

Response to Authority

Lorne Sanny

I. Introduction.

A. Authority is the right to decide or take action.

B. There are seven biblical authority relationships:

1. God and man
2. man and nature
3. husband and wife
4. parents and children
5. the governed and those who govern
6. employers and employed
7. spiritual leaders and followers

C. All these relationships have been contaminated by sin.

D. The gospel and surrender are the great solution to the authority problem.

II. The response to authority: submission.

A. General submission. (Ephesians 5:21)

1. This is a general attitude of submission to others regardless of position.
2. An outstanding illustration is Billy Graham: he both listened well and served.
3. It is a terrible life to have to be right all the time and to have one's way all the time. (Matthew 5:5)
4. God expects submission because all relationships are ordered.

B. Specific submission.

1. To submit means to surrender to the will and control of another.
2. Mankind is to surrender to the will of God. The problem with humanity is rebellion not information.
3. You cannot squirm out of authority.

III. How to submit to authority. (1 Peter 2)

A. It is done for the Lord's sake.

1. Christ is to be pre-eminent.
2. God's sovereignty is more firmly gripped in all of this.

B. It is to be done in difficult situations.

1. Honor and submit to civil authorities.
2. Submit as slaves or employees so that you might be more like Christ.
3. God does not overwhelm you, the Devil does. We need not a vacation, but an attitude change.
 - a. Commit your problems to the Lord.
 - b. Resubmit yourself to the Lord.
 - c. Trust that God is able to handle all those issues by Himself.

C. It is to be done with the right spirit.

1. This is a disarming spirit.
2. Show proper respect.
3. Act in boldness. (Acts 3)
4. This includes a willingness to suffer like Christ did. There is a cross at the center of the universe and Jesus said the disciple is to take up His cross daily.
 - a. If you are suffering without success it is so someone may succeed afterwards.
 - b. If you are succeeding without suffering it is because someone paid the price before you.
 - c. There is a price to pay.
5. This is also a winning spirit—a courageous one that wins people to the Lord.

IV. Illegitimate exercise of authority.

A. This should be respectfully resisted. (1 Peter 5:8-9)

1. We are to resist the Devil. (James 4:7)
2. We are to resist some men. (Acts 4:18-20, 5:29)

V. Conclusion. Response to biblical authority is biblical submission.

Application questions

1. What is the importance of attitude in regards to submission to authority?

2. How do difficult situations change the way that one is to submit to authority if at all? Explain.

3. What difficult places have you found yourself in that you were supposed to submit under? What was your response and what could you have done better if anything? Explain.
