

*<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. <sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen. Matt. 28:18-20*

*<sup>21</sup> So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” <sup>22</sup> And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. John 20:21*

*<sup>17</sup> Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.”*

*<sup>18</sup> And He said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. <sup>19</sup> Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. <sup>20</sup> Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.” Luke 10:17-20*

*<sup>5</sup> Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, <sup>6</sup> saying, “Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.” <sup>7</sup> And Jesus said to him, “I will come and heal him.” <sup>8</sup> 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. <sup>9</sup> 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.” <sup>10</sup> 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! Matt. 8:5-10*

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. There are two primary aspects of spiritual authority that we can focus on though we will in this session review only one of them.
  - 1. The spiritual authority of a believer to exercise our identity in Christ as led and empowered by Holy Spirit.
  - 2. The spiritual authority in the church for the purpose of leading, teaching, equipping and unifying the body of Christ.
- B. In this particular session we will focus on the authority of Christ as it has been invested in the life of a believer – a disciple of Jesus.
- C. **Critical Point** – The authority Jesus shares with believers was first promised to his **disciples**. This is critical for us to understand. The authority of Jesus passed on to his disciples was hard won at the cross. He invests that authority in his disciples, those who have surrendered, submitted, and committed their lives to following Jesus. Simply praying a prayer, attending church, throwing a little money in the plate, and walking away the rest of the week to live your life under your own leadership is not the true lifestyle of a disciple of Christ.
- D. We are as ambassadors of the Kingdom of God. Ambassadors of any government, kingdom or sovereign nation carry with them the full investment to represent the leader(s) who sent them.
  - 1. The main rule is that ambassadors live under the chain of command and obey the leadership who have sent them as a representative.

## II. GOD GAVE THE DOMINION OF THE EARTH TO HUMANS

- A. God gave the dominion of the earth to humans forever. In other words, He releases His power in the earthly realm in response to redeemed humans living in agreement with Him. When God gave the governing authority of the earth to Adam, he had the right to use it in any way that he chose. Adam committed high treason and gave his authority to Satan (Lk. 4:5-6).

**26“Let them have dominion...over all the earth...” 28God said to them, “...Fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over...every living thing...on the earth.” (Gen. 1:26-28)**

**16The heavens are the LORD’s; but the earth He has given to the children of men. (Ps. 115:16)**

- B. At the cross, Jesus defeated Satan. The Church must enforce Jesus’ victory in this age. Satan’s attacks against us will continue if we accept them. Faith is having confidence in our God-given authority, with urgency to act. It is not enough to know about our authority; it must be acted upon.

**15Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it [His death and resurrection]. (Col. 2:15)**

- C. We take our stand against the devil and resist him by speaking the Word to him. He will flee. We base our faith on what the Word says, not on what we can see or feel. When circumstances do not change instantly, some give up and let Satan attack them without resisting him.

**7Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (Jas. 4:7)**

- D. Demons must obey Jesus’ authority when it is exercised. We are to challenge demons fearlessly. Operating in spiritual authority has nothing to do with our feelings. It is based on Jesus’ authority. “Serpents and scorpions” refer to the power of demonic spirits (Ps. 91:13).

**19“Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” (Lk. 10:19)**

- E. These signs will follow any sincere believer. The most immature member in the Body has as much access to Jesus’ authority over demons as do the ones who are most mature.

**17“These signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues...18will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” (Mk. 16:17-18)**

- F. Satan has no legal right to torment us. The power of Jesus in us is greater than demonic power. Our faith or confidence is based on the fact that Jesus defeated Satan. Many do not understand their authority over Satan. Some think it is only for a select few with a special healing ministry.

**4He [Jesus] who is in you is greater than he [Satan] who is in the world. (1 Jn. 4:4)**

**8For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. (1Jn. 3:8)**

### III. OUR SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY IS BASED ON OUR UNION WITH JESUS

- A. Our spiritual authority is based on our union with Jesus. The authority that Jesus received as an “exalted Man” is given to His people. God gave Jesus to the Church (v. 22) as our head and made us His Body, the vehicle through which He expresses His power on earth (v. 23).

*17...the Father of glory may give to you...revelation in the knowledge of Him...18that you may know...19what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us...20 which He [the Father] worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand...21 far above all principality and power...and every name that is named...22 He put all things under His [Jesus'] feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. (Eph. 1:17-23)*

- B. We cannot understand our authority solely by our intellect; we need spiritual revelation about it. Those who exercise more authority do so because they have more understanding about their authority in Christ. Our authority comes from Jesus’ resurrection and exaltation. It is based on what He accomplished, not on our mood, feelings, fervor, or recent victories.

- C. Not only is Jesus seated at the Father’s right hand far above all demonic powers, but we also are seated with Him. Therefore, we have received access to God’s throne. In other words, when we pray according to God’s will, our prayers are received at His throne with divine approval.

*6 [The Father]...raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ. (Eph. 2:6)*

- D. We have been united with Christ in His death (we receive the benefits of His death), and are united with Christ in His resurrection, which includes the benefits of His being seated at God’s throne.

*5For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection. (Rom. 6:5)*

- E. The head and the body are joined together at God’s throne. The authority given to Jesus is also given to His Body to do the works of Christ! Physically, our head only acts through the agency of our body. Many believers see Jesus as the Head of the Church, but fail to understand that the Head by His sovereign choice is dependent on His Body to carry out His plans. Many only proclaim the truth of the cross without grasping the truth about the throne—that we are seated there with Him.

- F. Jesus gave His authority to the Church as His ambassadors, or official representatives, on earth. Christ delegated His authority on the earth to His Church. He releases power over demonic powers through His Body. Many problems continue because the Body is passive about resisting the enemy.

*18God...has given us the ministry of reconciliation...19God...has committed to us the word of reconciliation. 20Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ. (2 Cor. 5:18-19)*

*19“I will give you the keys of the kingdom...whatever you bind on earth will be [shall have been] bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be [shall have been] loosed in heaven.” (Mt.16:19)*