

On The Subject of Authority

1. Given to man, by God, for a purpose: Gen. 1:26-29.
2. Abdicated by man, with a result of enslavement, subjection to sin, death, and Satan: Rom. 5-6, Heb. 2:14-16.
 - 2A. The cases of sin in Jacob's four eldest sons: Gen. 34:24-31, 35:22, 38:1-26, 49:1-12. (Note that specific sins of Jacob's sons are mentioned only in connection with the first four, and the account of Judah's sin, not a sin against his father, does not disqualify his blessing)
3. Sought by Satan that he might exceed God: Gen. 3, Isa. 14, Luke 4:5-7, Rev. 12-13.
 - 3A. Obedience versus rebellion, submission to authority or rejection of it: I Samuel 15:22-24, Num. 14:1-9, Joshua 22, Deut. 21:18-21.
 - 3B. Craving power/authority in itself is an error of pride: 1 Timothy 3:6, 1 Pet. 5:3, Luke 10:19-20.
4. Reclaimed by Jesus, son of God, son of Man, the new Adam (man): Heb. 2:5-16, 1 Cor. 15:42-58.
 - 4A. The crucial question of Jesus' ministry: Matt. 7:29, 8:9, 21:23-32, Mark 13:34, John 5:27. (And of John's, John 1:19-28, Matt. 3:11-12, Matt. 21:24-27; and of the apostles' among the Jews, Acts 4:7, 5:28-29)
5. Set in order through the revelation of the church: Eph. 3:10-11, 1 Tim. 3:14-15.
 - 5A. All human beings have authority of some kind: Gen. 1:26, Gen. 3:16, 1 Pet. 3:1-7, Eph. 6:1-9.
 - 5B. All Christians have and will have spiritual authority: 1 Cor. 6:1-4, Gal. 4:1-7, 1 Thess. 5:14-15, Rev. 2:26-28.
 - 5C. All human beings are subject to some authority: see scriptures under 5A, Rom. 13:1, Tit. 3:1, Eph. 5:24, 1 Pet. 5:5, Heb. 13:17.
6. Given by Jesus (God) in proportion to responsibility: Luke 9:1-2, Acts 1:6-9, 1 Cor. 12:27-31.
 - 6A. Within the church each responsibility carries with it the necessary authority for achievement: 1 Tim. 5:17-22, Acts 6:1-6, Titus 1:9, 2:1-10, 2:15, Heb. 13:20-21.
 - 6B. Specific roles carry specific authority, and specific limitations: 1 Pet. 5:1-4, 1 Tim. 2:12, 1 Tim. 5:14, Tit. 2:15.

Consider: Two grave errors men commonly fall into are: 1) rebellion against authority, and 2) abuse of authority. The Christian, especially the maturing Christian leader, must seriously consider the spiritual chain of authority and their own place in that chain, their own responsibility to submit to others and to exercise authority appropriately.