



THE VOICE OF EVANGELISM INTERNATIONAL MINISTRIES

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WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE UNDER AUTHORITY?

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We want to take our Scripture text today from **Mathew 8:5-10**, “**And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came up to him a certain centurion, beseeching him, And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented, And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: But speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. 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, When Jesus heard it, he marveled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.**” From our scripture text we witness, as the centurion pointed out that, like Jesus, he was also “a man under authority.” The personal encounter between Jesus and the centurion suggest several lessons concerning authority and leadership. First of all effective leaders willingly admit when they need help and assistance. The Centurion faced a problem that went far beyond his limited and fragile powers. However, he was willing to go and seek outside resources. Therefore he went and enlisted the Son of God, Jesus the Lord’s Christ to deal with his situation. Spiritual leaders respond to matters of the heart and the spirit. Regretfully, most ministries and ministers today seek to appeal to the intellectualism of others. Jesus Christ, though having

far superior intellectualism never sought to appeal to the intellectualism of others, but rather He sought to touch their heart and their spirit. Jesus made this very evident the day He stood in the synagogue and read from **Isaiah chapter 61**, which we find here in **Luke 4:18**, “**The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captive, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.**” In this renowned scripture passage we see Jesus absolutely appealing to one’s heart and spirit and not their intellectualism. The apostle Paul was emphatic as well concerning his leadership and how he sought to minister to others found here in **1st Corinthians 2:4-5**, “**And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.**” We see in this passage of scripture the apostle Paul was adamantly opposed in attempting to appeal to one’s intellectualism by enticing words of man’s wisdom. Intellectualism will never be able to compete with the power of the Holy Ghost! I never fail to be amazed at the chicanery and trickery that fragile ministers seek to display while in the pulpit. The centurion, as a man of authority was moved with compassion in behalf of his suffering servant; he perceived that Jesus had the insight and the power that went beyond a

physician’s skill. When you look at your situation today are you looking to men? Men always have limited resources but God is forever unlimited. Effective leaders are able to approach others on their terms. The centurion came in faith, pleading with Jesus to help his servant. As a Roman officer, he could have ordered Jesus, or he could have offered him money, but instead, he approached the Lord in a manner that was consistent with his nature. The centurion fully and completely understood authority. Being a Roman centurion simply meant he ruled one hundred men. Effective leaders for the most part understand and accept the nature of authority. The centurion completely understood what submission was all about. When a Roman centurion issued a command, his soldiers simply obeyed. By faith he recognized Jesus had the same authority over illness. What profound insight and faith this Gentile had in the Lord’s Christ? He understood the great power that Jesus Christ possessed as a man under authority. Effective leaders invest trust in those under their authority. Great leaders display great faith in their people. Without a doubt, the centurion trusted that Jesus could do what He said he would do. Often times when approaching God’s throne we wish upon a matter more than believing in God’s power. Every one of you reading this newsletter possess a measure of understanding when it comes to authority. Every household has levels of authority as well. When authority

is not in harmony with the Word of God, error along with chaos will soon erupt! This was the very debacle in the heavenlies when Lucifer rebelled against God's authority. We are told in **Romans 13:1, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."** Christ is the supreme authority and He has ordained government that is only pursued by righteousness. Any governmental institution that does not embrace righteousness is not ordained of God. All authority is either godly or righteous or it is wicked and nefarious. Therefore, all authority will either be good or evil. Many times there is some confusion when it comes to the leadership in America. We do not submit ourselves to ungodly and wicked tyranny. Just because the law of the land declares abortion to be legal does not mean God ordained it. We only submit ourselves to godly authority that honors truth and justice. Effective leaders know how to trust those they have empowered. Trust is only as useful as the trustworthiness of the one in whom the authority is placed. Giving authority to untrustworthy people is very dangerous, to say the least. Having pastored for over twenty seven years and served on numerous boards: I have witnessed as quickly as some people are granted authority they just as quickly abuse it. There is no greater abuse than that of usurpation when it comes to authority. The old cliché is true, "give some people an inch and they will take a mile". One must be very judicial and operate in a spirit of humility when demonstrating authority. There is no greater abuse than the spiritual abuse of authority. The centurion's faith was marvelous because it was invested in the right person, Jesus. Leadership that is based upon blind faith, whether it is in others or in a system, demonstrates absolute foolishness. This is why the election process in our American government is so important when we go to the ballot booth. We just cannot give foolish

people and their ideologies unbridled authority. Regretfully, some leaders feign one thing publicly while under disguise they wield authority in utter terror. Never did Jesus wield His Holy Ghost power with any measures of pride or frivolity. Many times we rely too much on our own competence; therefore we fail to honestly assess both our strengths and our weaknesses. Self-confidence can be destructive in our personal lives. We are to never trust the flesh! The psalmist declared in **Psalm 118:8, "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man."** This scripture verse no doubt addresses the element of self-confidence, as well. Do you respond to people only in terms of "*the facts,*" or are you able to be sensitive to the feelings and often times unexpressed needs of others? God gave the human body two ears and one mouth: therefore we should do twice as much listening as we do talking. Without digressing too far from my subject, the bible addressed our hearing more than anything else. Jesus said in **Luke 4:21, "And he began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears"** (or your hearing). One of the many problems we face in this generation is the unwillingness of some individuals work with others. This is why we are obsessed with governmental shutdowns. Between the lies and the chicanery the American public is oftentimes left in the dark. Satan commits his evil acts while under the cover of darkness. For that reason Jesus said in **John 3:19, "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."** That is one of the greatest bible verses that Jesus Christ ever gave to mankind concerning evil. The word *deed* here in the Greek speaks as to how one works or performs. Are you willing to be in charge of a matter, but unwilling to submit to authority? Oftentimes people want to be up front and in leadership but they struggle with submission. God only gives authority to those who are in submission to

leadership. It is the devil who puts people into authority who then personifies rebellion. The very nature of Satan is all about rebellion rather than submission. The church is admonished in **Ephesians 5:21, "Submitting your selves one to another in the fear of God."** Even those who are in authority must sometimes submit to those in a lesser position of authority so as to keep the harmony within the body or entity. Just because we have to submit to authority does not mean we are wrong in a particular matter, but we are willing to submit for the betterment of everyone involved. There have been times as a pastor my church and pastor's council disagreed with me; therefore I submitted to godly counsel. Even though I possessed the greater authority given to me by God I understood the safety. Solomon declared in **Proverbs 11:14, "Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counselors there is safety."** Solomon then followed that wise admonition with **Proverbs 21:31, "The horse is prepared against the day of battle: but safety (or deliverance) is of the Lord."** In closing, let me ask you a very simple question, in whom and in what do you place your faith? The greatest position of one's faith should be in the immutable Word of God. God's Word never changes, my friend. I pray this simple teaching today has helped you recognize either your strengths or your weaknesses. May the Lord God of Abraham forever order your steps in His most holy Word! Again, we humbly thank you for your love and support for this ministry. It is my prayer that the God of all grace and of all comfort will keep you and your family in the coming days. Please continue to pray for our nation and our president. Also pray for this midterm election.

Serving With You All,

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