

A STUDY FOR CHURCH LEADERSHIP

***The Order of Ministry &
Authority Within the Church***



By: PASTOR PAUL M HANSSEN

There are two sides to a well-functioning, healthy, vibrant church. These two opposite sides must be firmly established and set in order if the church is to grow and if the people within the church are to thrive in their respective callings and ministries.

I have named these two opposite sides: ***The Pyramid of Authority and The Circle of Ministry***

1. THE PYRAMID AND THE CIRCLE

a. THE PYRAMID OF AUTHORITY

After the nation of Israel left Egypt and entered the phase of their journey into the wilderness, God called them “the church”.

This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us: (Acts 7:38)

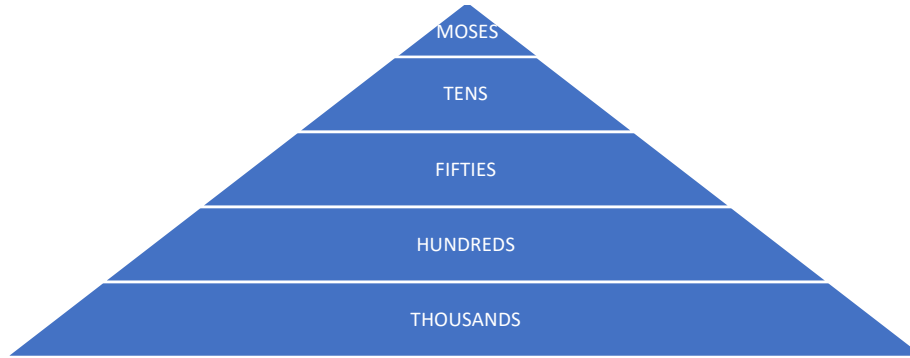
The word church means a calling out, an assembly, and to be called. God called out His people from Egypt. He redeemed them, set them free from the bondage of slavery, and set them on a path to inheritance in Canaan. But before reaching Canaan, God established His people as His Church.

The manner in which the church was set up was a prophetic picture of how God establishes the church in the New Testament Era.

Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God: And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do. Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens: (Exodus 18:19-21)

Moses was called by God as the leader, the voice, and the shepherd of Israel. Moses took his role and calling seriously and he worked so hard that he almost worked himself to death. Jethro, Moses’ father-in-law, received a revelation from God as to how the church was to be set up.

See the diagram on the following page:



The plan that God gave Jethro to give to Moses was the order of authority in the church. Moses, the voice, the teacher, the leader and shepherd of the people was to be the authority that guided the people in the ways and purpose of God. Under Moses were to be tens and under the tens were to be fifties, and under the fifties were to be hundreds, and under the hundreds were to be the thousands; hence, the order and flow of authority was to be established.

The order of church authority is the same in the New Testament Church Era.

Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. (Hebrews 13:7)

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. (Hebrews 13:17)

Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints. They of Italy salute you. (Hebrews 13:24)

To 'have the rule' means to lead, command with official authority, to be chief and governor. There are various levels and types of 'rulers' and rulership ministries within the church. These do not contradict one another, but are rather are in succession of and supportive of each other.

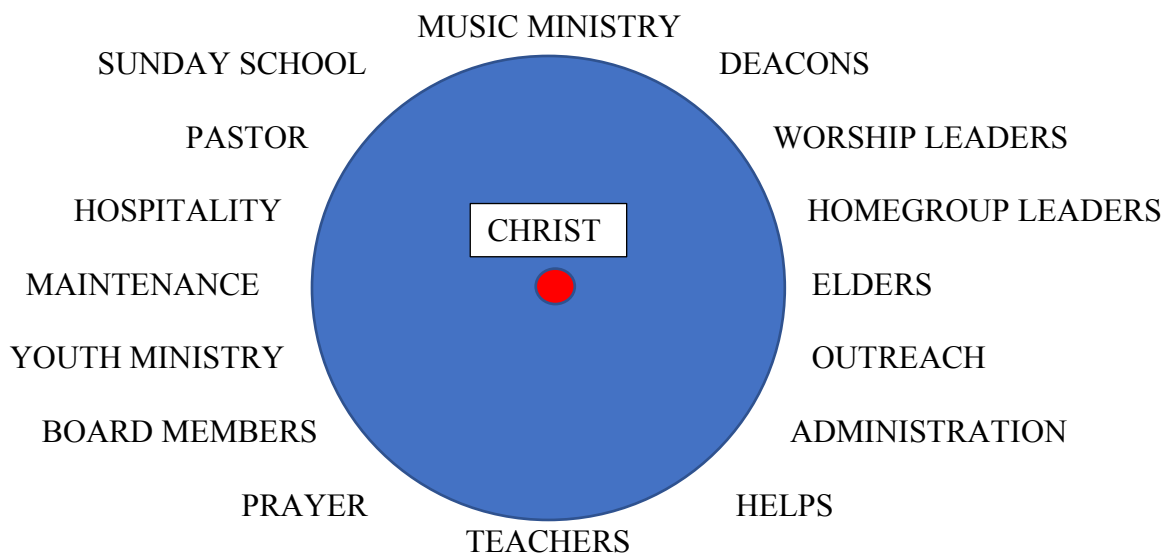
- a. The Fivefold Ministries - Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers - Ephesians 4:11
- b. Bishops - superintendent, overseer, an officer in charge of - 1 Timothy 3:1-2
- c. Elders - elder, senior, presbyter (an older minister of experience) - 1 Timothy 5:7
- d. Deacons - to run errands, an attendant, a teacher, a minister. - Philippians 1:1, 1 Tim 3:13
- e. Daily Administration - attendance, service, aid, teacher, minister, relief - Acts 6:1-6
- f. Disciples - learner, pupil - Luke 6:40, Acts 11:26, Acts 21:4
- g. Believers - trusting, faithful, true - 1 Timothy 4:12, Acts 5:14

The pyramid of ministry defines and reveals the steps of authority within the leadership of the church. However, the pyramid alone cannot sustain a healthy church. A church body with the pyramid system of authority alone in place will become an authoritarian institution where the top

of the pyramid of authority is hailed as the only authority. This system standing on its own will bring about an unhealthy system of government. Hence, God also established the ‘wheel of ministry’ to work alongside the pyramid of authority.

b. THE CIRCLE OF MINISTRY

The circle of ministry is the exact opposite to the pyramid of authority. While authority functions in a descending and ascending manner, ministry turns on an even flat plane, like a wheel revolving around a center, a pivot point, and on an axle.



Every service and function on the wheel of ministry is just as important as the other. As a matter of fact, this wheel does not work unless each of the ministries on the wheel esteem the other ministry more highly than themselves.

Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. (Philippians 2:2-3)

Each spoke of the wheel of ministry must faithfully remain in its place in order for the strength of the wheel to not be compromised. When one spoke breaks or fails the whole wheel is at risk of breaking up or at least becoming frail. If one spoke oversteps its boundary in an attempt to fulfill the purpose of another spoke, weakness is found in the wheel. This is called ‘meddling’.

The circle of ministry functions when all of the spokes are connected to the center and revolving on the axle of the wheel. Christ Jesus is the center. He is the axle. He is the reason. He is the purpose. God requires one main component of each and every spoke, or ministry.

Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. (Ephesians 5:21)

Within the pyramid of authority, we all submit to those above us in authority. However, in the wheel of ministry, every part must submit to one another whilst being centered around Christ. In other words, each and every ministry is honored, respected, and submitted to in their function, place, and purpose. The Sunday School Teacher does not infringe on the ministry of the Youth Leader, but instead submits to that ministry. The Pastor also submits to the various ministries whilst at the same maintaining vigilant oversight and authority of each ministry.

He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears. (Proverbs 26:17)

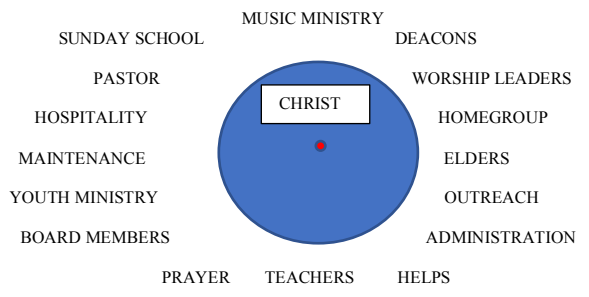
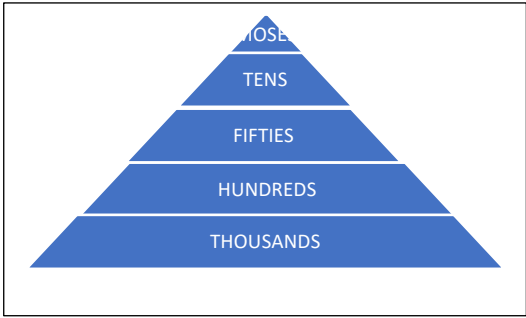
The word meddleth in Hebrew is *aw-bar*. Among many other things, *aw-bar* means to cross over, to cover, to go beyond, and enter into. It has to do with crossing boundary lines. Meddling is about interfering into that which is not your business or crossing boundary lines into others area of service. The wheel of ministry does not function while the spokes, as it were, interfere into other people's place of service. To meddle with strife means to enter into dealing with chiding, contention, and controversy. Ever seen a person grab a mad dog by the ears? That's the scene you will end up with. If there are issues to be dealt with, then the pyramid of authority kicks in. The wheel of ministry does not involve itself in another person's work, rather each and every spoke supports and submits to each other.

But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody (a meddler) in other men's matters. (1 Peter 4:15)

It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling. (Proverbs 20:3)

There is a fine line between assisting and interfering! Many times, over the years, I thought I was assisting a brother or a sister only to discover that I was actually interfering and meddling into areas and parts of their lives and ministries that I had no business meddling with. This same principle works on the wheel of ministry. There is a fine line between attempting to help someone as opposed to overstepping a boundary and claiming a position of authority. A wise man knows the difference; a fool meddles.

I recall questioning God about this years ago when He was dealing with me about these two opposite sides of church function. I asked Him how I, as the pastor and shepherd, was to submit to other ministries. The following week we were in service on a Sunday morning. A particular person was fulfilling their role in the service. Unfortunately, on that occasion they were not following the Spirit. However, the voice of the Lord spoke gently in my ears "Submit to the spoke – deal with this later." I submitted, but later I corrected. It would have been a mistake to correct on the spot; it would have been like taking a dog by the ears. Later, however, the pyramid of authority was able to be implemented and the young man learned a valuable lesson.



PERSONAL NOTES

2. THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH

Ephesians 5:23 / Colossians 1:18

The first and foremost truth that must be established within a healthy, functioning, church is the knowledge of who the Head of the church is. The head is not the pastor; it is not the board of directors; a governing body or team; rather, it is Jesus. He is the Head of the church! Without establishing this Truth from the beginning of the laying of the foundation of the church, there will ultimately be some form of power struggle along the way. Jesus must be recognized and honored as the Head of His church.

1 Corinthians 11:3

God gives us a clear picture of the order of governance in the church by giving us a picture of how His government is established in the home.



This same order must also be established in the church.



The true head in the home is not the man. Rather, it is Christ who in turn is under the Heavenly Father. If man removes himself from under his Head, Christ, the woman is no longer under the man's headship, but directly under Christ's. Man's authority is not his own; it is Christ's!

God gave us the visible example of the home and the order of authority in the home to show us the structure of His Church. In reference to the relationship of a husband and a wife and the order of authority in the home, the Apostle Paul wrote these words:

This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5:32)

The authority of a pastor and leadership of a church is not their own; it is Christ's. If the leadership operates under and through their own authority, the church is no longer under Christ's governance.

HEADSHIP AND LORDSHIP

There is a difference between Christ's Headship, and His Lordship.

HEADSHIP has to do with His governing of the corporate body, whereas His *LORDSHIP* has to do with HIS GOVERNING of the individual. In other words, what Lordship is to the individual, Headship is to the church. Headship is Christ's Lordship worked out in the corporate lives of the church, the body of Christ.

- a. **Lordship** – Lord = Hebrew AW-DONE / ADONAI = Sovereign, to rule, Controller, Owner, Master

Romans 10:9-10

Our spiritual journey begins by confessing Jesus Christ's Lordship. Salvation is experienced by *confessing Him as Lord*. As we spiritually mature, we grow under His Lordship by continuously yielding to Him as the Master of our lives and of who we are.

Matthew 7:21-23

Many will stand before the Lord on that great day and will say, "Lord, Lord." They will proceed to try and convince the Lord that they were under His Lordship and served "Him" with all their deeds. But His response to them reveals that they never knew Him or His Lordship. Their works did not originate from a desire to please Him, and neither were they under the governance of His Lordship. Rather, their works were influenced by the "self" and self-independence.

Lordship without Headship can and will ultimately lead to personal independence!

Luke 6:46

Those who call Him Lord will do as he commands.

Philippians 2:10-11

At the very end, all knees will bow and every "individual tongue" will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. This confession will not be collective, per se, but rather personal.

It must be noted however, that as believers we do not MAKE HIM LORD. He is already Lord! Our responsibility is to confess what He already is; Lord. As Lord, we surrender to His sovereignty, His rulership and His ownership. He is Lord!! However, Jesus Christ is not Lord, Master, Ruler, Owner and Sovereign of and over me, until I personally surrender to His Lordship! He is what He is, but I must accept what He is. He is who He is, but I must confess who He is. Obviously, He is not Lord and Master of me until I yield to and obey His commands. Only then is He Lord of me.

- b. **Headship** – Head = Hebrew ROSHE = Head and first in place, time & rank, Chief, End, Beginning, Priest, Ruler, Of great height, First of all.

Christ Jesus is the Head of His own church. He desires to be *first in all things*. He must be placed as number *one in all decisions*; He must be the *beginning, the end, and everything in between in all of our choices, programs, services and daily activities as a church body*. The church is His, not ours. He is the King and the Chief, the Priest and the Ruler of His church.

Colossians 1:18

Christ is Head of the body; the collective body, His church. His headship relates to the gathering of and rulership over His collective body.

Luke 20:17-18

The builders within the body (the leadership and various ministries) rejected the head. Jesus was of course speaking of the Jewish people and their priestly leaders. However, the very stone that they rejected became the Head of the church.

Matthew 16:17-18

Jesus said that He, Himself, would build His church.

Psalms 127:1

Even though Christ is the builder of His church we are nonetheless called to be builders. Unless He builds, the ones who build labor in vain. We only labor in vain when Christ is not permitted to be the chief corner stone, the Head, the King and the ruler of His own building, the church. As we labor under His authority, the church is built.

1 Corinthians 3:9-11

We are laborers *together with God*. This is a phenomenal truth! Imagine, called to labor together with the Chief Master Builder.

Colossians 2:19

Some are disconnected from the head ('not holding the head' simply means that the head is not acknowledged). The whole body can only be fitly joined together when He is positioned in His rightful place as the Head!

1 Peter 2:5

Under Christ's Headship as the Master of the blueprint and the plan, we are built *together, collectively*, as a living temple. All the living, quickened stones that have been chiseled out, as it were, under His Lordship, all fit in their proper place under His Headship. When individuals do not want to take their place under His Headship, within the collective body, it is always because they have not accepted His Lordship in their personal lives!!

Psalms 122:3

Jerusalem is compact together – built with individually cut stones prepared for each place and spot.

Ezekiel 28:14

The building blocks – the stones of fire

Romans 6:23

The quickening takes place through Jesus Christ our Lord.

PERSONAL NOTES

3. THE TRUE EVIDENCE THAT CHRIST IS HEAD OF HIS CHURCH – HOLINESS

The church that submits to Christ's Headship carries a very evident and definite mark of distinction: HOLINESS! Churches that are controlled by man and for man, do not practice sanctification and holiness. Holiness and moral purity will never be the banner flown over the church that is not set apart under God's Headship.

Ephesians 5:23-27

The end result of Christ as the Head of the church is for Him to present to Himself a ***glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing***; a church that is ***holy and without blemish***. This is the true mark and the visible evidence that Christ is the Head of His church.

We must remember, the church is His body. What kind of body does He want to maintain? A clean one! My Lord is not filthy in any manner. He demands that the body be clean, pure and set apart unto Him, for Himself. This can only happen, and will only happen, when He is the Head of the church.

1 Corinthians 6:15-20

As individuals, when we join ourselves to that which is unclean and morally defiled, we are actually subjecting the whole body of Christ to the filth that we have been united with. ***If you join yourself to a harlot, it not only defiles you, but it also defiles the whole body***. It is, therefore, imperative that each individual confess the Lordship of Christ in their personal/individual lives in order for them to be a part of the quickened body of collective believers that make up the holy, sanctified Body of Christ. His body is to be holy! Whatever you join your body to, in turn you are also joining to His body.

2 Timothy 1:9

Our calling is a holy calling.

Ephesians 1:4-5

He has chosen us before the foundation of the world that we should be holy. *True holiness is evidence that Christ is both Lord of the individual and Head of His collective body!* True holiness is evidence that God is fulfilling His purpose and will that was set in motion before time began. Ministry, power, or spiritual greatness were not the first things noted in Ephesians chapter one as being God's priority for those whom He has chosen. Rather, the first priority was for His chosen to be holy and without blame before Him in love.

When Christ is the Head of His church, there will be an emphasis on holiness, purity, sanctification and set apartness. There is never an exception to this rule!

Nobody has the right to hold a position of authority in the church who does not display Christ's Lordship in their personal lives. Nobody has the right to any form of leadership who does not display and live a set apart life unto God. It is not possible for a person to fill their role in the body with meekness, submission and surrender, without accepting Christ as the Head of His Own church.

Psalm 4:3

God has set apart the Godly for Himself.

Pure religion before God is taking care of the fatherless and widow, and remaining unspotted from the world.

James 1:27

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit (to relieve, look out for, go see) the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted (physically and morally unblemished) from the world.

It is to be noted that there is a difference between pure religion and simply being religious.

- Religion: The worship and adoration of a supreme being – God
- Religious: Bound by an order or a ceremonial devotion.

Many believers are religious, but do not have or practice *pure religion*. Many are bound by traditions and religious laws, but do not practice true adoration and worship unto God in their lives, deeds, and actions. (James 1:26) Churches, these days, consider themselves to be “free”, and yet their services cannot last longer than 1 hour or so. This is not freedom. This is operating in the bondage of a religious spirit. There are many who attend church who would be highly offended and upset if the Spirit of God began to move in a Sunday church service, hence causing the service to extend beyond the normal time slot. These people are religious, but do not practice pure religion.

Exodus 12:5-6

God’s original purpose was for all of Israel to be a Kingdom of priests, and a holy nation

1 Peter 2:9

His purpose remains intact for the New Testament Church.

4. AUTHORITY ESTABLISHED IN THE CHURCH

Authority in the church has always been, and remains more so in the present day, a controversial subject and a matter of continuous contention. Since the fall of man, authority has always been an issue. As we come to the close of this final dispensation in time, the rise of anti-authority sentiments increases, not only in the world, but also in the church in general.

Titus 1:10-11

For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

The Apostle Paul informed Titus, His son in the Lord, that there were many UNRULY, vain talkers, and deceivers who influenced the church.

Unruly means ***unsubdued, insubordinate, disobedient, not put under, unruly***. Insubordinate simply means *to be defiant of authority and disobedient*. Unfortunately, in these last and perilous days, the unruly spirit within every realm of society, including the church, is increasing. If God ordained authority is not established within the church it, too, will become infested with the Godless, insubordinate, disobedient and irreverent spirit that is wreaking havoc in the world today, as well as within the church.

(1 Thessalonians 5:14)

1 Corinthians 15:24-26

The absolute end and final result of Christ's ruling and reigning will be to totally put down, or bring under His control, all rule, all authority, and all powers. Everything that has ever risen up to oppose the authority of God will be put down and squashed under His feet. This is also true for the life of the individual believer and the collective body, the Church. When all man's rulership, authority and controlling powers are placed under Him, all strife will cease. Strife, contention, disunity, and friction within the church is always the result of conflicting authorities. The questions in all conflict are, "Who is the boss? Who will rule? Who controls?"

Before we discuss the order of authority or leadership in the church, let us first look into the scriptures and identify that there is such a thing as the establishment of authority within the church. Without God ordained authority being established in the church, the church, in general, will be a bastard church. True God ordained authority produces legitimate sons and daughters of God.

a. The Bastard Church

Hebrews 12:7-8

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.

The word bastard means *to alienate, to be of a Jewish father and a heathen mother*. In other words, a bastard is the fruit of a mixture of that which is Godly and that which is worldly. A bastard does not accept or come under authority or chastisement. Chastisement means tutorage (i.e.: education or training; disciplinary correction, chastening, instruction, and nurture). Hence, the nature of a bastard is to despise authority.

Deuteronomy 23:2

A bastard shall not enter into the congregation of the LORD; even to his tenth generation shall he not enter into the congregation of the LORD.

According to God's Moral Law, a bastard was not permitted to hold an office (hence, the meaning of entering into the congregation). The spiritual connotation for us is that those who are a mixture of the things of God and of the things of the world, and those who do not accept or come under divine authority, cannot hold a place of leadership.

This Law was given to protect the sanctity and purity of the public office and positions of authority. It was done so as not to endorse whoredom, or the mixture of seed with woman from outside the tribes of Israel. This, today, still holds great significance in the church. Spiritually, God does not want people in public office or places of ministry who are spiritual bastards. Those who mix the seed of Truth and the seed of worldly things should not hold an office of authority within the church.

This is an important issue because whatever spirit is on the leader, or those in authority, will spill over onto those who follow, or onto the congregation. Hence, God desires that those in leadership roles be first of all under God's Lordship, secondly under His Headship, and thirdly live lives that are sanctified, set apart and dedicated unto God! A bastard leadership will produce a bastard church.

Read Psalm 50:16-22. Take note especially of the following two verses:

Psalm 50:16-17

But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.

What we see here is a fruit of a spiritual bastard. God asks the question, "What have you done, or what do you do, what are your deeds, actions and works that declare my statutes that are being formed and fulfilled in your life?" In other words, God is looking for fruit. He is looking for the results of people who are walking in His statutes. His statutes are *enactments (or the process of acting something out), a custom, task, and commandment.*

Those who do not live out, or enact, God's commands, His order and requirements, but rather HATE instruction and cast His words behind them, these are bastards and not ones to be placed in positions of leadership.

Titus 1:16

They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

Many profess to know God. There are many that would have you believe that their life is in line with God's Word. However, their works deny Him. When people are disobedient, hate authority, do not display the works of a living relationship with God in their personal lives, and are abominable (meaning idolatrous, to stink), they are not suitable for a leadership role. It is our works, our mannerisms, our deeds, and our lives in general that display whether or not we truly know God.

b. When the Righteous are in Authority.

Let us first of all consider that there is, within the church, such a thing as righteous authority. The word authority in the English language means; *the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience; a person or organization having power or control in a*

particular sphere; the power to influence others because of ones recognized knowledge about something.

In Hebrew, the word authority is Raw-baw. This word means *to increase (in whatever respect): - [bring in] abundance, be in authority, bring up, enlarge, excel, make greater, grow up, heap, increase, make to multiply, nourish*. We see this word used in the following verse:

Proverbs 29:2

When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.

There is nothing worse to set off the peril and demise of a sincere believer's spiritual life than having a person in authority that is not righteous, or right, before God. But, when the people are blessed with a righteous shepherd; a person in authority who is clean, set apart and sanctified unto God, there is indeed something to rejoice about.

But when the wicked, or the morally wrong and violators of God's Moral Laws are in the position of rulership (*power, dominion, governor*), the people under his/her rule mourn – sigh and groan.

Take note of the meaning of *authority*! It means ***to increase, enlarge, cause to grow and nourish***. This is the fruit of true God given authority established in the church and administered by a righteous shepherd/leader. But, a person in a place of authority who has a wicked heart, a heart that violates God's moral principles, their authority turns to *rulership* where the leader usurps authority, dominion and power over the people.

1 Peter 5:1-3

The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

In these verses, Peter is speaking to those (the elders – shepherds – leaders) who have oversight of the flock, or the church. Oversight means to oversee, take heed, watch, and look upon. The duty of an elder, or *overseer*, was not that of rulership, but rather that of causing growth and increase through feeding and being an example. ***True God given authority is established by feeding the sheep and leading by example!*** This will be evidenced when the righteous are in authority.

Authority in the church is not obtained nor administered by the shepherds becoming lords (controllers, exercising dominion, rule) over the flock. God hates this type of established leadership.

Revelation 2:6

But this thou hast, that thou hates' the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

Revelation 2:15

So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.

In the messages to the churches in Ephesus and in Pergamos, the Lord Jesus gave stern and harsh words concerning the Nicolaitans. The word Nicolaitans means to be victorious over the people, to have charge and rule over the people, a conquest, priestly rulership.

The Nicolaitans were a sect of believers established by Nicolas. Nicolas was one of the seven deacons chosen by the Apostles in Jerusalem to oversee daily activities of the church. He was, however, a mixture of Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity. The common belief of this sect was that the body, and the outward workings of the body, had no impact on the eternal soul and spirit, hence no impact on one's eternal life. They were, therefore, encouraged in pagan practices, immoral acts of sensual and sexual nature, and the fulfilling of carnal, fleshly, and worldly appetites. The leaders of this sect used their twisted teaching as a means of control and rulership over the people. The Lord said he not only despised, but **HE HATED THE DEEDS AND DOCTRINE of the Nicolaitans.**

A true leader's deeds and doctrine will be based on the Word and Spirit of God and will be acted out in his/her life. Through their deeds, (example), and their doctrine, (teaching and feeding of the sheep), true authority and leadership is established. This only happens when the righteous are in the seat of leadership.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

The church in Thessalonica was admonished by Paul to "know" the leaders that labor among them and who are given the task of oversight, or authority. To know means ***to be aware of, consider, perceive, understand, look upon and discern.***

A true leader is "discerned" by the example he/she leads, lives and displays in and through their life and ministry. A leader who says "do as I say" is not a fit leader. This is a leader who, in most cases, is out to exert a personal and ungodly authority. But a leader who says "do as I do" is worthy of being followed when the life he or she lives is a life of portraying the example of the character and nature of Jesus.

The Apostle Paul said:

1 Corinthians 11:1

Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.

The authority of a shepherd, leader, overseer, or pastor is not his own authority. True spiritual authority is measured in a leader's life by the amount of authority he or she is under.

Matthew 8:7-10

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 marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

This Roman Centurion recognized how authority works. He understood that the authority he had over his soldiers was due to the authority that he, himself, was under. Without him being under the authority of those over him, mainly the Roman Empire, his attempt to exert authority would be futile. But, because he was under, he could also be over.

This also is the order within the realms of God's Kingdom. The amount of power, authority, oversight and rulership that a leader of God displays will be discerned, perceived and acknowledged by the authority that he, himself, is under. It is important for the shepherds of God's people to live under the authority of God in their personal lives first and foremost, and then certainly in their service and ministry to the flock of God.

c. Authority Establishes Structure & Order – The basis for God's presence

Isaiah 9:7

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

There will be no end to the continuation of and expanse of the Throne of David and His Kingdom. This, of course, is the Kingdom of God and the power of His Christ, the Anointed One (Revelation 12:10). Jesus Christ will sit upon David's Throne to rule with authority for the expansion of Eternity.

However, take note of something: "to **order** it and to **establish** it." Among other things, **to order** means *to be erect, to set up, fix, prepare, apply, appoint, render sure, confirm, direct, faithfulness, fashion, fasten, firm, be fitted, be fixed, frame, be meet, ordain, order, perfect, make provision, (be, make) ready, set aright.*

To establish means *to support, comfort, establish, hold up, refresh self, strengthen, be upheld.*

For His government, Kingdom, throne and peace, the very seat of His presence, to have an everlasting expanse, there had to be an order and an establishing that took place. The ordering and establishing was accomplished by His judgement (verdicts, charge, Law, reason, rule), and His justice (righteousness). In other words, without the ordering and establishment of His authority and Kingly rulership, there is no basis for the continuation of His government and peace. There would be no place for His presence to reside and from whence He would rule.

Order and structure form a basis, a throne as it were, for God's presence to reside in and govern from. Without order, structure and Godly authority being formed in His Kingdom, among His church and His people, His presence will not reside, grow, expand and bring peace. Quite the contrary, war, contention and strife become the norm.

Titus 2:15

These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

Paul called Titus, “My own son, after the common faith.” (Titus 1:4) Titus was sent to Crete to establish order within the churches, and to ordain leadership (elders as they are referred to), according as Paul had appointed him.

Titus chapter one and two are all about the establishment of order and structure in the church. Paul addresses elders, bishops, aged men, aged woman, young woman, young men and servants in these chapters. He then ends chapter two verse fifteen; these things SPEAK, EXHORT, AND REBUKE WITH ALL AUTHORITY.

Titus was commissioned by Paul to *rebuke with all authority*. Rebuke is a harsh word and is used frequently throughout scripture. **To rebuke means to reprove, convict, convince, tell a fault, admonish, correct and chastise.** Titus was admonished by Paul to rebuke with ALL AUTHORITY. Understanding “authority” in the light of what we have already studied causes us to realize that rebuke, even though often harsh in action, was for the purpose of correcting a fault and admonishing correction where there was a fault, or an offence against God, His Word, and His Spirit.

It has been established in this study that the overall authority in the church will be manifested by the church members who are growing, increasing and fulfilling their role in the corporate body. Authority establishes order and structure in the church, and will use the order and structure for the purpose of allowing God and His Spirit to move in the church and operate as He wishes.

In the Tabernacle of Moses, and later in the Temples that were raised in Jerusalem, order and structure were a very obvious part of the establishing and operating of the daily duties, feasts, and annual obligations that were adhered to, according to God’s Law. And yet, every aspect of structure and order was raised for the purpose of hosting, holding, projecting, and showing forth that which had no order or structure. For example:

1. THE BRAZEN ALTAR – DISPLAYED THE FIRE
2. THE BRAZEN LAVER – HELD THE WATER
3. THE GOLDEN ALTAR – CONTAINED THE INCENSE FROM WHICH ASCENDED SMOKE
4. THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK – HELD THE OIL AND FIRE IN THE LAMPS
5. THE TABLE OF SHEWBREAD – HELD AND DISPLAYED THE FRANKINCENSE ON THE BREAD
6. THE MERCY SEAT – WAS THE RESTING PLACE OF THE RESIDING GLORY OF GOD

Every one of these pieces of furniture in the “House of God” was formed and created by very specific measurements and with very detailed and specific materials as ordered by God. (**Hebrews 8:5**) Yet, each one of these items which made up the structure of the Tabernacle/Temple was useless without the fire, water, incense, smoke, oil, and glory which each item respectively hosted.

God’s presence, which knows no form, barriers, distance or space, could only rest among men when there was structure and order in place! Imagine the fire falling without an altar; water being poured without a laver; oil and fire without a candlestick, etc. All of these “no form” and yet

powerful substances that represented the power, presence, and might of God, would have run everywhere, hence causing death instead of life. God's no form glory and presence resides upon and works within the authoritative structure of that, which He, Himself, designs and sets up within His church.

Exodus 25:8

And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them.

The sanctuary, the structure, was for the purpose of God, who has no form, to dwell among His people. Without the structure, which represents and is founded upon God's authority, the fire, water, glory and presence of God would have gone everywhere and caused destruction. Whenever authoritative structure is missing in a church, the powerful gifts given to God's people to edify, become destructive rather than constructive.

God's residing, dwelling glory and presence always came and rested upon "structure". When God's commands were followed, or His subjects accepted His authority, His presence descended and rested upon the structure.

Exodus 30:34

1 Kings 8:10-11

2 Chronicles 5:14

2 Chronicles 7:1

In the New Testament Era, the same principle applies in the regards to God's Living Temple, the Church, His people. Where His authority is established and structure and order are in place, His Spirit, power and presence reside.

Ephesians 2:20-22 The church is built on the foundation of Jesus Christ to grow into a temple for the purpose of His residing presence and glory to dwell.

Ephesians 5:26-27. His church is called glorious, or full of glory. His Church is His structure under His absolute authority and Headship.

When the church is truly built on the foundation of Jesus Christ and the revelation of who He is, namely Lord, Master, Ruler, Sovereign and the Anointed One, a "structure" is formed that creates a place for the presence of God to reside.

1 Corinthians 14:40

Let all things be done decently and in order.

Paul wrote these words to the Corinthian church who were obviously having some issues in the use and operation of the gifts of the Spirit. The Apostle Paul, lays out concise and clear structure as to how to use the gifts. God gave gifts to His church for the edifying of the church. However, if there is **no order (to arrange in an orderly manner), or structure, or observance of authority**, the gifts flow all over the place and cause havoc and death, rather than bringing life and edification.

I have ministered in many churches where this very thing is a problem, just like it was with the Corinthians. These churches are full of self-proclaimed prophets, gift ministries and people who supposedly hear from God and operate accordingly. These churches are also full of confusion. Why? The problem is not because people have gifts, but rather that true order, structure and authority is not present in the church. There is no place for the fire to “safely” fall; no place for God’s presence to move from and through; no place for the Spirit and the anointing to flow from and bring healing, life and freedom. The structure and order must be present!

Spiritual gifts cannot, will not and do not edify when they are not brought under authority! Authority, structure and order is the basis for God’s Spirit to move, flow, bless and edify in the church.

2 Thessalonians 3:3-6

*But the Lord is faithful, who shall **stablish you**, and keep you from evil. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which **we command you**. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. Now **we command you**, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.*

Imagine, in this day and age telling saints that they are “commanded” to do this or that? The word command means to transmit a message, give a charge, and to enjoin (instruct, or urge).

It was common for the Apostles to command as did Jesus, Himself. To command has more impact and power behind it than to simply ask. Commanding carries a weight of authority. However, both Jesus’ and the Apostle’s commands were never self-centered or for the purpose of serving self. The commands given were instructive commands for forming a basis and establishing a structure, or a place of presence with which the Lord could be well pleased, and hence dwell among. It is in this environment that His presence longs to dwell.

Genesis 3:8

And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

Why did Adam male and female hide from the presence of the LORD? The order and structure of God’s authority had been broken down. His presence no longer had a throne in their hearts. Hence, there was nowhere within them, or within the garden, for His presence to rest upon and fellowship with them as it had previously. So, instead of welcoming God’s presence, they hid from it. Individuals, and indeed whole church groups, that do not establish order and structure within their lives and churches through true Godly authority, will run from God’s presence instead of welcoming it. Why? There is nowhere for His glory to rest, sit, reside, and move upon.

d. The Purpose for Authority in the Church

We have already seen in multiple ways what authority “is not”. Authority in the church has nothing to do with rulership, control, demands, manipulation, intimidation, domination, or force. False authority, or authority that is birthed from the human will and fallen nature of man will produce all of the above. False authority is self-serving and revolves around a person, or personality, or personal preference, but in no way is built upon the purpose of God or His Divine will.

True authority is birthed through and from the Head of the church, Christ. When He truly is the Head, God-given authority will display the true purpose of authority. In this lesson we will study the purpose, or the fruit, of Godly authority as God’s Word teaches us.

5. GODLY AUTHORITY

a. Godly Authority Edifies

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: (2 Corinthians 10:8)

Edification means: **architecture, a structure, confirmation, a building, edify.**

True authority gives the church structure, a building, as it were. None of us would feel safe at night if we did not live within a structure. Being in the open without walls, doors or a structural surrounding, leaves us vulnerable to all kinds of perils and harm. However, living within structure brings warmth, comfort, and safety – or edifying!

A child will always feel safe and secure when his/her life is given structure. But, structure is never a reality without authority.

God ordained and purposed the establishment of authority in four areas of life:

- 1. Family:** Husband—Wife—Children
(See Ephesians 5:21–6:4 and Proverbs 6:20–21.)
- 2. Government:** National leaders—Local officials—Citizens
(See I Peter 2:13–17 and Romans 13:1–5.)
- 3. Church:** Church leaders—Church members
(See Ephesians 4:11–16, Hebrews 13:17, and I Peter 5:1–11.)
- 4. Business:** Employers—Employees
(See Colossians 3:22–4:1 and I Peter 2:18.)

Imagine any, and indeed all of these establishments operating without any sense of authority, or structure. The result is always chaos. Yet, the average Christian accepts the display of authority in the home, in government, and in the workplace. But when it comes to the church, true structure, edifying, or authority is often frowned upon and shunned.

A church which is established and operates under God given authority is edified. We think of edification as being some form of hairy, fairy consolation of the flesh. This could not be further from the Truth. Edification is building, and building cannot be accomplished without structure.

Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the power which the Lord hath given me to edification, and not to destruction. (2 Corinthians 13:10)

The five-fold ministry was given to the church for, among other things, edification.

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: (Ephesians 4:11-12)

Godly authority edifies! It builds structure which then creates safety, comfort, and rest.

b. Godly Authority Gives Warning

Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. (1 Thessalonians 5:14)

To warn means; **to put in mind, to caution or reprove gently, admonish, call attention to, and advise.**

Giving a warning is often not well received by the recipient. Personally, I have had many, somewhat harsh responses, from those to whom warning was given. Many take warnings as reproof, which in some cases it is a more gentle form of reproof. **However, warning from a person in authority is evidence of genuine love, care and concern.** A parent would never allow his/her child to run towards a cliff without giving warning; or place their hand on a hot stove without giving warning. Warning is a preventative action!

Warning is an aspect of ministry that God esteems highly necessary to be performed and accomplished by His servants whom He has placed in authority. **Warning is a prophetic word, hence inspired by the Spirit of God.** When warning is not given by God's servants as He has commanded, God does and will hold His servant in contempt.

When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall

die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul. (Ezekiel 3:18-21)

We can see the seriousness of giving warning as far as God is concerned. When God inspires His servants, the leaders in authority, to give warning and they don't give the warning, God holds His servants responsible. Pastors and spiritual leaders often shun from giving warning because often there is no evidence or visible sign of what God is warning about. The prophets of old were ridiculed, mocked, scorned, and killed because of prophetic warnings that were not received well by the nation. NOTHING HAS CHANGED!

Noah warned his generation of the coming flood and he was considered a mad man. Why? It had never rained before. There was no evidence of what he was stating. (Gen. 6 & 7, 2 Pet.2:5) This is often the case. Hence, warning is very much an inspired, prophetic word. Prophets often give warning. As a matter of fact, one of the main ministries of a prophet is that of warning.

The scriptures are full of examples of God, through His servants, giving His people warning.

Genesis 19:12-13 Lot and his family were warned about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Genesis 41:28-32 God warned the Pharaoh in Joseph's day of the seven years of plenty and the following seven years of draught.

Deuteronomy 11:16-17 Israel was warned about serving other Gods.

Jonah 3:4-10 The city of Nineveh was warned of God's judgement upon them.

Galatians 5:19-21 The Galatian church was warned about the results of the works of the flesh.

1 Peter 5:8 Peter warned of the devil going about as a lion seeking whom he may devour. This warning reminds me of what God told Adam in regards to dressing and keeping the garden (**Genesis 2:15**) because there was a prowler on the loose.

This list could contain, literally, hundreds of examples of warnings given throughout God's Word. **Yet, God's people are quick to act in the flesh and slow to react to warning!**

People in this generation are no different than those from past generations. They will listen to a warning if there is a "sign", or some form of "evidence" given. The Jews proclaimed that they would not listen to the words of Jesus without a sign. But Jesus told them that they would receive no sign other than the sign of His death and resurrection. (Matthew 12:39-40)

When the prophets of old warned nations, tribes, families or individuals, it was always done with passion, intensity, emotion, and as in Jeremiahs case, with tears. In the New Testament, the Apostle Paul also warned with tears.

Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. (Acts 20:31)

The motive behind the warning, along with the positions of the minister's heart, is of vital importance to the recipient. When the source of warning is from a place of anger, self-serving purpose, or ill motive, **warning crosses a line and becomes a threat.** This is where spiritual leaders need to use caution and always examine their own hearts. Giving threats is an abuse of authority and power and has no place in the Kingdom of God.

And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him. (Ephesians 6:9)

There is a huge difference between a warning and a threat. Remember, warning means to **put in mind, to caution or reprove gently, admonish, call attention to, and advise. It also means give someone forceful or cautionary advice about their actions or conduct.**

To threaten, on the other hand, means: **a statement of an intention to inflict pain, injury, damage, or other hostile action on someone in retribution for something done or not done.** Unfortunately, threats are common place within the church today as leaders try to hold on to power and hence use intimidating threats, and manipulation, to dominate the congregants. This is ungodly and has no place in God's Kingdom.

Threats being displayed in a church setting is not something only witnessed from the leader toward the saint, but is also a form of control that is used by saints towards leadership. Church members also use all forms of tactics, both passive and aggressive, to manipulate leadership, and hence the whole church, for the purpose of moving the church in a certain direction or to operate in a certain way. (This is a topic for a later date. But be aware of such tactics and always stand on the side of pure Truth. Truth always wins!) Threats are always self-serving and never stand on the side of Truth, God, or Godliness!

And now I make one more appeal, my dear brothers and sisters. Watch out for people who cause divisions and upset people's faith by teaching things contrary to what you have been taught. Stay away from them. Such people are not serving Christ our Lord; they are serving their own personal interests. By smooth talk and glowing words they deceive innocent people. (Romans 16:17-18) NLT

c. Godly Authority Reminds

If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. (1 Timothy 4:6)

d. Godly Authority Commands

These things command and teach. (1 Timothy 4:11)

The word “command” is certainly not a popular word in the church. In today’s culture, this word carries a domineering, negative, and harsh connotation. Command means *to transmit a message, to enjoin, (give in) charge, give a command (-ment), and declare*. It also means *to give and authoritative order*.

Commanding and teaching go hand in hand! Spiritual leaders cannot command without teaching and laying out purpose and reason for the command.

Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the LORD your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it: (Deuteronomy 6:1)

True commands must be built on the foundation of true doctrine and the teaching of the Word of God. When commands are given that are not founded on the principles of Truth, we should arm ourselves and be aware. This is a trap that leads to bondage, impure religion, and legalism. Commands built on the teaching of the Truth bring life and true spiritual freedom in the Spirit.

Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. (Matthew 15:7-9)

There are many church groups who teach man’s commandments as doctrines. These are people who live a surface Christianity, who offer outward manifestations of religion, but their heart is not involved in their own spiritual lives.

True, Godly authority will not command without the teaching of scripture.

e. Godly Authority Teaches

These things command and teach. (1 Timothy 4:11)

(1 Timothy 5:17 Labor in Word and doctrine / 2 Timothy 4:2 Preach / 1 Peter 5:2 Feed the Flock)

f. Godly Authority Admonishes

And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; (1 Thessalonians 5:12)

g. Godly authority reproves, rebukes & exhorts

Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. (2 Timothy 4:2)

h. Godly authority watches over souls

Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you. (Hebrews 13:17)

The bottom line, basis and reason for all spiritual authority is for the watching over the souls of the believers. Never, ever, should authority be asserted for personal reasons, for a self-centered purpose, or to enforce dominance and rulership over God's people. The purpose for using Godly authority should be for God's will to be established, enforced and fulfilled.

PERSONAL NOTES

PERSONAL NOTES

PERSONAL NOTES