripture that is vital at this point to remember as well:

Colossians 2:8-10, "See to it that no one makes a prey of you by philosophy and empty deceit, **according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe, and not according to Christ. For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have come to fullness of life in him, who is the head of all rule and authority.**" [RSV]

We must always remember that no human tradition can take away what Christ has done because it can not add to what Christ has already established. Christ is the head of all rule and authority and is why when we pray we end our prayers by saying [in Jesus name] because He is the head and ruler over all things. We do this in recognition of Christ authority and power. We must understand the reason why he has given us authority. We use his authority because we are seated with him. In Luke chapter 10, verses 17-20, we read about the seventy people whom he appointed and gave authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy. The seventy were surprised that even demons were subject to them in Jesus name. Jesus told them that they were not to rejoice in this, but rather that each of their names was written in heaven. We must take on this

same attitude as Jesus instructed in chapter 10 verses 17-20. Scripture warns us about our enemy the devil in

1 Peter 5:8-9, "**Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith,** because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings." (NIV)

The devil is the deceiver who goes after our minds to confuse, create doubt, and weaken our faith in God. We need to take heed and take the authority that Christ has given us in prayer. This is also known as binding and loosing. In Matthew 16:19, "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever **you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven**" (NKJ). We can learn from the centurion in Matthew 8:8-10, the centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that you should come under my roof. **But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed,** "For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "**Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith,** not even in Israel" (NKJ). I pray that we can have this kind of faith. Jesus is the author and the finisher of our faith. If we can believe, which means to live in accordance with the word of God and take action in Jesus name, what victories we may witness.

The last thing for us to remember in regards to taking the authority is to put on the whole armor of God. There are seven things to remember about the armor of God. However, I would encourage you to read Ephesians 6:10-18 for yourself and meditate on the meaning of the **shield of faith** and the **sword of the Spirit** in understanding the application in our lives. In order for this to work we must have **faith, hope, and love** working through us by Holy Spirit which helps each believer to become more like Christ. This is a daily process as we renew our minds by reading the word of God.

Here are seven things to remember about the armor of God.

1. **The girdle of truth around the waist – The truth is the word of God that will set you free.**
2. **The breastplate of righteousness – The new nature that is created in God's image when trust in Christ.**
3. **Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace – The ministry of proclaiming the "Good News."**
4. **The shield of faith – The trust and practiced commitment of the word of God daily in our lives.**
5. **The helmet of Salvation – The deliverance from the power of sin, and having the mind of Christ.**
6. **The sword of the Spirit A – Actively using the word of God in our lives as the Holy Spirit leads us.**
7. **All prayer and supplications – The constant approach to God in everything we do is done through prayer.**

Remember, that nothing can be accomplished without His great love for each and every person that works this amazing change in our lives.

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