

Lost & Found Center Teaching Series



COMPONENTS OF SUPREMACY PT.1

Introduction

The authority of the believer has been a popular topic for bible teachers over the last several years. The goal of many of these teachings was to make us aware of the authority that we've already been given in Christ so we can stand during these spiritually dark days. In this study I want to explore some aspects of authority and deepen our understanding of how it works - whether it is being used for us or against us.

(Jesus is) far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

Ephesians 1:21 NIV

When the Apostle Paul wrote these incredible words about Jesus, it was probably through a combination of what he saw, likely in a vision, what he read and knew from the ancient prophecies of the Old Testament, what he had heard from eyewitness accounts of people who saw and experienced the miracles of Jesus and of course his own personal encounter with a resurrected Jesus on the road to Damascus. In any event, Paul had the training and the mental capacity to put it all together and with the aid of the Holy Spirit to reveal an important part of Jesus to us.

In describing Jesus' role in what we could call universal governance he also reveals to us some additional truths. Simply put, since this verse declares that Jesus has supremacy over all things then we need to examine the components of this supremacy – Rule, Authority, Power and Dominion because that is how things run.

This makes sense when we look at another verse also written by Paul.

My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Colossians 2:2-3 NIV

Paul is stating here that wrapped up in Jesus is all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. That means that studying this one person will yield all the answers. Figure Jesus out and you figure everything out. Figure Jesus out and you figure God out. Go figure.

So going back to the original verse, Jesus is described as being supreme because he is over all rule, authority, power and dominion. In this series of lessons, we will try to understand these components of supremacy and what they mean with respect to Jesus, ourselves, and the spiritual world we exist in. I may not have all the answers but I am encouraged by the above verse Colossians 2:2-3 that at least I know where to look.

About Lists

A brief note about lists. There are quite a few lists in the Bible from the components of supremacy being discussed here to the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23, the qualities of love in 1 Corinthians 13, the gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12 and the spiritual armor in Ephesians 6:13-18. Whenever there are lists in the Bible, the lists are always there for a reason – which is to create a distinction for our understanding and to allow us to drill in deeper. The Bible does not just say that Jesus is above everything. It gives us a list. With that in mind we examine the components of that list: rule, authority, power and dominion individually.

Rule or Height of Authority

When you think rule think of the height of authority. Rule is all about level. Effective rule is only effective at its designated level. The highest rule has the final say. The highest rule cannot be overturned. Think rule think height.

Now let's look at an example through two verses.

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. Ephesians 2:1
NIV

In this verse the **“ruler of the kingdom of the air”** is Satan, the devil, the enemy of God. The word of God here establishes that he rules in the atmosphere. Look around at our world. It makes perfect sense. We always need to be reminded about this truth when we look at the world.

Now let's turn to Matthew 8:23-27. This is when Jesus gets into the boat with his disciples and goes to sleep. A storm occurs and the disciples wake him up. Jesus promptly rebukes the wind and waves and everything becomes perfectly calm. The Bible tells us:

The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!" Matthew 8:27 NIV

Jesus displayed what? – his rule over the atmosphere. But we have already established that the enemy is the ruler of the atmosphere. So what happened? Jesus must have overruled the enemy. He must have eclipsed his rule.

The key question to ask when confronted by an authority is what is the height of his rule. This reminds us that only one authority is supreme. The next thing to do is seek to overrule him by appealing to a higher authority.

If you have a problem with your service at a restaurant, you could complain to the waiter or you could do what? – seek to overrule – go to the manager. Rule teaches us to deal with authority in two ways. First understand the level, then attempt to overrule.

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Ephesians 6:12 NIV

Paul probably saw the spiritual realm and the demonic hosts at various levels controlling various regions. This would have been a troubling vision had he not also seen Jesus established at the highest level above which there is no higher authority.

Rule is the place to start. May the Lord Jesus have the highest rule in our hearts, not man, not fame, not material riches, not chemical dependencies, not anything. May there be only one absolute rule in your life.

Dominion or Boundary of Authority

When you think dominion think boundary. The dominion then is the boundary of authority. Every authority is bounded. Just like every rule is only effective at its designated level, every dominion is also only effective within its designated boundary.

Let's look at Job 1. In this passage, God has a discussion with Satan about Job. God talks about what a righteous man Job is. Satan complains about not having access to test Job to see what he's made of and states:

"Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has?"
Job 1:10 NIV

Satan's complaint was that God had erected a boundary around Job that he could not penetrate. This verse demonstrates boundaries to authority and gives us an additional approach on dealing with authority.

The next question to ask when confronted by an authority is what is the boundary of this authority. The next thing to do is to:

- Look for the boundary and seek to step outside it, or
- Pray for a boundary within the boundary

Point one is all about repositioning yourself. If you have placed yourself in a situation or aligned yourself with an organization, group or person that puts you in a difficult circumstance, step out from it to get some relief. Is it that simple? Generally not. But tune your understanding to look for areas or boundaries that you need to exit.

Point two is when you just can't step out of that situation. It may be impossible for you to get outside your boundary. In this case you need a boundary within a boundary. A dominion within a dominion is what God does for Job. A dominion within a dominion is what we generally seek in a world dominated by the enemy.

**You are my hiding place;
you will protect me from trouble
and surround me with songs of deliverance.** Psalm 32:7 NIV

The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and he delivers them.
Psalm 34:7 NIV

Both of the above verses are about establishing a boundary within the enemy's dominion. Ever seen a balloon in a balloon. Same concept. How do we do this? We don't. We study the Bible to see what God has done for others. Once we see what's available we ask Him to do the same for us.

Jesus' rule has no boundaries. There are no areas that he cannot control. He walks through walls. There are no places he cannot go. Death is not a boundary for him. Through his resurrection from the dead, even death is now under his control. Time can be real boundary for authority. Ever hear of term limits? But Jesus' rule is not bounded by time. He will rule forever and ever.

How about you? If rule is the place to start in our life, then dominion is the very next step. May there be no area in your life or in your heart that is outside his control. Do not be mistaken; he will take control of every area - including your life. We have the opportunity to give him this control now, as our choice. May you have no secret places in your heart where he is not allowed.

Authority or Rights

When you think authority think rights. Rights govern authority. Those rights determine the height and the boundary of authority. All rights come from somewhere but the originator of all rights is God. As for you:

...and do not give the devil a foothold. Ephesians 4:27 NIV

Paul is speaking to the Ephesians here and cautions them to not give the enemy a foothold. Another way to look at this is to not give him any rights. Don't give him anything to latch on to.

A good example of this is the Old Testament story of the Gibeonites. Joshua, the leader of Israel is tricked into making a treaty with these people who he was supposed to war against. The Gibeonites had presented themselves to Joshua as a people who were of no threat and lived far from the "promised" land. They asked for and received a promise of protection from harm. As a result, Joshua had mistakenly given up rights to something that God had given to Israel.

How did this affect Israel? Well years later there was a severe famine in Israel which was a judgment of God because of the Gibeonites.

During the reign of David, there was a famine for three successive years; so David sought the face of the LORD. The LORD said, "It is on account of Saul and his blood-stained house; it is because he put the Gibeonites to death." 2 Samuel 21:1

Authority is all about rights, so the next question when confronted by authority is to determine if they have the right.

- If they have the right then seek to remove the right. Seek to reverse what has caused a foothold in your life. It may mean you are doing something you shouldn't be doing or that you have brought something into your life that shouldn't be there. Get rid of it. Remove the right.
- If they don't have the right they don't have authority and you must not surrender your authority. You must defend your rights. This is not a call to activism but defending spiritual rights. We'll explore this more in the next lesson but for now remember Joshua and the Gibeonites. Most of us know when we compromise our faith. Think of this compromising as giving up rights and giving the enemy a foothold into your life.

Where does Jesus' authority come from? The Bible says that Jesus' authority comes from God and has been earned through his obedience.

And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death— even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
Philippians 2:8-10 NIV

Jesus' willing sacrifice of himself gave him the right to rule. And as we see in Ephesians 1:21, there will never be anyone either now or in any future time that will come along with more authority. It is interesting to realize that the highest authority that has ever and will ever be attained has been earned - and earned through suffering no less.

How about you? We'll see in future lessons that the Christian life is not only about giving up some rights but also about acquiring, retaining and exercising new rights. But for now, have you given up your right to rule your life? May Jesus be the Lord of your life.

Power or the Force behind authority

When you think power think of the force behind authority. Without power there is no authority. Behind every authority there is some type of power. To say the enemy has no power is just as incorrect as saying he has no authority.

Power and Strength

Just a little side note about power and strength. Power is not strength though the two are interrelated. Power moves. Strength holds. We need power to take and we need strength to keep. Power is offensive while strength is defensive. Jesus operates in both. He possesses all power and all strength. This is revealed in the following verse.

In a loud voice they sang:

**"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength
and honor and glory and praise!" Revelation 5:12 NIV**

Here is another list. Lists again are to create a distinction. There is a distinction between power and strength. The Bible puts it another way:

**What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.
Revelation 3:9 NIV**

The ability to open anything is all power while the ability to hold anything shut is all strength. Using the old paradox, Jesus is both the irresistible force (all power) and the immovable object (all strength).

Why do we need to know the difference between power and strength, because at different times in our life we will desperately need one or the other. There will be situations that come into our life where the goal will be pure survival or just to hold on. In those

situations we pray for strength. But our life should not just be about surviving. There is the power of God that we need to be reminded of. The Bible puts it this way:

...his incomparably great power for us who believe. Ephesians 1:19 NIV

We need to remember to cry out for the power of God to change things. Strength rides out the storm while power calms it. Which do you need today?

Going Back to Power

The key thing to remember when confronted with authority is that we do not use our own power. The only way to survive spiritual authority is with God's power. It can never be about our power.

There is a great example of how the Apostle Paul came to this conclusion. Jesus had appeared to Paul in a vision and told him that he was going to testify in Rome. On the boat to Rome he encountered a violent storm such that:

When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days and the storm continued raging, we finally gave up all hope of being saved. Acts 27:20 NIV

Even though Paul had a vision that he would end up in Rome, he still gave up hope of surviving. How could that be? What was he trusting in? However, by the time Paul wrote his second letter to the Corinthians, he understood the purpose of his trials.

Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead. 2 Corinthians 1:9 NIV

The Lord had to take Paul through a difficult situation to bring him to a place where his trust was not in his own power but in God's. How about you? Whose power and whose strength do you rely on? May it only be the Lord's.

Drawing Three Conclusions from Our Study

The reason we lay out the framework is so we can then draw some conclusions from what we've learned and use that framework as a reference point for future study. Consider then the following verse in context of our study.

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. Ephesians 2:1 NIV

The Bible is describing here that the enemy of God is the ruler of the kingdom of the air. You could say that this enemy is the highest authority of the atmosphere. We could then draw the conclusion this enemy's authority is governed by rights. His authority in the earth, how ever it has been acquired, is real. We also know that Jesus has eclipsed every authority. So from our knowledge of authority we can draw our first important conclusion.

1. Jesus through his superior rule can override or reverse anything the enemy plans against you.

Remember only the highest rule cannot be overturned. Only the highest rule is final. I am both amazed and saddened for people who have fears over touching things or fears over family curses or curses of any kind. We must embed the truths of God into the core of our being.

But if Jesus can override the enemy, then why does the enemy still have rule? We then draw our next conclusion.

2. Jesus is in the position of terminating the rule of the enemy whenever he is ready, since the enemy's rule is subject to his.

That his supremacy has been established is something we should never question. That he has not fully asserted his rights is based on his planning and should never have any impact on how we view his supremacy.

Consider also that the dominion of Jesus' rule is everlasting. As a result it encompasses and surpasses the boundary of the enemy. Notice from the above verse that we operate within the boundary of the enemy. We can then draw our last conclusion for this study:

3. Jesus through his superior dominion can carve out for us a place of safety within the boundary of the enemy's rule.

Yes it may sound simple but are you rooted in these truths? We need the truths of Jesus to become part of us – to transform our thinking, our decision making, and our everyday lives.

That ends part 1. Next, we'll discuss the differences in operation of power and authority within the kingdom of God and the kingdom of darkness because the differences are real and important.

Notes

For Questions or Comments please respond to lostandfoundcenter@yahoo.com and visit www.lostandfoundcenter.org for additional information.

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