

## Doctrine of Authority

1. Having been invested with political authority by King Ahasuerus (Xexes) of Persia in order to defend the Jews against their enemies, Esther the queen and her uncle Mordecai wrote letters of instruction to the general public.
  - *Esther 9:29 Then Esther the queen, the daughter of Abihail, and Mordecai the Jew, wrote with all authority, to confirm this second letter of Purim.*
2. The rule of the righteous brings happiness to the hearts of people for political authority will be used for the good of those governed.
  - *Proverbs 29:2 When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.*
3. When Jesus taught He taught with authority which means He did not qualify His comments or commandments as the scribes did. By so doing Jesus established an intrinsic authority as opposed to one derived.
  - *Matthew 7:29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.*
  - *Mark 1:22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.*
4. Human authority will always find a higher authority to submit to. The chain of command ultimately moves from man to God who alone is the Sovereign of the universe and the master of His own creation.
  - *Matthew 8:9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.*

The concept of human authority being under divine authority was not lost on Thomas Jefferson but it was rejected by Benjamin Franklin at a critical point in America's history.

The original draft of the Declaration of Independence had these words by Jefferson,

*"We hold these truths to the sacred and undeniable ..."* Benjamin Franklin took a quill pen and crossed out the phrase and wrote instead *"We hold these truths to be self evident."* Nevertheless, all human authority and freedom is derived from God.

5. In contrast to an autocratic spirit of ruling over others Jesus taught His followers to be more humble in exercising authority.

- *Matthew 20:25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. 26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister.*
6. It is not unusual for individuals to question the authority of others. Even Jesus was challenged by the chief priests and the elders of His day.
- *Matthew 21:23 And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?*
7. The Lord responded to the attack upon His credibility with incredible wisdom and asked a question that could not be answered.
- *Matthew 21:24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. Matthew 21:27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.*
8. Legitimate authority when recognized induces respect and obedience.
- *Mark 1:27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.*
9. Authority can be delegated as Jesus taught in the parable of a man on a far journey.
- *Mark 13:34 For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.*
10. The disciples of Christ were invested with authority over all devils and diseases.
- *Luke 9:1 Then he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.*
11. Those who have been invested with authority and use it well shall be rewarded with a great sphere of influence and service.
- *Luke 19:17 And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.*
12. As authority can be used it can be abused. Evil religious leaders can work in connection with evil-minded civil authorities to hurt the righteous.

- *Luke 20:20 And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.*
13. The authority of Jesus extends not only over the demons of darkness but also over human hearts.
- *John 5:27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.*
14. Those who hold political authority are wise to seek spiritual understanding as the man from Ethiopia.
- *Acts 8:27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship,*
15. When religious authority is abused the innocent suffer. Saul of Tarsus, prior to his conversion put many people into prison needlessly. Paul never forgot how he persecuted the church.
- *Acts 9:14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.*
  - *Acts 26:10 Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them.*
  - *Acts 26:12 Whereupon as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests,*
16. One day all human authority will bow before King Jesus.
- *1 Corinthians 15:24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.*
17. Paul was careful to subordinate the right to use his pastoral authority to gracious appeals.
- *2 Corinthians 10:8 For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed:*
18. The church is to pray for those in authority.
- *1 Timothy 2:2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.*

19. Christ has the right to organize the church the way He deems best. The Lord has decreed that woman not hold an official teaching office nor to take by force authority over men. This would include use the legal documents and system of a denominational institution to seize power.

- *1 Timothy 2:12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*

20. Sometimes it is necessary for pastors to exercise their authority with force.

- *Titus 2:15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.*

21. As God grants authority to men and angels the devil, who has usurped authority shares his power and authority with individuals of his own choosing.

- *Revelation 13:2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.*