

Problem of Authority

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I. Introduction.

- A. God is the ultimate one to whom we account for our use or submission to authority.
- B. Biblical authority-submission relationships: God-man, man-nature, parents-children, governed-governors, employers-employees, spiritual leaders-followers. There are clear biblical guidelines for these relationships that are trans-cultural.
- C. Subject: the problem of authority.

II. All authorities are limited.

- A. They are limited by the moral law—even God is limited by this.
- B. They are limited by free will—even God has limited Himself to us in this regard.
- C. They are limited by defined limits. Many limits, however, are undefined and change and shift.
- D. They are limited by other authorities.

III. Trouble comes when these limits are violated or exceeded.

- A. God gave Satan great authority although he exceeded them. (Revelation 13:2)
- B. Jesus gave the disciples authority to teach and preach. (Luke 10)
- C. When Satan exceeded his authority sin entered the world. When Adam and Eve exceeded their authority sin entered their lives. (Genesis 2-3)
- D. Sin is a refusal to stay within God's limits.
- E. Sin is placing oneself at the center in God's place. Self-centeredness and pride is at the root.

IV. The results of sin.

- A. Separation from God. Sin short-circuits us. (Isaiah 59)
- B. Bondage to self. The commandments were to bring us out of bondage. (Exodus 20, Deuteronomy 5)
- C. The problem of authority is essentially sin.
- D. Earth is polluted under its habitants because of sin. (Isaiah 24:5)
- E. Sin contaminates. It contaminates the relationship between husband and wife and parents and children.

F. One cannot leave if there is conflict.

VI. The solution: the gospel.

A. It is peace and reconciliation.

B There is no other solution.

C. Paul pleads that man is reconciled to God since Jesus took upon himself the transgressions. (2 Corinthians 2)

D. One can be reconciled to God right where he is at. This can lead to reconciliation with other people as well. We all need to say sorry at some time.

E. We ought to seek to have a conscience void of offense before God and man. (Acts 24:16)

F. Since self-centeredness is the great problem, self-surrender is the great solution.

Application questions

1. Explain the importance of limits upon authority.

2. How is the gospel the solution to the authority problem?

3. Are there any areas in your life that you need to surrender? List the two greatest that come to mind and share those with a trusted fellow Christian.
