



## LESSON #11

### THE AUTHORITY OF A LEADER

In all aspects of society, including the Church, those in charge must exercise authority to maintain respect and order in the community and in the House of God. Authority does not mean that the leader gets to make all the rules, and everyone must blindly follow them—that is a dictator, not a leader. Leadership authority is not controlling, intimidating or manipulative—that is the rebellious spirit behind witchcraft, disguised as liberty, decency and equity. There is nothing decent or fair about it. That is an ungodly authority of domination that suppresses, rather than liberates the people under its demonic spell. Such was the wicked spirit of Jezebel in 1 Kings 18, Ahab's wife, bent on controlling and deceiving God's people, while silencing His true prophetic voices. Leaders are ordained by God with delegated authority to maintain order in His kingdom. Any pastor, teacher, prophet, apostle, or spiritual leader not called by God has no authority to minister in His name. They may act like they do, speak like they do, dress like they do, but they are powerless impersonators—hypocrites playing a make-believe role with the people they lead.

I was sitting in a coffee shop two years ago, looking out the window and watching a construction crew tear up the road for improvements. A man wearing a red vest and yellow hardhat was directing the traffic with a stop sign in his hand. The cars would stop and commence at his command. He had legal authority from the city over the civilians to keep order on that particular street. As I watched his authority in action, it dawned on me that I could put on the same uniform and hold the same stop sign and stand in the same spot and control the traffic. I would be doing so without delegated authority and no driver would be obligated to observe my commands. To "delegate" means to grant inalienable control, power and authority to someone acting on their behalf. God appoints delegations of leaders who act on His behalf representing Him to others. The only valid authority any leader has for maintaining order in the Kingdom is that which has been delegated to him or her by the King. Hence, we are not under obligation to false authority in the church.

## **THE PURPOSE OF AUTHORITY IN LEADERS**

Leadership authority in God's house is for the divine purpose of correcting error or sin, with the objective of uplifting and restoring health to the Body. Paul stated that a little leaven leavens the whole lump—in other words, sin left to itself will ultimately infect the entire body and cause great division where there is no authority to intervene and restore unity. To be sure, this necessary intrusion of authority will involve a measure of pain, even as a surgeon operates on the patient with healing as the expected end, while knowing the knife will hurt. Leaders must not compromise on their authority for the sake of another's temporary relief. Only repentance brings restoration. Authority ignores the symptoms and attacks the root. The Apostle Paul knew how to wield the sword of authority for the main purpose of building up the Body and restoring the blessing and unity of the Holy Spirit.

***“I may seem to be boasting too much about the authority given to us by the Lord. But our authority builds you up; it doesn't tear you down. So I will not be ashamed of using my authority.”*** 2 Corinthians 10:8

Have you ever had to use your delegated authority in dealing with sinful actions on the part of others that threatened the health and unity of the Body? Explain.

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A true leader never has to prove his or her authority, they only have to exercise it. Godly people will recognize a real leader's authority more by what they do than by what they say—in other words, leaders walk the talk and that gives them rightful authority and respect. Leadership authority does not demand respect—it earns respect through genuine love, not aggressive control. God's leaders never have to demand their own way when they have His backing and approval.

## **A LEADER'S IMPARTED ANOINTING**

There is a special anointing that God imparts to leaders of authority. Anointing is an enduing of supernatural power that quickens and enables the loyal leader to successfully accomplish the things God requires in His house, not with human strength, ability or effort, but in the power and demonstration of the Spirit. David was anointed as the king of Israel to display such authority as demanded respect from the people he served. From an early age, God's Spirit came upon him to defeat Goliath, escape the constant plot of Saul to kill him and to take the throne.

David’s authority was renowned throughout the illustrious kingdom of Israel and beyond. Leaders must have God’s anointing in their ministry to be effective and with confidence, step out and make an impact for eternity in God’s house.

***“My horn You have exalted like a wild ox; I have been anointed with fresh oil.”***

Psalm 92:10

‘Horns’ in the Bible speak of authority and ‘oil’ refers to the Holy Spirit. We, as leaders, need a daily, fresh supply of supernatural empowerment to minister in the Spirit. People will stand up and take notice when they are in the presence of a man or woman of delegated authority—they display life and power that exposes and overturns every demonic scheme and demolishes every satanic stronghold. One of the greatest demonstrations of Christ’s authority on earth is in John 2:16—

***“And Jesus said to those who sold doves, “Take these things away! Do not make My Father’s house a house of merchandise!”*** Christ displayed such vehement anger towards those who were mocking His Father’s house of prayer and turning it into a den of thieves. He exercised righteous authority as the anointed Son of God and restored dignity, order and the presence of God back to the holy temple. It was at that point that the power was released to heal, which is the cause and effect of anointed authority. ***“And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple; and He healed them.”*** Matthew 21:14. Even the pompous, legalistic Pharisees recognized that Christ taught the people with an authentic God-ordained authority that they did not possess—theirs was a mere form of godliness without the power.

***“And they were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.”*** Mark 1:22

Although the Pharisees could not deny the manifest authority of Christ, they wilfully defied it with stubborn rejection and hell’s fury to destroy the Son of God who threatened their self-appointed control over the spiritually blind masses. Don’t be upset when stubborn, obstinate people will not receive your authority—it’s not your problem! God will deal with them for resisting His delegated authorities. Again, the impartation of the anointing is to be equipped to minister the undeniable power of God’s Word and Spirit. Have you experienced a time when someone rejected your delegated authority and refused to receive correction or counsel? What were the circumstances of the event and the outcome?

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## **SPEAK TRUTH WITH CONFIDENT AUTHORITY**

One of the most powerful verses regarding authority in the Old Testament is regarding the minor prophet, Micah. He was boldly empowered by the Holy Spirit to fearlessly confront head on Israel's sin. ***“Truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord, and of justice and might, to declare to Israel his sin.”*** Micah 3:8 How could Micah make such an audacious statement? Because 2,700 years ago, he was sent by God to be His voice! The same thing is true today—leaders are raised up and sent by God to be His voice of authority. You never need to feel unqualified or ashamed to speak the truth in love to those who need to hear it when God has sent you. They need to hear it, whether they receive or reject it.

***“How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent?”***

Romans 10:14-15

That is the delegated authority of being divinely sent by God. I want to end this lesson with a true story of a church that Julie and I were involved with some years back. The time had come for a new pastor to take the reins of the church. A team of us met the candidates for the position, a husband and wife who seemed to be a very sincere couple with a true heart for God and people. They were recommended by a board member who knew them from a previous church. They were approved, and to make a long story short, the new pastor and his wife attended the church a short time later with the intention of getting to know the leaders and congregation while Julie and I were still present. He had agreed to preach that service so that the members could get to know him as well. After a beautiful time of worship, the new pastor was called to the pulpit. The next few minutes were extremely painful and embarrassing as he stood there with his hands in his pocket, looking very unsure of himself. He left no doubt in anyone's mind when he sheepishly confessed he didn't know what to say. It was quite the awkward moment for all in attendance as I waited and wondered if this was just a case of nerves and it would get better. His dear wife began to coach him from her seat and I then knew that it was not going to get better. He was definitely not the one. What happened? God did not send him; therefore, he had no delegated authority. Two weeks later, I received a phone call from the board that he quit. It was a hard lesson for the church leadership to learn. Authority for leaders in God's house is not something acquired—it is given by God, but must be exercised by the individual. A leader either has delegated authority to lead—or does not. True, God-sent leaders will exhibit His authority.