

# Source of Authority

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## I. Introduction.

A. Authority is the right to decide or take action. To have the right without the power is to be ineffective, but to have the power without the right is illegal. The two go together.

1. The topic of authority is an issue of the home and a religious question as well.
2. Both the Devil and Jesus claimed authority. (Luke 4, Matthew 28)

B. We live in an ordered universe where there is authority and submission to authority.

1. This is simply an assertion.
2. When you go with authority there is harmony. When you go against it there is catastrophe.

## III. The source of authority

A. You could look at this as simply the fact of authority.

B. All authority comes from God. (Romans 13:1) God is sovereign in His universe and has the right to do what He wants. God has the power to do whatever He wants. God's glory has to do with this.

C. God has delegated authority.

1. First to Jesus. (1 Peter 2, John 13)
2. To angels and Satan. (Jude, Revelation 13)
3. To man. (Genesis 1:28)

D. There are seven biblical authority submission relationships concerning mankind.

1. God and man. Man is to be in submission to God. (Matthew 6:10, James 4:7)
2. Man and nature.
3. Husband and wife. (Genesis 3:16, Ephesians 5:22-23)
4. Parents and children. (Ephesians 6:1)
5. The governed and those who govern. (1 Peter 2:13-14)
6. Employers and employed. (Ephesians 6, 1 Peter 2:18)

7. Spiritual leaders and followers. (Hebrews 13:17)

E. Whether or not these relationships are used or abused, the simple fact is that they are there.

F. People have more than one authority relationship, so the question comes when these conflict what should a person do?

1. We get our instructions from the Scriptures.
2. God does not say much about these relationships, but what it says is always central, fundamental and basic. It fits any man any time anywhere.
3. Certain things apply whether they are voluntary or involuntary.
4. The ten commandments are not rules, but expressions of God's character that we are to live by and can apply anywhere. We do not break the ten commandments—they break us.
5. We all have to make choices. Each of us is accountable to God for the choices that we make. With a right comes a responsibility. With a responsibility comes accountability. (Romans 13:14)
  - a. God will judge us by our actions and attitudes.
  - b. You have the freedom given by God to choose your attitude in any of these relationships.
  - c. God will make us responsible for the attitude we choose.

IV. The problem of authority.

V. The response to authority.

VI. The exercise of authority.

**Application questions**

1. Why is authority simply a fact?

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2. Why are we held accountable in deciding which authority we will follow?

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3. What are situations where you have been in where one authority tells you to do one thing and another tells you to do the opposite? How did you handle it? How should you have handled it?

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