



Lesson 21

His Authority is my Umbrella

INTRODUCTION

Our God created a system of order for all of creation. It is evident everywhere...from the order of the days of creation, to the seasons, weather cycles, and reproduction of living things...the list could go on and on. Likewise, God created an order, or structure of authority, for mankind to follow on planet earth. This includes instructions regarding our familial, church, social and governmental relationships. He outlined these instructions very clearly in scripture, as well as gave us a living example to follow in His son, Jesus Christ.

THE AUTHORITY PRINCIPLE

First and foremost, we must understand that God is **the supreme authority**. We are called to always submit to and obey Him. It will be nearly impossible to follow God's delegated authority if you do not first have a clear buy-in on His supreme authority.

FOR THE LORD IS GOD, AND HE CREATED THE HEAVENS AND EARTH AND PUT EVERYTHING IN PLACE. HE MADE THE WORLD TO BE LIVED IN, NOT TO BE A PLACE OF EMPTY CHAOS. "I AM THE LORD," HE SAYS, "AND THERE IS NO OTHER..." ISAIAH 45:18 (NLT)

Secondly, God places people in positions of authority in our lives. This is God's **delegated authority**. Many people live by the idea that "I do not mind submitting to God, but I'll only submit to man if I agree, or if I feel that man is worthy, or if that man has earned my respect." Let me be very clear: we cannot separate our submission to God's supreme authority from our submission to His delegated authority.

EVERYONE MUST SUBMIT TO GOVERNING AUTHORITIES. FOR ALL AUTHORITY COMES FROM GOD, AND THOSE IN POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY HAVE BEEN PLACED THERE BY GOD. SO ANYONE WHO REBELS AGAINST AUTHORITY IS REBELLING AGAINST WHAT GOD HAS INSTITUTED, AND THEY WILL BE PUNISHED. ROMANS 13:1-2 (NLT)

God appoints all existing rulers. No one operates in a place of legitimate authority without God's knowledge. God is in control of all creation and He is aware of all things. Get comfortable with that concept.

If we rebel against those in authority, we are rebelling against God Himself, or His ordinances. To do this, is to bring judgement on oneself.

GOD RULES ACCORDING TO KINGDOM AUTHORITY

Often this principle is difficult for us to understand and follow because we live in a democracy, where "the people rule". We like to follow popular opinion, cultural norms, our own personal preferences, etc. We like to be in charge of ourselves, and make adjustments as we see fit.

But, God does not operate in a democracy. He is King of all creation. He rules over His Kingdom, where He institutes rank, order, and authority. His rules are not subject to popular culture or to a popular vote. His rules are perfect and unchanging. **We must have a kingdom mind-set as we understand God's principles.** If we view God's order and authority through this lens, we will remain in the protective covering and provision of our Lord. However, if we decide to step away from God's authority structure, and live according to our own desires, we run the risk of disconnecting ourselves from His provision.

IF THEY LISTEN AND OBEY GOD, THEY WILL BE BLESSED WITH PROSPERITY THROUGHOUT THEIR LIVES. ALL THEIR YEARS WILL BE PLEASANT. BUT IF THEY REFUSE TO LISTEN TO HIM, THEY WILL BE KILLED BY THE SWORD AND DIE FROM LACK OF UNDERSTANDING.
JOB 36:11-12 (NLT)

JESUS, OUR PERFECT EXAMPLE

THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD WILL REST ON HIM - THE SPIRIT OF WISDOM AND OF UNDERSTANDING, THE SPIRIT OF COUNSEL AND OF MIGHT, THE SPIRIT OF THE KNOWLEDGE AND FEAR OF THE LORD- AND HE WILL DELIGHT IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD. HE WILL NOT JUDGE BY WHAT HE SEES WITH HIS EYES, OR DECIDE BY WHAT HE HEARS WITH HIS EARS...
ISAIAH 11:2-3 (NIV)

Jesus is filled with Holy Spirit. He takes great pleasure in revering, honoring, and wholly submitting to God the Father.

While Jesus walked on earth, He did not make decisions according to His own natural sight or hearing, but according to God's principles and plans. Jesus operated out of complete submission to God's design. We, too, are called to operate in submission to God's designs, not according to how we think or feel.

JESUS DEMONSTRATED SUBMISSION IN HIS PERSONAL, FAMILY, CHURCH AND GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONSHIPS

PERSONAL ORDER While Jesus was on earth, by His own choice of will He did and spoke nothing except by the guidance and permission of His heavenly Father. He was the perfect pattern for the personal order to which we are called.

“I CAN DO NOTHING ON MY OWN. I JUDGE AS GOD TELLS ME. THEREFORE, MY JUDGEMENT IS JUST, BECAUSE I CARRY OUT THE WILL OF THE ONE WHO SENT ME, NOT MY OWN WILL.”
JOHN 5:30 (NLT)

“...I DO NOTHING ON MY OWN BUT SAY ONLY WHAT THE FATHER TAUGHT ME. AND THE ONE WHO SENT ME IS WITH ME- HE HAS NOT DESERTED ME. FOR I ALWAYS DO WHAT PLEASES HIM.” JOHN 8:28-29 (NLT)

He showed His total faith and reliance on God, even unto death.

“FATHER, IF YOU ARE WILLING, PLEASE TAKE THIS CUP OF SUFFERING AWAY FROM ME. YET, I WANT YOUR WILL TO BE DONE, NOT MINE.” LUKE 22:42 (NLT)

FAMILY ORDER Jesus willingly and humbly submitted Himself to the authority of His parents, until He left their home and began His public ministry.

In this scriptural example, Jesus was twelve years old:

THEN HE RETURNED TO NAZARETH WITH THEM AND WAS OBEDIENT TO THEM. AND HIS MOTHER STORED ALL THESE THINGS IN HER HEART. JESUS GREW IN WISDOM AND IN STATURE AND IN FAVOR WITH GOD AND ALL THE PEOPLE. LUKE 2:51-52 (NLT)

JESUS WAS ABOUT THIRTY YEARS OLD WHEN HE BEGAN HIS PUBLIC MINISTRY.
LUKE 3:23 (NLT)

CHURCH ORDER Jesus honored the church systems of His day by assembling with the people of God in their houses of worship. He also taught in the synagogues and the Temple.

“AM I SOME DANGEROUS REVOLUTIONARY, THAT YOU COME WITH SWORDS AND CLUBS TO ARREST ME? WHY DIDN'T YOU ARREST ME IN THE TEMPLE? I WAS THERE AMONG YOU TEACHING EVERY DAY...” MARK 14:48-49 (NLT)

Jesus submitted to the ruling spiritual authority and took their offenses without complaint. (Matthew 26:57-68)

GOVERNMENTAL ORDER Jesus showed His support for human governments by teaching obedience to their authority.

“... GIVE TO CAESAR WHAT BELONGS TO CAESAR, AND GIVE TO GOD WHAT BELONGS TO GOD.” MATTHEW 22:21 (NLT)

Jesus did not use His mighty power or exalt Himself over the existing government representatives. He allowed Himself to be arrested, falsely accused, and beaten by the Jewish guards. He respected and submitted to their authority, even though He had done nothing wrong. (John 18:2-12)

Jesus prayed for the government authorities and asked for their forgiveness even as He drew His last physical breath.

JESUS SAID, “FATHER, FORGIVE THEM, FOR THEY DON’T KNOW WHAT THEY ARE DOING.”
AND THE SOLDIERS GAMBLER FOR HIS CLOTHES BY THROWING DICE. LUKE 23:34 (NLT)

HOW DO WE FOLLOW THIS AUTHORITY PRINCIPLE IN OUR OWN LIVES?

We, as followers of Christ, are called to submit to and obey the authorities that God has established. The Bible gives clear directives for us in the following areas: personal, family, church, and government.

PERSONAL ORDER Jesus is Lord of all. We must commit our whole lives to Him, start each day in communion with Him, and seek His presence in our lives above all others.

JESUS REPLIED, “YOU MUST LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, ALL YOUR SOUL, AND ALL YOUR MIND. THIS IS THE FIRST AND GREATEST COMMANDMENT. A SECOND IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT: LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.”
MATTHEW 22:37-39 (NLT)

“REMAIN IN ME, AND I WILL REMAIN IN YOU. FOR A BRANCH CANNOT PRODUCE FRUIT IF IT IS SEVERED FROM THE VINE, AND YOU CANNOT BE FRUITFUL UNLESS YOU REMAIN IN ME.”
JOHN 15:4 (NLT)

FAMILY ORDER The Lord is clear and simple for His commands in this area. For many of us, these are some of the most difficult to follow. See the scriptures below regarding God's expectations for children, wives, and husbands.

CHILDREN are called to be submissive to their parents, and to honor and obey them always. God even promises blessings for those who obey this command.

CHILDREN, OBEY YOUR PARENTS BECAUSE YOU BELONG TO THE LORD, FOR THIS IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO. "HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER." THIS IS THE FIRST COMMANDMENT WITH A PROMISE: IF YOU HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER, "THINGS WILL GO WELL FOR YOU, AND YOU WILL HAVE A LONG LIFE ON THE EARTH."
EPHESIANS 6:1-3 (NLT)

Conversely, the Lord tells us in scripture that those who do not honor and obey their parents will be cursed. Ouch!

CURSED IS ANYONE WHO DISHONORS THEIR FATHER OR MOTHER. THEN ALL THE PEOPLE SHALL SAY, 'AMEN'. DEUTERONOMY 27:16 (NIV)

HUSBANDS are always to be submissive and obedient to God, and not harsh or oppressive to their wives. They are called to lead their wives with a servant's heart and nurture her. When this is done well, a wife can confidently submit to her husband, lean on him, and trust his covering. This type of marriage relationship mirrors the love between Christ and His church.

AND YOU HONOR CHRIST BY YIELDING TO ONE ANOTHER. BE TENDERLY DEVOTED TO EACH OTHER IN LOVE. FOR WIVES, THIS MEANS BEING TENDERLY DEVOTED TO YOUR HUSBANDS LIKE YOU ARE TENDERLY DEVOTED TO OUR LORD, FOR THE HUSBAND PROVIDES LEADERSHIP FOR THE WIFE, JUST AS CHRIST PROVIDES LEADERSHIP FOR HIS CHURCH, AS THE SAVIOR AND REVIVER OF THE BODY. IN THE SAME WAY THE CHURCH IS DEVOTED TO CHRIST, LET THE WIVES BE DEVOTED TO THEIR HUSBANDS IN EVERYTHING.
EPHESIANS 5:21-24 (TPT)

AND TO THE HUSBANDS, YOU ARE TO DEMONSTRATE LOVE FOR YOUR WIVES WITH THE SAME TENDER DEVOTION THAT CHRIST DEMONSTRATED TO US, HIS BRIDE. FOR HE DIED FOR US, SACRIFICING HIMSELF TO MAKE US HOLY AND PURE, CLEANSING US THROUGH THE SHOWERING OF THE PURE WATER OF THE WORD OF GOD. ALL THAT HE DOES IN US IS DESIGNED TO MAKE US A MATURE CHURCH FOR HIS PLEASURE, UNTIL WE BECOME A SOURCE OF PRAISE TO HIM- GLORIOUS AND RADIANT, BEAUTIFUL AND HOLY, WITHOUT FAULT OR FLAW; A BRIDE FULLY PREPARED FOR HIM. HUSBANDS HAVE THE OBLIGATION OF LOVING AND CARING FOR THEIR WIVES THE SAME WAY THEY LOVE AND CARE FOR THEIR OWN BODIES, FOR TO LOVE YOUR WIFE IS TO LOVE YOUR OWN SELF.
EPHESIANS 5:25-28 (TPT)

How long do we have to obey our parents as our God-appointed authority?

Let's see what the Bible says...

THEREFORE A MAN LEAVES HIS FATHER AND HIS MOTHER AND CLINGS TO HIS WIFE, AND THEY BECOME ONE FLESH. GENESIS 2:24 (NRSV)

God establishes His instructions from the very beginning. That is, children are subject to their parents until marriage, when that order of authority shifts. The words in scripture emphasize that when a man and woman join in marriage, a new order of authority is set up. The reason God did not mention a woman leaving her parents is that she does not establish the new family's order; the man heads the authority. Once children are wed, they are no longer commanded to obey their parents, but they are still to honor them. (Under Cover by John Bevere)

CHURCH ORDER The universal church is made up of all believers in Jesus Christ worldwide. The local church is a group of believers in a particular location. God gives instructions regarding both.

UNIVERSAL CHURCH:

NOW THESE ARE THE GIFTS CHRIST GAVE TO THE CHURCH: THE APOSTLES, THE PROPHETS, THE EVANGELISTS, AND THE PASTORS AND TEACHERS. THEIR RESPONSIBILITY IS TO EQUIP GOD'S PEOPLE TO DO HIS WORK AND BUILD UP THE CHURCH, THE BODY OF CHRIST. EPHESIANS 4:11-12 (NLT)

LOCAL CHURCH:

In 1 Timothy 3, Paul describes this order of elders, deacons, and pastors.

Paul tells us in scripture to live in peace and harmony with fellow believers. We are to submit to and obey our church leaders.

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS, HONOR THOSE WHO ARE YOUR LEADERS IN THE LORD'S WORK. THEY WORK HARD AMONG YOU AND GIVE SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE. SHOW THEM GREAT RESPECT AND WHOLEHEARTED LOVE BECAUSE OF THEIR WORK. AND LIVE PEACEFULLY WITH EACH OTHER. 1 THESSALONIANS 5:12-13 (NLT)

GOVERNMENTAL ORDER The purpose of human government is to enforce God's moral laws on earth. He has ordained the appointment of governmental leaders in order to establish the common good, and to punish evil men for sins against the good.

Let us review our foundational scripture from Paul in Romans regarding authority:

EVERYONE MUST SUBMIT TO GOVERNING AUTHORITIES. FOR ALL AUTHORITY COMES FROM GOD, AND THOSE IN POSITIONS OF AUTHORITY HAVE BEEN PLACED THERE BY GOD. SO ANYONE WHO REBELS AGAINST AUTHORITY IS REBELLING AGAINST WHAT GOD HAS INSTITUTED, AND THEY WILL BE PUNISHED. ROMANS 13:1-2 (NLT)

Paul goes on to say...

FOR THE AUTHORITIES DO NOT STRIKE FEAR IN PEOPLE WHO ARE DOING RIGHT, BUT IN THOSE WHO ARE DOING WRONG. WOULD YOU LIKE TO LIVE WITHOUT FEAR OF THE AUTHORITIES? DO WHAT IS RIGHT, AND THEY WILL HONOR YOU. ROMANS 13:3 (NLT)

Peter tells us in 1 Peter...

FOR THE LORD'S SAKE, RESPECT ALL HUMAN AUTHORITY- WHETHER THE KING AS HEAD OF STATE, OR THE OFFICIALS HE HAS APPOINTED. FOR THE KING HAS SET THEM THERE TO PUNISH THOSE WHO DO WRONG AND TO HONOR THOSE WHO DO RIGHT.
1 PETER 2:13-14 (NLT)

And, Paul specifically urges us to pray for our governmental authorities. Not only is this pleasing to God, but we are also told that by doing this we will live peaceful dignified lives.

I URGE YOU, FIRST OF ALL, TO PRAY FOR ALL PEOPLE. ASK GOD TO HELP THEM; INTERCEDE ON THEIR BEHALF, AND GIVE THANKS FOR THEM. PRAY THIS WAY FOR KINGS AND ALL WHO ARE IN AUTHORITY SO THAT WE CAN LIVE PEACEFUL AND QUIET LIVES MARKED BY GODLINESS AND DIGNITY. THIS IS GOOD AND PLEASES GOD OUR SAVIOR...
1 TIMOTHY 2:1-3 (NLT)

CONCLUSION

God holds His people together and the peoples of the earth together through His authority principle. Every child of God is expected to recognize, respect, and obey the authorities placed over him. By consistently submitting to God, and to the authority structure designed by Him, we will continue to mature in our faith, grow in our walk with Holy Spirit, and remain under God's provision and protection.

"Those who honor authority walk in great authority, and respect follows them. They have attracted the blessing of God. Those who revile authority, or lightly esteem authority, sow a harvest of disrespect and cause judgement to follow them." (Under Cover by John Bevere)

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE GOD WITHOUT FAITH. ANYONE WHO WANTS TO COME TO HIM
MUST BELIEVE THAT GOD EXISTS AND THAT HE REWARDS THOSE WHO SINCERELY SEEK HIM.
HEBREWS 11:6 (NLT)