

Authority - Exercise

Lorne Sanny

Introduction.

- A. Today we want to conclude the general subject of authority.
- B. Tomorrow we will deal with spiritual leadership.
- C. Then in our final time together we will deal with decision making.
- D. Review.
 - 1. Preoccupation on authority is dangerous. (Luke 10:20)
 - a. Many people feel a leader is one who tells you what to do but that is mistaken.
 - b. Authority and leadership are not synonymous.
 - c. Leadership and position are also not synonymous.
 - d. Leadership has to do with influence.
 - e. The one who has a plan gets leadership regardless of who has authority.
 - 2. Authority is part of the ordered universe.
 - a. The Navigator movement is a spiritual movement.
 - b. We are also an organization.
 - c. The organization serves the movement.
 - d. If we are not careful the movement will serve the organization and that is not right. The Sabbath was made for man not visa-versa.
 - 3. Authority has limits.
 - a. As parents the organization has no business ordering family relationships.
 - b. Each individual has responsibility to submit or not to submit.
 - c. Thousands of decisions by ordinary people will determine the success for failure of an organization.
 - d. If a man fights with his wife in the morning he is ineffective all day long.

- e. Self-centeredness damages authority.
 - f. If we demand too much from people we are exceeding our authority.
 - g. We tend to like being “God” in relationships.
 - h. God alone is divine and we are under shepherds.
 - i. A man married a girl under the assumption that she would be his servant and that had to be straightened out before they could serve God.
4. The need of authority is redemptive, reconciling, restorative in nature, and this is accomplished by influence not by force.
- a. We need to have external controls because of lack of internal controls.
 - b. But we need to develop the internal controls.
 - c. The first step is surrender and submission to God.

I. Today we come to the exercise of authority.

A. First, I have some propositions to make.

1. Authority is not a bad word, and with authority comes responsibility and accountability.
 - a. It is legitimate even though we live in an age of rebellion.
 - b. Authority is given as a reward.
 - c. The apostles argued which of them is the greatest. (Luke 22:24-28)
 1. Jesus rebuked them but also told them he appointed them a kingdom with authority to sit on thrones.
 2. He did not say the authority is bad.
 3. The parable of the talents shows that the reward for faithfulness is authority. (Luke 19:11-27)
 4. Why is authority a reward for faithful service?
 - i. Authority is in line with the character of God.
 - ii. God is interested in character, which is determined by choices, and authority is the right to choose. Thus, right choices results in more right to choose.
 - iii. Right responses to circumstances results in character, and God is interested in character. (James 1:2-4)

iv. God is interested in a relationship with us on a day by day basis instead of us living by a manual instruction book. (Galatians 5)

2. He who has authority must accept responsibility.

- a. Responsibility is the obligation to perform.
- b. The man with the one pound didn't use it and he got in trouble,
- c. A husband must rule his family well. (1 Timothy 3:4-5)
- d. In raising teenagers I decided to fight the battle at home by faith on my knees.
- e. A governor must govern.
- f. Paul told Titus to lead in his congregation. (Titus 2:15)
- g. Whether accepted or rejected a leader must function.
- h. Jesus was challenged and so were the apostles.

3. Responsibility must be discharged with the proper attitude.

- a. Authority must be exercised redemptively.
- b. The attitude is important.
- c. Husbands exercise authority with love. (Colossians 3)
- d. Parents are not to provoke their children.
- e. Governors rule justly. (2 Samuel 23:3)
- f. Employers forbear threatening. (Ephesians 6:9)
- g. Spiritual leaders lead not as lording it over others. (1 Peter 5:3)

4. Responsibility brings accountability. (Luke 12:41-48)

a. Luke is loaded with information on authority, as is 1 Peter.

1. Who is the faithful and wise steward who feeds the household?

- a. The first was faithful to do what he was told to do.
- b. The second began to abuse the servants and he will be cut in pieces.

c. The third knew his master's will, but didn't obey and was beaten.

d. The fourth did not know his master's will and acted ignorantly and was beaten lightly.

2. Those who receive much must give much.

b. Accountability is to the source of one's responsibility and authority.

1. You are accountable to the one who gave you authority.

2. We have an intermediate responsibility to men.

a. When men give authority they demand accountability from the top down and from the bottom up.

b. I have authority over men in The Navigators, given me not by the Board of Directors, but from the men under me.

c. I also received some authority from the Board.

d. Therefore I am accountable both to the top and to the bottom.

e. Businessmen who think authority comes from the top only are whistling Dixie.

f. Leaders are accountable up and down.

g. The Navigators has a staff of 1,300 full-time people and I feel my greatest accountability to the staff, and when I feel like resigning I feel a greater responsibility to the staff than I do to the board of directors.

h. Our sufficiency is of God. (1 Corinthians 3:5)

B. Later we will talk of the mutual responsibility between staff members.

1. We will all give account of ourselves to God. (Romans 14:12)

2. This subject is so big that it gets to the heart of the whole mess in the world.

a. Husbands treat your wives right that your prayers be not hindered (1 Peter 3:7)

b. Wives submit to your husbands as to the Lord.

- c. Parents bring up children in the Lord.
 - d. Children obey in the Lord.
 - e. Governors govern in the fear of God.
 - f. The governed are resisting God when they resist their government.
 - g. Employers also have a master in heaven.
 - h. Employees submit as to Christ.
 - i. Spiritual leaders lead as unto God.
3. When we bring God into the human relationship picture, everything becomes clear.
4. All authority comes from God and therefore responsibility goes also to God.