

The Foundations of Authority

Wed, May 11, 2005

- A small airplane flew into restricted airspace over Washington DC
- The alert level for our nations capital was raised to red
- A Black Hawk helicopter and two F-16 fighter jets were sent to intercept the aircraft
- The pilot and a single passenger were were headed to an air show in North Carolina
- If the warning flares had failed to get the pilot's attention, the plane would have been shot down

Questions Regarding Authority

- Does the government have the right to take the life of whoever was on that plane?
- Without “reading them their rights” or a trial?
- What gives them that right?
- What other persons or institutions have the power of life and death over us, and under what conditions?

Authority

- Authority – the power or right to give commands, enforce obedience, take action, or make final decisions; jurisdiction
- Greek exousia:
 - means: privilege, force, capacity, competency, freedom, mastery, influence;
 - translated: authority, power, control

Origins of Authority

- Personal – All authority for my life resides with me and with whoever I give that authority to
- Societal – All authority for my life resides with the society I live in, which also has authority over each of its members
- Divine – All authority for my life resides with a Supreme Being, who also has authority over all things

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Acts 17:22-23

Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; 23 for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you:

God's Divine Authority

- He made us – Acts 17:24, 26-27, 29

Acts 17:24-31

The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, ... 26 **And he made from one man every nation of mankind** to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, 27 that they should seek God, in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, ... 28 as even some of your own poets have said, "'For **we are indeed his offspring.**' 29 **Being then God's offspring**, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man.

God's Divine Authority

- He made us – Acts 17:24, 26-27, 29
- He sustains us – Acts 17:25, 28

Acts 17:24-31

25 nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since **he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything...** 28 for **"In him we live and move and have our being'....**

God's Divine Authority

- He made us – Acts 17:24, 26-27, 29
- He sustains us – Acts 17:25, 28
- He judges us – Acts 17:30-31

Acts 17:24-31

26 And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, **having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place,** 27 **that they should seek God,** in the hope that they might feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, ... 30 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now **he commands all people everywhere to repent,** 31 **because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness** by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead."

God's Divine Authority

- He made us – Acts 17:24, 26-27, 29
- He sustains us – Acts 17:25, 28
- He judges us – Acts 17:30-31
- He saves us – 2 Cor. 5:14-15

2 Corinthians 5:14-15

For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

God's Divine Authority

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The Limits of God's Authority

- He does not force us to willingly obey Him

Responding to God's Authority

- Ignoring it
- Denying it
- Perverting it
- Undermining it
- Rebelling against it
- Grudgingly submitting to it
- Voluntarily submitting to it (James 4:6-7)

James 4:6-7

But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "GOD RESISTS THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE." 7
Therefore submit to God.

God's Total Authority

- Command us (Matt. 8:5-10)

Matthew 8:5-10

Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, 6 saying, "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented." 7 And Jesus said to him, "I will come and heal him." 8 The centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. 9 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." 10 When Jesus heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, "Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!"

God's Total Authority

- Command us (Matt. 8:5-10)
- Put others in authority over us (Jn. 12:48-49)

John 12:48-49

He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him-- the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. 49 For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak.

God's Total Authority

- Command us (Matt. 8:5-10)
- Put others in authority over us (Jn. 12:48-49)
- Order our lives according to His purposes (Acts 1:6-8)

Acts 1:6-8

Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. 8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

God's Total Authority

- Command us (Matt. 8:5-10)
- Put others in authority over us (Jn. 12:48-49)
- Order our lives according to His purposes (Acts 1:6-8)
- Judge us (Jn. 5:26-27)

John 5:26-27

For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, 27 and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.

God's Total Authority

- Command us (Matt. 8:5-10)
- Put others in authority over us (Jn. 12:48-49)
- Order our lives according to His purposes (Acts 1:6-8)
- Judge us (Jn. 5:26-27)
- Bless or Curse us (Rom 2:9-10)

Romans 2:9-10

tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; 10 but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

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- Bless or Curse us (Rom 2:9-10)
- Save or Condemn us (Luke 12:4-5)

Luke 12:4-5

"And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. 5 But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!

God's Total Authority

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- Put others in authority over us (Jn. 12:48-49)
- Order our lives according to His purposes (Acts 1:6-8)
- Judge us (Jn. 5:26-27)
- Bless or Curse us (Rom 2:9-10)
- Save or Condemn us (Luke 12:4-5)
- Destroy or Preserve us (Jn. 17:1-2; Matt. 28:18-20)

John 17:1-2

Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, 2 as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying,
"All authority has been given to Me in
heaven and on earth. 19 Go therefore
and make disciples of all the nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20
teaching them to observe all things that I
have commanded you; and lo, I am with
you always, even to the end of the age."
Amen.

Understanding Authority

- Makes us appreciate just being alive
- Makes us want to be the type of person God wants us to be
- Makes us desire to see others voluntarily compliant with God's will
- Leads us to accept God's will, without consideration of our own will, desire, or reasoning