

## Fisher's Foundations KINGDOM AUTHORITY

### Lesson 11

#### THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS CLASS:

Is to impart to every student a full comprehension of, distinct awareness of, and a profound respect for all spiritual authority, no matter where it is to be found. We want you to trust God more and have the balanced biblical perspective involved in stewarding and lovingly exercising God's power. We want to practically help you enhance your relationships with all those in authority over you. It's our prayer that you will learn what to do from non-abusive leaders and also learn what *not to do* from the abusive leaders you might find... and not follow the later type of leader!

**“Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time” [1 Peter 5:5-6].**

#### INTRO:

If you will disobey Authority and go cheat on a test in school, later on you will also cheat in business. If you'll rebel and cheat at football practice, later on you will also cheat in the game. If you'll rebel and commit sexual sin with your girlfriend or even cheat on her, later on you will also go cheat on your wife. Christian, if you will rebel and be yoked with a non-Christian girlfriend or boyfriend, you would also be the one who would get yoked together with a non-Christian spouse in marriage ...and then suffer the consequences. God wants you to submit to the Authority of His Word and be faithful in all the small and large things. Obedience is important! The highest throne of power is firmly established on Authority. God's Word says in Romans 13, that God alone is Authority in all things, and that all the authorities on the earth are instituted by Him. Therefore, it goes without saying that we as His servants—by our own volition and a right heart attitude—are to quickly obey God's Authority wherever we might encounter it. But we also need to use our heads, eyes and Bibles in this to make sure that it is God's Word that we are obeying! Lots of preachers and Christians today are quick to tell you what you must do to glorify God ...without having any scriptural basis for what they say. You need to pray about that and obey God. There are different good laws in different geographical locations. So wherever you go on this planet, be very quick to recognize those in authority around you. Be quick to pray, to learn which laws don't go against the Bible in that locale and then be quick to submit to those in authority and to those laws. Why would a non-rebellious God lead you there to rebel against His Authority?

#### I. REBELLION DEMOTED THE ENEMY TO THE LOWEST PLACE

- A. When God created the world, we are told that He examined it and declared that it *"was good"* (Genesis 1:31). This means that even the angelic world did not have evil angels or demons in it at that time. But between Genesis 1:31 and Genesis 3:1 a beautiful angel named, Lucifer (who was possibly a high ranking arch-angel like Gabriel or Michael or maybe even higher—possibly the worship leader of heaven) rebelled in heaven and became the evil troubler of all mankind, Satan. Lucifer, which means "shining one or star of the morning" a.k.a. "the guardian cherub" became Satan when he overreached God's authority, competed with God in usurping His Authority, and became an adversary of God: thus, prideful rebellion was the cause of the devils fall. The devil, an intelligent "spirit-being" with a distinct personality did something very stupid when he reached up to grasp for authority for himself and God put him down. Jesus Christ on the other hand, was never party to a rebellion. Christ came down and submitted to divine and earthly authority and God put him up. Never forget, the way up in the Kingdom is down and the way down in the Kingdom is to put yourself up.

In Genesis chapter three, we find that Satan, in the form of a serpent, was tempting Eve to sin. Therefore, sometime between the events of Genesis one and Genesis three, this big rebellion in the angelic world must have taken place, with many angels turning against God and becoming evil. This rebellion was led by Satan himself.

**"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! For you have said in your heart: I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High. Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit" (Isaiah 14:12-15).**

The rebellious, fallen angels are now, more than likely, the demons that currently do Satan's bidding. As a result, Satan is a fallen, but powerful spirit being with a well-organized network of demon powers to help him accomplish his selfish purposes. Those purposes, according to Jesus, are to **"steal, kill, and destroy"** (John 10:10). That's the bad news. The Good News is that two-thirds of the angels are on the side of true Christians! As the prophet Elisha said to his servant, **"Don't be afraid. Those who are with us are more than those who are with them"** (2 Kings 6:16). As Christians, we have an even greater asset than the majority of angels on our side: Jesus Christ, who conquered Satan at the cross of Calvary, is also on our side!

- B. According to Matthew 6:13, (**"For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."**), the eternal Kingdom and all that goes with it, including the spiritual authority, belong to God alone.
1. The unseen controversy of the universe is basically centered on who shall have authority. In the local church that is never to be a controversy!
  2. We are not to obey mere man, rather God's authority in the man that God has set-in over us as our leader.
  3. God has purposed to manifest His authority to the world through the Church, rather than through the world's system. The Church is the influencing factor in the world that our highest Authority (Jesus Christ) left us.
  4. The greatest expectation of God on man is not for Him to bear the cross, to serve, give offerings, or sacrifice – with an appearance of denying himself. The greatest mandate is for him to obey authority!

The Prophet Samuel told Saul that obedience is better than sacrifice. Why? Because even in sacrifice there can be an element of self-will. Obedience alone is the factor that is absolutely honoring to God, for it alone makes the will of God its center. As we look at our Lord praying in the garden of Gethsemane, we learn that in serving the Father, we are not called to choose self-denial or sacrifice ahead of simply fulfilling God's revealed will.

**THERE ARE ONLY TWO MAIN PRINCIPLES THAT ARE AT WORK IN THE UNIVERSE:**

1. **There is the godly, humble, submissive, serving principle of obedience to divine authority and...**
2. **The prideful, selfishly ambitious, usurping, position grasping, self-serving/exalting principle of satanic rebellion.**

Two contrary entities are clashing BIG TIME in the unseen world around us. Everyone, yes all men and women, will choose to align themselves with either one or the other, because even not choosing is to choose. Please don't be on the wrong side by default.

Please do choose Christ and serve Him on His terms rather than on your own. Satan rejoices when the rebellious-saved or the rebellious-unsaved tries to propagate God's Kingdom or principles in the earth, because that person is operating according to his satanic principle.

It's not advantageous for you to do anything according to the satanic principle. And the privilege of service must never be based on talent or personality; rather it is to be based on how the servant relates to God's authority.

## **II. OLD TESTAMENT CASES OF REBELION**

**Read:** Genesis 2:16, 17; 3:1-6; Romans 5:19

- A. Since the fall of Adam, disorder has prevailed in the universe. Everyone thinks he is able to distinguish good from evil and to judge what is right or wrong. But one man's words are as good as another's generally, so there is no real authority except from God, and this authority He has clearly revealed to us in His Word.
  - B. Therefore, whenever a person sins against God's authority, whether it be direct or delegated authority, he sins against God. All born again believers must learn to obey authority in every realm of life, as well as in the Church where Jesus Christ is Head. All their works must originate with God and not with themselves.
1. Man's fall was due to man's rebellion. In the Garden of Eden God placed Adam and Eve under authority in order that they might learn obedience.
  2. All works are to be done in obedience to God's Word and Spirit (which are always in agreement with each other). But many works by so called Christians today are accomplished out of self. These works are allegedly done in the Name of Jesus Christ, and then when some are not and the pretence is uncovered, reproach is leveled at the Body of Christ.
  3. Obedience must be recovered. Since Adam's blunder, disorder has prevailed in the universe. Many are a law unto themselves – they think they are an authority on distinguishing between right and wrong. All divisions and disruptions that are currently within the Church of Jesus Christ, stem from pride that has led to at least one form of satanic rebellion. By the Spirit, we must restore obedience to recover authority in the Church.

4. There is no unity in the Body without the establishing of authority from the Head. The Word of God alone is our point of reference!
5. There is a necessity for every Christian to learn both how to be under authority and in authority. A church suffers because of its many constituents who do not know how to submit, but she is also damaged through some that don't know how to balance love and truth in a place of authority. Unity is important, but commitment to truth is more important! It's imperative that leaders love saints and sinners without compromising the truth.

### III. TRUE SERVICE MUST BE INITIATED BY GOD—COORDINATED UNDER HIS AUTHORITY

**Read:** Genesis 9:20-27; Leviticus 10:1-2; Numbers 12; 16:1-50

**God doesn't make leaders He makes servants, and servants that prove themselves faithful become leaders bearing His authority.**

- A. Everyone who wishes to serve the Lord acceptably needs to meet authority, because no one can please God or properly serve Him with an attitude of, or M.O. of lawlessness.
  1. Whenever man touches God's delegated authority in a negative way, he's dealing with God in a wrong way. Sinning against delegated authority is sinning against God.
  2. Spiritual authority is not something one can attain by effort; rather, it is entrusted by God to whomever He chooses. To protect people from authoritative abuse is good. To harshly speak against God-chosen representatives is rebellion and very dangerous.
  3. We are not expected to follow people in authority blindly, but we are expected to obey those in authority if what they are saying is in agreement with the Word of God. **“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good”** [1Thessalonians 5:21 kjv]. Check their message out in the light of God's Word. Judge with righteous judgment, not according to the flesh. Obey your leaders short of sin.
  4. Failure by a delegated authority always tests the obedience of their underlings. Although Noah's conduct was wrong, his failure became a major test that revealed who was obedient and who was rebellious.

***“The simple believes every word, but the prudent considers well”*** (Proverbs 14:15). People have been likened to unintelligent sheep that just follow each other anywhere, even into danger. Carnal, worldly and deceived Christians regularly urge others, *“Come on after me. It’s not baa-aa-aaaad.”* But Jesus never said follow My people. He said ***“follow Me.”***

I like what the Bible says about the Bereans though, ***“Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the Message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true”*** [Acts 17:11 NIV]. The Bereans didn’t ever hear high-profile Paul protest, *“Hey, wait a minute brother! Are you actually questioning thee ‘haaah-revelatory unction of the Lord’ that God gave me while I was in a trance and under the anointing ...when I was deep in a season of prayer?”* No way! Paul and Silas were very happy to have their message examined—yes, to have their Message carefully checked out against the Scriptures. And you should feel the same way!

Like they did, we too would do well to heed Scripture's repeated warnings to be on guard against false teachings (e.g., Romans 16:17-18; cf. 1 Timothy 1:3-4; 4:16; 2 Timothy 1:13-14; Titus 1:9; 2:1), and to point these clear warnings out to other believers (2 Timothy 4:6). Most of what false teachers (inside the Church and outside of it) teach is true. Think about it... otherwise who would swallow it?

Teachers aren’t to ignore the warning of Paul: ***“that in us you might learn not to exceed what is written....”*** [1 Corinthians 4:6 nas]. ***“Do not go beyond what is written”*** [niv]. ***“that ye might learn... not to think of men*** (celebrity preachers, singers etc) ***above that which is written”*** [kjv—emphasis mine] ***“Follow only what is written in the Scriptures”*** [ncv].

The devil just loves it when we act on our emotions, or when we get drawn into a conflict and start reacting in the flesh. That’s when Mr. Lu-Cifer will eat our lunch! But God always wants us to think things through first. I’m sure you’ve seen statements in the Bible like, ***“These things you did not consider”*** [Isaiah 47:7], or ***“She did not consider her future. Therefore she has fallen astonishingly; she has no comforter”*** [Lamentations 1:9]. We need to carefully look at and weigh all things, and pre-think about the consequences of our choices. Two times in Haggai we read, ***“Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Consider your ways!’”*** [1:5+7]. ***“They refused to obey, and they were not mindful of Your wonders that You did among them”*** [Nehemiah 9:17].

B. Nadab and Abihu, the preacher-kid's, were burned-out in the ministry.

1. God never meant for Nadab or Abihu to serve independently; He placed them under the delegated authority of Aaron, their father who was the high priest.

2. When Nadab and Abihu ventured to offer sacrifices by themselves apart from Aaron's directive, they were offering strange fire.
3. What's up with strange fire? Strange fire is about service without an order – service without obedience to authority. While true service is initiated by God, strange fire originates from man.
4. Offering strange fire does not require knowing the will of God or obeying the authority of God.

C. God's work is always to be the coordination of authority, with order.

D. There is a holy fire of revival; a hot fervor, an ardor of spiritual passion that is meant to burn in us Christians as this zeal of the Lord is appropriated by faith. But anyone who presumptuously says about leadership, "Hey, if he can, I can too. In God's army, we are equal with that person in spiritual rank and in every way." Listen, that type of attitude is out of order. Are we to compare and compete or be in a state presumption or rebellion? This sort of ministry with this kind of self-will, pride and rebellious mind-set will basically change the nature of a fire so to speak. And this attitude is all too common with many so called Christians today. Our nation has become a nation where lawlessness is lauded even in the ministry. Our nation needs to turn back to God in obedient humility today. With no repentance forthcoming, that type of competitive, arrogant attitude in the church could bring down the fire of God's judgment!

1. If a person rebelliously speaks against representative authority, they could incur divine wrath. Miriam thought she could reprimand her brother on the basis of their family relationship, but when she slandered Moses and challenged his position, she wrongly touched upon the work of God. Rebellious words are still serious! They ascend to heaven and are heard by the Lord. We must guard our hearts and be very cautious, because some preachers who are given to inordinate charisma and weirdness today (not just on TV) try to scare people into mindless obedience for their own financial advantage, quoting passages about Miriam's sin etc. The Shepherding Movement (a.k.a. "Discipleship Movement" led by Bob Mumford, Derek Prince, Charles Simpson and Don Basham) in the 1970's was an influential and controversial movement but it was cultic and whacked, because the leaders were simply abusing authority so as to control people in all areas of their lives... like where the devotee could buy a home, or who they would date, or who they would marry or be friends with, **That's not at all what we want!**
2. God and His (sound, born again) leaders who have been placed in positions of delegated authority are inseparable with Him; therefore, no one can reject God's representative authority with one hand and receive God's grace with the other hand. Frequently man's rebellion forces the judicial hand of the Lord.
3. The eyes of the disobedient see the barrenness of the wilderness, while eyes of faith see the better promise, which lies ahead. The obedient follow the Lord by faith, not reason or sight. Authority is not a matter of outside instruction from man's word, but of inward illumination from God's Word.

Through Christ, our faith should produce a positive influence in the world. Rebellion is contagious as a negative influence in the world. As demonstrated in Numbers 16:1-50, the attitude of rebellion infects many weak people. God hates rebellion because it is a principle of death coming from Satan. Today it would seem that the norm is rebellion and promiscuity. If it's good it's called bad, If it's bad, it's called good. If you want to rebel in a healthy way today, I would say this: ***LIVE A GODLY LIFE! LIVE HOLY, LIVE IN A RIGHTEOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS! MAKE HIM YOUR VERY BEST FRIEND! MAKE COMMITTED GROWING CHRISTIANS YOUR CLOSE FRIENDS. GROW IN THE GRACE AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORD!***

#### IV. JESUS OBEYED HIS FATHER'S COMMAND

In the Godhead, authority is represented by the Father, but it could not be established without obedience. God created angels and men to obey, but both rebelled. So, perfect accord was reached within the Godhead, and that authority would be properly responded to by the obedience of the Son.

**Read:** Philippians 2:5-11; Hebrews 5:7-9

Q&A 1. Who represents authority in the Godhead?

Q&A 2. Who represents obedience?

Q&A 3. What does authority mean to you?

A. While Jesus was upon the earth, He submitted to God the Father in obedience, even though He was co-equal with His Father (see John 14:28).

1. God exalts whoever humbles himself in Christ.
2. If you are filled with Christ, you should be filled with humble obedience ...not a mere appearance of such.
3. Through our obedience to God's direct will, we will receive crowns as rewards.
4. Though we are not to desire suffering, we can learn obedience through suffering (Hebrews 5:8). God saved you so you could obey His will and be blessed.

#### V. HOW GOD ESTABLISHES HIS KINGDOM

A. Our Lord Jesus passed through all kinds of sufferings, but He always exhibited a beautiful attitude of humble obedience. He became the Source of our eternal salvation by such obedience and it was all for the sake of God's Kingdom.

**Read:** Hebrews 5:8-9; Acts 5:32; Romans 10:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; 1 Peter 1:22

1. Though the enemy and his captives continually violate God's authority through rebellion, God will set up His Kingdom. The Gospel call is manifold, it calls men to enter the Kingdom by receiving eternal life, and then it calls those who do, to remain in, and build that Kingdom through obedience, love, and the Word of God.
2. We must obey the authorities God has established wherever we encounter them. But if the Church refuses to accept God's authority,

God has no way to broaden His Kingdom, for God's strategy for doing this is first in His Son, Jesus Christ, then in His local churches, and lastly, in the whole world through His Church international. It is spread only through the passionately obedient Church.

**You can only expect people under you to submit to your authority if you too remain under authority.**

3. God has ordained the Church to be the vanguard of His Kingdom. He calls us not only to receive His life through faith, but also to maintain His authority through on-going obedience. Many in the church are able to hearken to one certain human boss or maybe two, but this shows that they have not received a full understanding of the biblical concept of authority, for it is authority we must obey – not merely a man.

## **VI. ALL MEN SHOULD OBEY DELEGATED AUTHORITY**

**"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" [Matthew 8:9].**

- A. God has set up His authority in the spiritual realm, in his earth, in the home, and in the local church. As we discover how important it is to honor the authority of the Lord in our personal lives, other people will respect the Lord's authority in us. God's Kingdom literally incurs loss if His delegated authorities misrepresent Him before others. He still boldly establishes authority though. And since God is not afraid to establish authority in the earth, we shouldn't be afraid to obey those in authority on the earth. If we are afraid to obey a decent authoritative directive, this is an affront to God. It is impossible to bypass delegated authority and remain directly subject to divine authority, for God Himself will not supersede delegated authority. Only when the directive of delegated authority distinctly violates Scripture can we be allowed to say, **"We must obey God rather than men."**
1. People encounter the perfect God, wherever they are confronted by authority in imperfect man. But at the same time people themselves never become Gods like Mormons and some TV preachers teach.

**"Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good" [1 Peter 2:13-14].**

**“Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble. Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time” (1 Peter 5:5-6).**

2. In Mark 12:1-9 the "foolish tenants" have to have the presence of the owner before they are willing to obey authority.
  3. If you obey God's direct Authority 100% only and no delegated authorities on earth who are not violating God's Word, in a sense you are obeying 50% of God's total Authority. Things will go bad for you fast!
  4. On the Damascus Road the influential, religious Saul met the Lord and cried out, "What shall I do, Lord?" Though Paul quickly put himself under the direct authority of the Lord, God immediately tested the veracity of this verbiage, temporarily shifting Paul under the "no-name," delegated authority on assignment, Ananias.
  5. No one should expect to obtain revelatory light directly from the Lord in heaven if they refuse to receive God's light of illumination from simply reading God's Word or from carefully listening to His delegated authorities rightly dividing the written Word.
- B. When Jesus walked this earth, He intelligently subjected Himself under the flawed governing authorities.
1. The Bible verifies that God put His people under delegated authority in, Exodus 22:28, for it states, "**Do not blaspheme God or curse the ruler of your people.**" We are not even to revile or despise a human spiritual authority that has fallen in sin. We are to pray diligently for them.
  2. The basic principle of all God's laws is to punish evil and to reward the obedient. We should pray for our government officials that they will judge according to the righteousness of God, revealed in His Word. One day when the Antichrist comes to rule, he will distort and pervert the system of law, calling good as bad and bad as good.

**“Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor” (Romans 13:1-7).**

## VII. AUTHORITIES HAVE BEEN INSTITUTED IN THE FAMILY AND THE WORK PLACE

- A. The husband represents Christ and the wife represents the Church in the marriage relationship.
- B. First Peter 3:1 tells us that if the woman's husband is an unbeliever, he may be won to Christ by the wordless witness of the well behaving wife.
- C. The only commandment in the Ten Commandments that comes with a promise is: "**Obey your parents.**"

**"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything"** (Ephesians 5:22-24).

**"Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother,' which is the first commandment with promise: that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth. And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men"** (Ephesians 6:1-7).

- D. God has ordained that employees (servants) should obey their employers (masters). God wants employees working diligently as unto the Lord, rather than flapping their gums to the impediment of the quality of their work at the employer's expense. Why? That's the best witness to give on the job.

**"Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed"** (1 Timothy 6:1).

**"Exhort bondservants to be obedient to their own masters, to be well pleasing in all things, not answering back, not pilfering, but showing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things"** (Titus 2:9-10).

## VI. BECAUSE THE HEAD HAS POWER, THE BODY WILL HAVE POWER. BE MOTIVATED TO OBEY!

*"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All power in heaven and on earth is given to me. So go..."* [Matthew 28:18, 19].

*"...upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high"* [Hebrews 1:3].

*"...For Yours is the Kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen"* [Matthew 6:13].

*"Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but stay in the city, until you are clothed with power from on high"* [Luke 24:49].

*"God has not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind"* [2 Timothy 1:7].

1. On earth, the fullest expression of God's authority is found with His believers in the local church, Christ's Body. Jesus is the source of authority, as the Head. The members of the body, each with its special function, are partakers of this authority. A healthy physical body is designed to move gracefully at the slightest impulse that is communicated from the head, and that's how we are to be.

### EVERY BELIEVER HAS AUTHORITY (POWER) OVER THE DEVIL AS THEY LIVE IN SUBMISSION TO GOD

**Read:** 1 Corinthians 12:12-21; Matthew 6:26 & 62-64; 18:15-18

2. In our physical bodies some of the impulses and movements are conscious while others are automatic. The hand picks up a shoe at the command of the head, while the heart simply beats automatically, knowing the will of the head. But there is a unity and positive coordination in the body. Yes, God has graciously gifted inside of you voluntary muscles (which are connected to your brain) and involuntary muscles (i.e., heart, lungs). I find it interesting that those muscles, in which your life literally depends, God doesn't allow in your control and yet He is under no obligation to go on letting you inhale your next breath, especially when you're sinning (rebellious) against Him.
  - A. As the members obey the Head, the body is blessed! The kind of obedience that best satisfies God is demonstrated by the Body's response to its Head. God will remain at work in His people until the relationship between Christ and the Church, fits the pattern exactly as the relationship between God and His Christ. We are destined to be one.
  - B. Not only is the Body subject to the head; in addition, its various members help one another, submitting to one another in love for the common good.
  - C. In the body, the function of each member is limited. Eyes see, feet walk or run, ears hear, etc. We are to be interdependent, not rejecting the complimenting functions of other members, for the function itself of each member constitutes its authority.

- D. God wants to teach us how to be team players, more than super-stars. It is impossible to make each member a whole body; therefore, we must be taught how to righteously stand in our position of being one member. We must learn to appreciate and accept the workings and supply of other members around us. It only creates a poverty in both the individual and the corporate Body of Christ when one desires to have everything in himself alone.
- E. Insubordination brings poverty, as well, but submitting to authority and other peer level members brings in eternal riches.
- F. God never uses authority to oppress, hurt, or trouble us, rather He uses it to bless, bring order, provide for the weak and to replenish our under-equipped state.
- G. God works thoroughly in preparing the life of His leader so He may give that person to you as a humble, servant authority – in order that you may learn obedience and possess what you've never had before.
- H. When God raises up the brothers and sisters in the church who are more advanced spiritually, this could be a test for some, but it enables you to possess their wealth without your having to go through their painful experiences.
- I. All those obedient in Jesus can exercise God's power in ministry, regardless of their positions, titles and levels of spiritual rank in the Church. Whoever is gifted and has heard from the Word has a valid ministry, and whoever has a ministry has spiritual authority. We all are called to be ministers of reconciliation with the Word of reconciliation.

## IX. MAN'S REBELLION WILL MANIFEST IF THAT IS WHAT IS IN HIS HEART

1. Words are the outlet of the heart. Jesus said, "**...out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks**" [Matthew 12:34]. If one will speak rebellious words freely without any inward restraint, they need a firsthand revelatory encounter with Authority. Heart obedience in the Kingdom can easily be detected by what one frequently speaks about. Christians who cannot control their words can not control themselves and they forfeit the anointed, positive influence of being in authority. Slanderous words usually stem from a man's unsanctified reasoning, and although we must never ignore intelligent Bible based appraising or sound spiritual discernment, we cannot afford to walk by sight.
2. There are only two kinds of Christians, those who live on the level of reason [carnal Christians], and those on the level of authority [spiritual Christians]. Reasoning became the life principle of man, at the time when Adam sinned by eating that certain fruit. Today when God's command comes to the righteous directly [in prayer] or indirectly through delegated authority, the follower should first stop and consider what the Bible says corresponding to this specific authoritative command – the Scriptures that might give us sufficient precedent to act and carry out such a command. That's why we need to have a good working knowledge of the Scriptures in advance.

**READ:** 2 Peter 2:10-12; Jude 8-10

**“Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience” [Ephesians 5:6].**

- A. Eve added words to God's command concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In Genesis 3:3, ["**but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'**"] Eve added: "**Nor shall you touch it.**" ("neither" in the KJV).
- B. Hams words expressed rebellion of heart towards his father's authority. When he discovered his father's weakness, he jumped at the opportunity to broadcast it to his brethren, Shem and Japheth (Genesis 9:18).
- C. There are two different degrees of this sin in Numbers chapters 12 and 16. Miriam spoke out against Moses with restraint and could be restored, but Korah and his crew were swallowed up into Sheol, because none of their words were censured by the fear of God.
- D. Sin and arrogant reviling always cause the righteous to lose their power. When rebellion is verbalized, the loss of power is greater. The more words, the less restraint—the greater the loss. We need the holy fear of God daily! Churches lose their unity by inadvertent, foolish words and then their collective power also goes.
- E. When God exercises authority in relation to your life, directly or through a servant of His over you, He has no need to consult with you to gain your approval. He simply requires you to acknowledge that this is of God according to the Bible, this is good, and you will quickly obey.
- F. In Leviticus 18-22, each time God orders the people of Israel to do certain things, He interpolates a phrase like this, "**I am the Lord your God.**" In other words "I am the Lord your adequate reason."
- G. When we argue with God, we are telling Him He needs our consent to do something. And just as the potter needs no consent from the clay, God doesn't need to check with you (I find it kind of interesting when He talks about clay, because we all basically came from dust and 80% of our physical makeup is water). As our true Potter, His ways are much higher than our ways.

## X. RECAPTURE THE CAPTIVE MIND

**Read:** 2 Corinthians 10:4-6; Genesis 3:1-6; 1 Samuel 15

1. Our God is very merciful, gracious, loving and kind towards rebels. But as we look at history, it's so interesting to observe nations where a spiritual vacuum existed, (basically due to their rejection of and rebellion against the authority of the Scriptures). They would take on harsh dictators as their leaders who would hurt and destroy. And God would allow this to happen. Why? Is it because He's vindictive? NO, it was so that people would learn to respect God's benevolent authority and turn to Him in repentance and faith. If people (lost or saved) will not learn to submit to delegated authorities on this earth, they will meet up with concrete authority bearing power to destroy (authorities with civil authorization to enforce laws).
2. As Christian, we are to be more orientated to the Kingdom of light than to the kingdom of darkness, but we also need to be aware of the enemy's ploy. Satan enjoys giving us all sorts of reasonable sounding advice—yes, false grounds for disobeying. It's because he loves to enslave us and he longs to destroy us—so that instead of us becoming the Lord's best friends, which is totally in our best interests, we become the enemies of God. And Satan also likes to speak to us in first person, making us think that his thoughts (the ones he speaks in our ears) are our own. Example: "I believe my leader's motives are totally selfish in this, so I will..."

3. The battle is won or lost in the mind, and thoughts can be used as tools of the enemy. We don't fight his reasoning with reason. Instead we use spiritual weapons like prayer and declaring the Word to tear down his strongholds of reason.
  - A. When Satan reasoned with Eve in the Garden and she saw that the tree was good for food, instead of listening to God or rehearsing exactly what God said, she responded with reasoning, [Genesis 4].
  - B. Whether or not a Christian has met authority may be readily discerned by observing: first, whether they have any rebellious words, second, whether they constantly reason and argue about authoritative biblical mandates, or third, whether they still offer many feeling-based opinions.
  - C. King Saul, along with Nadab and Abihu, all offended God by attempting to serve God according to their own reason and thoughts. They felt they knew a better way, but God looks at how we obey [1 Samuel 15; Leviticus 10:1-2]. Satan is not afraid of our ministry so long as we minister according to the principle of rebellion. If we as believers can commit to fully obey God, fearing our own untested ideas and opinions, then God can manifest His glory and authority on earth.
  - D. A disobedient church praying for and expecting the lost to obey the Gospel through their compromising witness, simply wastes valuable time in an exercise of futility!

#### **XI. SOMETIMES THE COMMANDS OF DELEGATED AUTHORITY CONFLICT WITH THOSE OF DIRECT AUTHORITY**

1. When delegated authority (those who represent God's authority on earth) along with direct authority (God Himself) are in conflict, we can render respectful submission, but not obedience to the delegated authority. Obedience is related to conduct, and submission is related to heart attitude. We should always prayerfully appeal to the delegated authority to see if there is another way to get him the same desired results, but in a righteous way.

**Read:** Hebrews 11:23; Ex. 1:17; Daniel 3:17-18; 6:10; Matthew 2:13; Ephesians 4

- A. When the Jewish council forbade the Apostles to continue preaching the Gospel, the Apostle's simply kept a submissive attitude through the trial, but they continued on with the Lord's Great Commission. They did not disobey with quarrels and shouting; they maintained a godly attitude of respect while dissenting. **"But Peter and the apostles answered and said, 'We must obey God rather than men'"** [Acts 5:29].
- B. There should never be a slanderous or seditious word spoken, nor should there ever be an attitude of insubordination towards any governing authorities.
- C. A person who has met divine authority walks softly—very tenderly. They are prayerful before the Lord. That person has been broken of his own way, melted so to speak, and has obtained reverential fear, knowing it's not beyond them to miss God in presumption. A person who has met authority is not narcissistically competitive, selfishly ambitious. They have neither the thought, nor the interest to become one in authority. They take no pleasure in controlling others.

- D. They only take pleasure in worshiping God, winning souls, and helping other Christians do the same!
- E. Jesus wants to be Lord of your life and lead you to a caring Bible teaching church with a healthy shepherd, but He doesn't want you to be afraid to leave to go to another church if the pastor gets off doctrinally. God alone receives unqualified obedience and that's for all eternity. Any human authority will of course, be ranked lower than God, under God and therefore our human authorities should never receive more than qualified obedience. If they depart from following the Word, prayerfully appeal to them first and then leave them if they will not change. We are to love the Lord more and have no idols.

**REACH OUT TO YOUR LOST FRIENDS! PLEASE PRAY FOR THEM. DON'T MAKE IT COMPLICATED. CHRISTIAN, JUST RELAX AND BE YOURSELF IN THE SPIRIT AND LET'S BE DOERS OF THE WORD!**

### *The Essentials We At Fish For Souls Believe*

When we talk about the essentials, we are referring to the basic elements that make up and characterize our historic faith, and which separate it from other false belief systems in the earth. Our goal is to make people so familiar with the Word of God and the essentials of the Christian faith that when a counterfeit looms on the horizon, they will recognize it instantaneously.

I like the maxim Augustine used to quote that originated from a basically unknown German man named, **Rupertus Meldenius** in AD 1627. Regarding different Christian teachings, Meldenius stated: *"In essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, and in all things charity."* That's profound, because we all need to let the written Word of God dictate our faith and practice rather than supernatural experiences, feelings, or well-intentioned spiritual leaders and yet not cut off people for minor differences of opinion. We simply need to look to the Lord in this as we prioritize our beliefs and our relationships. Again, **we don't ever want to break fellowship with other Christians just because we can't come into a full agreement about the periphery doctrines of our faith that really aren't pertinent to salvation—namely non-essentials.** Maybe like me, you've experienced a situation where a TV preacher was verbally elevating secondary teachings to the level of cardinal/essential Christian doctrine and then watching them divide with other Christians over these. That's so wrong and should be addressed!

Today religious leaders from prominent Christian denominations say even Moslems and Mormons will enjoy salvation apart from the Bible Christ. But **real Christians must form their unity around nothing more than the *Bible Jesus* and the *Essentials*, since essential Christian doctrine forms the only line of demarcation between the Kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of the cults.** Now, as perhaps never before, this line is not just slightly blurred by false teachers and their teachings, but it is being totally distorted. The tide in evangelicalism is turning from unity *around* the essentials to unity *despite* the essentials -- unity at any price. Sounds sweet, but we aver that truth is more important than unity. Movements within our culture today—cults as well as within the church—are compromising, confusing, and contradicting essential Christian doctrine and it's time we Christians wake-up to our duty with no compromise!

It is precisely because these essentials have been un-righteously redefined that millions have a completely distorted view of what it means to be a Christian today. Today several putative "Christian leaders," (para-church and local church ministers) exacerbate the cloudiness and I believe unintentionally obfuscate what's orthodox. Of course they will use Christian terminology in their teaching and mix in many true statements (otherwise who would swallow the poisoned part), *but the meaning they pour into many of the words they use is decidedly unbiblical.*

Jesus Christ commands, *“judge righteous judgment”* (Jn. 7:24). The Bible says, *“Open your mouth, judge righteously”* (Prov. 31:9). In light of these verses let’s look at the essentials:

First, we believe in the authority of the Scripture, which is another way of saying that the Bible is God’s inspired, infallible and inerrant Word. It’s the ultimate source for knowledge about God, as well as the definitive guide for our everyday lives.

Second, we affirm the existence of a triune God, or one God in three distinct persons--yes, three distinguishable personages. (In other words we are talking about: a plurality in the divine unity or God’s three-in-oneness. Not three Gods, yet each of these Persons is fully God)—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This God is self-existent, eternal, unchanging, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, holy, righteous, and loving. God created the universe from nothing and He rules over His creation sovereignly including both human and angelic beings. (Note: Though the term “Trinity” does not appear in the Bible it does belong to that class of terms which are biblical in the sense of expressing clear Scriptural teaching).

Third, we also hold that man is a physical and spiritual being who is created in God’s image. But because of his sin or transgression, man has lost his fellowship with God. The extent of sin is so great that its effects continue to this very day in the form of cruelty, suffering, and death.

Next, by God’s grace, Jesus Christ—who is fully God and fully man—was sent to save us from our bondage to sin. We believe that Christ was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died vicariously for our sins, physically rose from the dead, and will one day return to judge the world and deliver His people. Personal faith in Jesus Christ is the only means by which mankind can escape eternal damnation and judgment.

Finally, we recognize the church as God’s ordained institution—a living organism that’s headed by Jesus Christ. The true Church is composed of all believers, and is organized for worship, for fellowship, for the administration of the sacraments, for spiritual growth and support in the Word of God (for there is no spiritual growth apart from the Word), and for the evangelization of the world. —kVs

A lot more can be said about these, but here is some further reading: Paul Little’s book *Know What You Believe*, R.C. Sproul’s *Essential Truths of the Christian Faith*, also Bruce Milne’s *Know The Truth* (IVP).

**Thank you for taking the time to look at Fisher's Foundations!** Now purpose never to be like those seeds that fell among the thorns ...who hear the Message but, *"are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity"* (Luke 8:14 nkjv). God is calling each of us to lay a firm foundation by seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness—by applying these biblical principles until we reach maturity. I hope these study lessons were a blessing to you on your way to becoming a reproducing-disciple-maker—a fisher of souls! This stuff is right in line with Christ's final commandment to, *"Go into the all the world and make disciples of all nations."*

Here's what we've endeavored to accomplish and still aim for:

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|----------|---|
| <i>M</i> | <b>Maturity</b> – <i>Our goal is the spiritual maturity of every believer in the Word. This involves Christ-likeness in relationship to God, to the Scriptures and towards one another.</i>   |
| <i>A</i> | <b>Advancement</b> – <i>The advancement of the Kingdom of God by fishing for souls is our aim. This involves daily personal world evangelization with you as integral part of God's program.</i>  |
| <i>T</i> | <b>Teaching</b> – <i>As you are equipped with the Word, you too can equip or disciple others. This involves you continuing to teach well by example, by godly character and persistence.</i>  |
| <i>U</i> | <b>Usefulness</b> – <i>We want to help you use your talents for useful service in Christ's fishing Venture. This involves you working towards mastering the basics as you involve yourself with God's soul-winning church.</i>  |
| <i>R</i> | <b>Responsibility</b> – <i>Getting your pillars of faith right will set you on the right path for responsible leadership development. This involves increasing your sphere of influence.</i>  |
| <i>I</i> | <b>Instruction</b> – <i>Remaining attentive to the instructions of the Holy Spirit as you go the distance towards the heavenly city. This involves further progress in your ability to be controlled by the Holy Spirit.</i>  |
| <i>T</i> | <b>Track</b> – <i>Now that you've been placed on the good track to run on, you can trust the Lord more and more in areas of setting priorities, decision making and determining the will of God. This involves daily prayer, being reminded and reminding others of Christ's teachings.</i>   |
| <i>Y</i> | <b>Young-hearted</b> — <i>retaining that passionate vigor and fiery zeal for the Lord just like a young believer receives from Jesus through vibrant worship, verse memorization/ meditation, witnessing and fellowship. This involves forgetting what's behind and pressing on toward mark for the Prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus!</i> |

Now you need loving community in a healthy church and also in a small Bible study group. No matter what local church you visit, you will never be thriving until you have on-fire Christian friends in a more intimate setting where you can hold each other accountable. When I go to my small study-prayer group, I feel like reading the word each day! I feel like praying more, and witnessing with excitement! I start growing. The early church set the example by meeting in the temple and from house to house. Jesus Christ gave, *"gifts 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, until we come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature and full grown in the Lord, measuring up to the full stature of Christ"* (Eph 4:11-13 nlt).

The Bible says, *"Let us go on instead and **become mature** in our understanding"*(Heb. 6:1 b nlt). Keep feasting on the Word together, *"**Solid food is for those who are mature**, who have trained themselves to recognize the difference between right and wrong and then do what is right"*(Heb. 5:14 nlt). It says, *"...in malice be babes, but **in understanding be mature**"*(1 Cor 14:20 nkjv emphasis mine).

This foundations series was designed to be presented in a warm-hearted, small group setting that would help to foster friendships, meaningful fellowship and lasting Kingdom partnerships. This kind of interactive atmosphere that I am describing is so conducive for maximum learning and edification. You are not alone. If you are having trouble finding a healthy church in your location, please write us. We might be able to help. Thank you for making the decision to mature in the grace and knowledge of the greatest Fisher! -kVs