

Walking as Men Under Authority

**BY
LARRY R. BLACKBURN**

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Preface

The Greek word translated in the New Testament as authority is *exousia*. The English spelling is *exousia*, pronounced ex-oo-see'-ah, and means, according to Strong's Greek Lexicon, the following:

- 1) power of choice, liberty of doing as one pleases
 - a) leave or permission
- 2) physical and mental power
 - a) the ability or strength with which one is endued, which he either possesses or exercises
- 3) the power of authority (influence) and of right (privilege)
- 4) the power of rule or government (the power of him whose will and commands must be submitted to by others and obeyed)
 - a) universally
 - 1) authority over mankind
 - b) specifically
 - 1) the power of judicial decisions
 - 2) of authority to manage domestic affairs
 - c) metonymically
 - 1) a thing subject to authority or rule
 - a) jurisdiction
 - 2) one who possesses authority
 - a) a ruler, a human magistrate
 - b) the leading and more powerful among created beings superior to man, spiritual potentates
 - d) a sign of the husband's authority over his wife
 - 1) the veil with which propriety required a woman to cover herself
 - e) the sign of regal authority, a crown

It is found 103 times with the following breakdown of its translations:

power - 69 times
authority - 29 times
right - 2 times
liberty - 1 time
jurisdiction - 1 time
strength - 1 time.

According to *The Random House Webster's Unabridged Dictionary*, Copyright © 2001 by Random House Inc., the following definition is found:

authority (n., pl.) au·thor·i·ty

1. the power to determine, adjudicate, or otherwise settle issues or disputes; jurisdiction; the right to control, command, or determine.

Supp. Note: **syn** . rule, power, sway. Authority, control, influence denote a power or right to direct the actions or thoughts of others. Authority is a power or right, usually because of rank or office, to issue commands and to punish for violations:

Example: to have authority over subordinates. Control is either power or influence applied to the complete and successful direction or manipulation of persons or things:

Example: to be in control of a project. Influence is a personal and unofficial power derived from deference of others to one's character, ability, or station; it may be exerted unconsciously or may operate through persuasion:

Example: to have influence over one's friends.

2. a power or right delegated or given; authorization:

Example: Who has the authority to grant permission?

3. a person or body of persons in whom authority is vested, as a governmental agency.

4. Usually, "*authorities*" – persons having the legal power to make and enforce the law; government:

Example: They finally persuaded the authorities that they were not involved in espionage.

5. an accepted source of information, advice, etc.

6. a quotation or citation from such a source.

7. an expert on a subject:

Example: He is an authority on baseball.

8. persuasive force; conviction:

Example: She spoke with authority.

9. a statute, court rule, or judicial decision that establishes a rule or principle of law; a ruling.

10. right to respect or acceptance of one's word, command, thought, etc.; commanding influence:

Example: the authority of a parent; the authority of a great writer.

11. mastery in execution or performance, as of a work of art or literature or a piece of music.

12. a warrant for action; justification.

13. testimony; witness.

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FOREWORD

Does a Christian have authority now on Earth? Can he/she operate like Jesus did during His earthly ministry? Is there a void in the life of the Church today that needs to be addressed? I believe the answer is a definite “YES” to each of these questions.

Authority has been given a bad rap. We tend to put the Apostles and other great men of faith in a box and somehow think that they could do things; but we, on the other hand, are just worms of the dust, waiting until we get to heaven – and boy, will we have authority then! But permit me to ask: *Who, or what, are you going to exercise authority over - then?* There’ll be no devil, no demons, no sickness or disease, no lack – everything will be under His feet and we’ll be there worshipping and serving our Lord and our God.

Psalm 23 is written for the present – not when we get to heaven. “The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want (lack)...” Why? Because “My God supplies ALL my need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:19). He is my Jehova-Jireh – my provider! I have no lack, for He meets ALL my need.

Another part of Psalm 23: “He prepares a table in the presence of my enemies...” That has to be on this side of Glory, for there’s no enemies in heaven.

“In my Name YOU cast out devils...” Jesus told us in Mark 16. Where are you going to cast them out from? Not in heaven... they won’t be there. You cast them out here in this place – Earth. You do it. In another passage, Jesus said that we would do his works and even greater ones! (John 14). Someone says, “Well, that was to the Apostles, Larry, not us.” Then why didn’t Jesus say “I say this to you Apostles (only).” Look at verse 12 – *Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.*

Note that He said that “he that believes on me – he will do the works that I do and even greater ones!” Are you a believer? Do you profess to be a Christ-follower? A Christian? Then you have the right to do the works that Jesus did. “How,” you say? That’s the purpose of this book.

The Church has been ignorant of this subject and needs to rise from (among) the dead and awake to righteousness. “Wake up,” in other words. We need to quit playing church and be the church! Doing so will bring in the end-time harvest the Lord is desiring.

Truths never change. God’s Word is Truth and His Word is forever settled. It’s the knowledge (the waking up to) that truth, that will set us free (John 8:32).

Larry Blackburn

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All scripture is from the King James Version, unless otherwise noted.

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Chapter 1

JESUS' AUTHORITY RECOGNIZED BY PEOPLE

It was right after the Sermon on the Mount, as we have named and come to know, that we find these verses:

“And it came to pass when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” (Matthew 7:28 and 29)

There's something about a man speaking under the power and anointing of the Holy Spirit that is easily recognized by those in audience. It's an insight, to a degree, into the supernatural; an insight into the spiritual; recognized by both the seen and the unseen. Both man and demons recognized this authority in Jesus' life. Jesus lived thirty years before his anointing; but nowhere is it recorded during this time, that anyone recognized him as having authority. The closest we come is the passage of his visit to Jerusalem with his parents when he was about twelve years of age (Luke 2:41-52). And then they weren't recognizing his authority, but rather, his wisdom.

Most of us accept Jesus' authority. But what many do not understand, is that this authority to minister came only after his baptism by John, the anointing by the Holy Spirit, and the wilderness temptations. Before this time, Jesus was known as the carpenter's son. Later, during his earthly ministry, when his country was blessed to have him in their midst (Mark 6:1-6), they questioned themselves saying, “Isn't this the carpenter, the son of Mary?” It says Jesus could not do any mighty work there. Jesus replied, “A prophet is not without honor, but (except) in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.” They did not accept his authority and, consequently, missed out on the blessings God had in store for them. Because of their ignorance, Jesus went about their villages teaching. Why? In an attempt to give them knowledge; the “entrance of His Word gives light,” as Psalms 119:130 says.

This should help us understand the ministry today. The principle is traceable throughout the Old Testament as well as the New. One such passage is Numbers chapter 13 and 14. Israel had just sent twelve spies into “the land of milk and honey.” Ten of these spies brought what the scripture calls “an evil report” (Numbers 13:32). These ten stirred up the congregation of Israel such that chapter 14, verse 2, says, “all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, ‘Would (wished to) God that we had died in the land of Egypt or would [that] God we had died in this wilderness...’” However, notice verse 27, when God comes in on the scene: “How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against **me**? I have heard the murmuring of the children of Israel, which they murmur against **me**.” God takes it personally when one of His delegated authorities is attacked.

Another Old Testament example is found in 1 Samuel chapters 24 and 26. Israel's first King, Saul, sinned against the Lord (chapter 15) and his kingship was taken away and given to David, the son of Jesse. Saul grew jealous and angry toward David and decided to kill David and keep his throne.

David fled into the mountains and hid. Saul eventually found out where David was and took his army to flush David out and kill him. One night, David sneaked in to where Saul slept and cut off part of his robe, sparing Saul's life. David's followers suggested to David that he should kill Saul and take his rightful place as the new King. David's response was "The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed" (26:11). David spared Saul's life not once, but twice and refused to harm Saul in any way.

David knew the spiritual law concerning delegated authority. Psalms 105:15 says "Touch not mine anointed..." David left judgement of Saul to God and God alone. It was many years after the prophet Samuel first anointed David, that he actually gained the title "King of Israel".

We see this same principle, or spiritual law, in the New Testament, Acts 9:1-6:

And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" And he said, "Who art thou, Lord?" And the Lord said, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks." And he trembling and astonished said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And the Lord said unto him, "Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do."

Look at verse 4, "Saul, why are you persecuting *me*?" Someone might ask, "But I thought Saul was persecuting the church?" Jesus said "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Mt. 25:40) Again, he takes it personally.

"Touch not my anointed." (1 Chronicles 16:22 and Psalms 105:15) 1 Corinthians 10:10 says, "Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer."

Read Hebrews chapter three, verse six, through chapter four, verse three, and there you'll find that God says those who murmured against Him, departed from Him -- because they had an evil heart of unbelief (3:12) and, consequently, could not enter in the promise land "because of their unbelief." (Hebrews 3:19) The word, "unbelief" is better translated as "unpersuadableness." After all the mighty miracles God did for them, all the provisions God provided, they would not enter in because they could not be persuaded to. And why couldn't they? Because of their "evil heart of unbelief" (verse 12).

Could this be why some today are destroyed? Could this be why some don't get answers to their prayers or aren't receiving the provisions God has for them? Could this be why some aren't entering into the rest God has for them?

Learn this about murmuring and attacking God's children either by word or deed:

**DELEGATED AUTHORITY IS TREATED AS BEING ONE AND THE SAME
AS THE ONE WHO DELEGATES THAT AUTHORITY!**

Don't fight God... you'll never win.

Chapter 2

JESUS – A MAN UNDER AUTHORITY

Let's begin by taking a look at the following verses from Mark chapter eleven:

And they come again to Jerusalem: and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders, and say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me. And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed. And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things. (vs. 27-33)

Notice that these chief priests, scribes and elders asked: “By what authority are you doing the things that you do? Who gave you permission to do these things?” They did not ask *how* He did the things that He was doing. “We want to know by what authority you are doing these things!”

I remember as a child, my parents would ask me, “Who told you that you could do that?” or “Who gave you permission to do that?” or “Who said you can do that?” Why were they asking me those questions? Because they wanted to know who authorized me to do or say the things that they caught me doing or saying. Usually, I had none. Unless I was at Grandma's – then, she got into trouble!

“By what authority?”

Permit me to ask you a couple of questions: “By what authority are YOU doing the things you do?” and “Who is the authority in YOUR life?”

What does the Bible have to say about authority? Man was originally created to have authority. Genesis uses the word “dominion,” but it still means authority. Man's authority, man's dominion, was far reaching. It reached from earth to heaven itself. We know this is true, because scriptures tell us that Jesus entered into the heavenly temple itself, to purify (cleanse) the “heavenly utensils,” and offer the final payment for the sin of the world with his own blood (Hebrews 9:19 – 24). “It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” If the heavenly utensils needed cleansing, then that means that Adam's sin reached that far.

Moses was told to make the earthly tabernacle “after the pattern showed thee.” (Hebrews 8:5) What “pattern” did he have? The heavenly pattern. He made a replica of the temple he saw in heaven (Exodus 25:9 & 40). Later, Jesus took his High Priest position, and with his own blood entered into this heavenly temple once, and for all of us. No longer is it necessary for any sacrifice to be made. He paid it ALL. We get access now via the power of the blood. We can come boldly to the throne of God and obtain help in time of [any] need (Hebrews 4:16). Boldly doesn’t mean arrogantly. It means because of what Jesus did, paving the way for us, we have total and free access to the Father, so we can with confidence, go to Him anytime and obtain help in our time of need. He is *for* us – not *against* us. He simply says to His children, “Come. Obtain.”

Let’s continue our study on Jesus’ recognized authority from Matthew 8:5–13:

And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, and saying, “Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.” And Jesus saith unto him, “I will come and heal him.” The centurion answered and said, “Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.” When Jesus heard it, he marveled, and said to them that followed, “Verily (truly) I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel. And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” And Jesus said unto the centurion, “Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee.” And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

From this account we learn:

TO BE IN AUTHORITY, YOU MUST BE UNDER AUTHORITY!

True authority always stems from this. Only as you place and keep yourself under authority do you maintain that delegated authority. A police officer maintains his authority by the agency that employs him as long as he keeps himself under that authority, abiding by the laws governing that authority. Once he steps out on his own, he is no longer a representative of that agency. He is considered a “loose cannon,” a “vigilante,” or a “rogue cop.” Likewise, a representative (or as 2 Corinthians 5:20 calls us – an “ambassador”) of the Kingdom of God must maintain the authority vested in him. Jesus did not reply to the priests, scribes and elders when asked, “By whose authority do you do these things?”... “By my authority, after all, I’m the Son of God!” No, his authority came through the same avenue that Christians today have their authority – the Word of God. Authority never extends beyond responsibility; authority never proceeds out of anything other than responsibility. *Responsibility and Authority go hand in hand.*

This centurion recognized the authority of Jesus. He said, "...speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I **say** to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it" (verse 8 and 9).

I like Luke's translation of this story: "For I also am a man set under authority..." (Luke 7:8) Luke adds the word "also." "For I *also*..." Recognizing Jesus' authority as being under the authority of God, this centurion knew that Jesus' words would produce results. Whatever Jesus said had to come to pass; "**Speak** the word only, and my servant shall be healed." Words produce. "The words I speak," Jesus said, "they are spirit and they are **life**." "My son, attend to my words, incline thine ear unto my sayings. Let them not depart from thine eyes, keep them in the midst of thine heart. For they are **life** unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh." (Proverbs 4:20-22) "I am the way, the truth, the **life**..." (John 14:6) "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God." (John 1:1) What am I saying? That Jesus is the Word; that Jesus (the Word) is LIFE, and that Jesus (the Word) will produce life in those that hear and allow that Word to take root in them, and that this Word produces health. [Sidenote: It's interesting to me, to hear some people say that healing is not for us today. Haven't they heard Proverbs 4:22, that God's Word (Jesus) produces "health to ALL their flesh"? The Hebrew word translated "health" is the exact same word translated elsewhere as "medicine." It's the only medicine I know where one can take an overdose or mix with other medicines and get better! Or haven't they heard Psalms 107:20, "He sent His Word and healed them and delivered them from their destruction?"]

The Word works. It will always produce after it's own kind. The Centurion knew this – that words produce – and believed it. Jesus called this the highest kind of faith He had seen. The word sent by Jesus produced health to the Centurion's servant. (This also shows that those in authority over others can obtain help in their behalf... a principle every parent should understand.)

Someone might point out that Luke's account and Matthew's accounts seem to contradict one another. One account says the Centurion himself came to Jesus, and the other account says elders of the Jews besought Jesus for the Centurion's healing of his servant. But there's no contradiction, once you understand the principle of *delegated authority*. By this, you'll see that the Centurion's representatives were there asking Jesus for the healing -- *in his stead*. The Centurion was there via his representatives who were sent in his name. Later, when Jesus came close to the house, the Centurion sent others (friends) who came to Jesus and asked Him to "speak the Word only" because he (the Centurion) knew Jesus' words would invoke the healing in his servant.

So there's no contradiction, just misunderstanding the perspective of the writers—Luke, from delegated authority, and Matthew from the authority himself.

Notice that verse ten says Jesus "marveled" at this man's faith. Another passage (Mark 6:6) says Jesus "marveled" at the people in his own country because of their unbelief. I would rather have Jesus marvel at my faith than my unbelief any day. Sadly, religion (tradition) gets in the way of truth. "Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition." (Mark 7:13) Jesus said in

John 8:31-32, “If ye continue in **my** word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” Note that (1) If you continue in His word THEN are ye His disciples, and (2) you shall know the truth (the WORD – Jesus – the TRUTH) and the TRUTH (Jesus) shall set you free. It’s *knowledge of* the truth that sets you free. It’s when the Word becomes a Word to you personally, the “letter of the law” becoming “the spirit of the law” as mentioned in 2 Corinthians 3:6.

I remember the first time I used delegated authority. I was working at a government installation, on second shift, getting ready to get off at 11:30 or 12 midnight. My wife called just before I got off and asked me to hurry home, as our one and a half-year old daughter, Jennifer, was crying and had a high fever. She told me she had tried everything she knew to do; yet the baby still had the high temperature and was as cranky as ever. A tepid bath had proved no good as well.

[Now, this next part needs to be explained a little. If one tells others that “he hears voices,” it could be construed as someone that is in desperate need of psychological help. I heard and communicated with my Saviour and Lord.]

A minute later after work, I was walking out to my car thinking about all that Kathy told me concerning Jennifer and I thought to myself, “What am I going to do? Kathy has done everything I know as well.” Jesus spoke to me and asked, “What did I do?”

I recognized Jesus’ voice (John 10) and asked, “Where? When?”

“When I went to Peter’s house,” came the answer.

My memory started researching Jesus’ ministry and I remembered a time that Jesus went to Peter’s house and there, Peter’s mother-in-law was sick with a fever. I watched the action play out in my mind as I went over each verse. I saw Jesus come into Peter’s house and as He entered, He had to duck His head a little as He was taller than the door entrance itself. (I have always thought Jesus was around 6’2” – ever since I had a dream and He and I walked together. I’m six-foot even, and in the dream, I had to look up a bit to look at His face. I had some reservations about marrying my wife and it was bothering me tremendously – thus, the dream)

I saw Jesus come in, and upon seeing Peter’s mother-in-law sick lying in bed. He went over and rebuked the fever; the fever left her, He took her by the hand and helped her up. She then cooked dinner.

“That’s right,” said Jesus.

I thought over the action again, and again. “What am I missing?” I asked the Lord. No answer.

So I replayed the scene over once more. Then I saw it – Jesus **rebuked** the fever. He spoke to it! “Well, if Jesus did it, then Bless God, I can do it too!” I said.

On the way home (about 5 to 10 minutes from work), I spoke in my car, “Fever! In the Name of Jesus, you leave my child right now! You have no right to be attacking my child – you leave now!” I continued traveling home praising the Lord, thanking Him because His Word works.

I arrived home and my wife met me at the door saying, “Honey, there’s nothing wrong with Jennifer now. A couple minutes ago, she was crying and still feverish; but now look at her.”

I looked at our baby, in the middle of the floor, playing with some toy with a smile on her face. I picked her up and noticed that she didn’t feel hot at all. My Jesus had healed her through *delegated authority* given unto me.

Examine the ministry of Jesus as told in the four Gospels. Then read the first chapter of Hebrews. When you see Jesus, you see the Father. Jesus is the exact reflection of the Father. He said Himself, “I only do those things the Father tells me to do.” “I only speak that which the Father tells me to speak.” (John 5:19; 12:49) So the works that Jesus did throughout his earthly ministry, was the Father’s will in action. The words that Jesus spoke, were the Father’s words. The Father’s will was manifested in the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus only did that which pleased the Father (John 8:29). It was pleasing to the Father that people were healed. It was pleasing to the Father that people were delivered. It was pleasing to the Father that people had their needs met. Has the Father changed? No. But, because some churches do not practice the Word, they do not have the same results; and, consequently, must provide to their congregation an explanation as to “Why doesn’t it work for me?” I call them (the explanations) “excuses.” They must provide some excuse for their failure to do the works that Jesus did. (See John 14:12). Basically, what they and a lot of Christians do is this: **They judge the Word in light of their circumstances, instead of judging their circumstances in light of the Word.** If your circumstances don’t line up with the Word of God... speak to them and change them! Blow that mountain out of your life by speaking to it (Mark 11:22-24). Pray for wisdom. Prayer will not only give revelation as to what is coming and what to do, but it will also expose the problem(s) that are currently, or in progress, in your life. It’ll take the Word to get rid of any problem, and the relinquishing of your will to His to be able to go His Way. Hold fast to the confession of your faith. “I believe, therefore, I speak” (2 Corinthians 4:13). “NO weapon that is formed against me shall prosper” (Isaiah 54:17). It doesn’t say, “no weapon shall not be formed against me” it says any weapon that is formed against me shall not prosper – Shall not be brought to success against me. How? By me giving the Word first place in my life. John 10:10 tells us WHO steals, WHO kills, WHO destroys. AND IS NOT THE HEAVENLY FATHER! “Render unto Satan the things that be Satan’s and unto God the things that belong to God” (Larry’s paraphrase of Matthew 22:21).

“These signs shall follow them that believe...” (Mark 16:17) The signs follow the believer – not the doubter. Read the last verse of Mark 16: “And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them* and confirming the word with signs following. Amen”

Notice in the KJV, the word “them” is italicized. Usually, this means that it was added by the translators because they (the translators) thought it gave clarity to what was being said. I believe, in this case, it should not have been added. Remove it and read the verse again: “And they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with and confirming the word with signs

following. Amen.” The Lord works with AND confirms His word with signs following. You preach the Word concerning salvation and people get saved. Preach the Word concerning healing, people get healed. The harvest is always a product of the seed. God watches over His Word to perform it (Jeremiah 1:12; Isaiah 55:10, 11). The seed is the Word of God. It is sown in many types of soils, but the seed itself will produce IF that seed is received and kept in good ground. (Mark 4:14-20 and Matthew 13:3-9, 18-23).

Luke 8:18 tells us “take heed *how* you hear” and Mark 4:24 says, “take heed *what* you hear.” How you hear deals with your attitude; what you hear deals with content. We need to be very knowledgeable of the Word of God (content) and willing to allow that Word to correct us if necessary, and to give us understanding in the things of God. Then we need to receive that Word in our lives (attitude). The Word of God is given to us for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16). Faith is produced by hearing the Word (Romans 10:17).

For example, some Christians don’t have knowledge of the subject of healing. Consequently, they are destroyed for that lack (Hosea 4:6). A lack of knowledge of what the Word of God says concerning the subject of healing, gives no resistance to the enemy in the arena of health. Their ignorance puts up no block to sickness, disease and consequently, they suffer in the natural because of it.

Healing is within the Gospel. What most Christians think the “Gospel” is today, isn’t what the Bible calls the Gospel. Look at Acts 14:

⁷ And there they preached the gospel.

⁸ And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother’s womb, who never had walked:

⁹ The same heard Paul speak: who steadfastly beholding him, and perceiving that he had faith to be healed,

¹⁰ Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked.

First, the Apostle Paul did not heal this man. Second, the man had faith. Third, Paul perceived the man had faith to be healed and simply told the man to act on it. “Stand upright on your feet!” Lastly, the man put action (works) to his faith and reaped the benefits of that faith. (James 1:22)

How did this life-long cripple get faith to be healed? Verse seven says “And there they [the Apostles Paul and Barnabas] preached the **gospel**.” The “gospel?” What is it about “the gospel” that brought faith to a crippled man, who never walked, to receive his healing in those lifeless legs of his? If Paul and Barnabas preached only the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, how did that produce faith in the man to be healed? Is there something that we are missing here? Undoubtedly, yes!

How does one get faith? How is faith produced? Romans 10:17 says, “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” In order to have faith for healing, one must hear the Word concerning healing. You cannot have faith for something that is not known, for faith is based

upon the known will of God, and knowing comes from hearing what God says about the subject studied (Psalms 119:130). God's Word and His will are the same.

We are representatives of the Father in the earth today. It is He who is at work in us, through us, and from us, but the will of the Father is carried out via the Body of Christ. Remember when Jesus ascended into heaven in Acts 1, the Word says: "And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? **this same Jesus**, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (verses 10 and 11). I like those three little words: "this same Jesus." Jesus hasn't changed from his earthly ministry. He is the same yesterday, today and forever, Hebrews 13:8 tells us. Now if Jesus healed all that came to him (in faith) during His earthly ministry, and "this same Jesus" is going to be coming back, doesn't it stand to reason that in between these two periods of time that He would remain the same? Modern theology would have us to believe that somewhere between His ascension and His return, Jesus changed. Then when He comes again, He'll change back to what He was during His earthwalk. It doesn't take a rocket scientist here to see that something's amiss. Jesus is the same. He is the exact same person today as He was then. And He'll be the same when He returns. Jesus is unchangeable.

So, how did this cripple find faith to be healed? He had to hear Paul say something about Jesus' willingness to heal any and all. He had to hear "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him; and **with his stripes we are healed.**" (Isaiah 53:4, 5) Or perhaps he heard from Acts 10:38, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and **healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.**" Why did Jesus go about healing all that were oppressed by Satan? "FOR God was with him!" Sickness is oppression from Satan. Why did healing come to this cripple? Because God was with Paul and confirmed His Word with signs following the believing Paul.

Faith is ALWAYS present when the Word is preached, but faith is not manifested until it is received and acted upon. God will provide the power to confirm His word, but it still takes our hearing and our believing, then action upon that Word, to allow that power to be released. Take a look at Jesus' own ministry as recorded in Luke 5: 17-26...

And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judaea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was present to heal them. And, behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought means to bring him in, and to lay him before him. And when they could not find by what way they might bring him in because of the multitude, they went upon the housetop, and let him down through the tiling with his couch into the midst before Jesus. And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, "Man, thy sins are forgiven thee." And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?" But when

Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, “What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins,” (he said unto the sick of the palsy,) “I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go into thine house.” And immediately he rose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God. And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, “We have seen strange things to day.”

Verse 17 “... and the power of the Lord was present to heal them.” But notice no one got healed that were inside the building listening. Only the ill man and his four friends had faith. Jesus saw “their faith” and the sick one received his healing. Their faith manifested in the use of the power of God resulting in obtaining healing for this man. How many times have we been in meetings where the power of the Lord was in residence, but not used our faith to appropriate that power in our lives for a healing? Faith always comes when the Word is proclaimed. “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing [*and hearing... and for some of us hard-headed ones... and hearing, and hearing*] by the Word of God.” And the power of God is present where the Word is proclaimed because He’s willing to use His power to ensure His Word comes to pass; now, that’s confirmation!

Romans 1:16 in part states “For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation...” The Gospel contains the power of God that will result in salvation. The Greek and Hebrew word for salvation, “implies the idea of deliverance, safety, preservation, healing, and soundness.” (See Dr. C.I. Scofield’s note on this verse in his reference Bible.)

We see this in numerous cases in the Gospels alone. One particular case that comes to mind is recorded in Mark chapter five:

25. And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years,
26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,
27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment.
28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.
29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague.
30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?
31 And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?
32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.
33 But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.
34 And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

The Greek word translated in verse 30 as “virtue” is “dunamis” meaning, “power,” “mighty work,” “strength.” It’s the same word as in Acts 1:8, “But ye shall receive power [dunamis], after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you...” We get our English word, “dynamite” from this Greek word.

I want you to notice, verse 34: “Daughter, your faith has made you whole...” How? By this woman’s faith – *not* by Jesus’ power. Jesus didn’t say, “My power has healed you,” He said, “Your faith has made you whole.” If this woman’s faith can heal her, then my faith can heal me. God is no respecter of persons. He loves me as much as He loved this woman. His will was for this woman to be healed; His will hasn’t changed. Therefore His will is for me to be healed. It will take His power (verse 30) to bring about the fulfillment of our faith, and thank God, His will to use that power is still alive today.

It was this woman’s faith that made a demand upon the power of Jesus to be healed. She touched Him, but then so did the multitude of other people (v. 31). Why didn’t they get healed? This woman was the only one we have recorded to receive healing because she was the only one that touched Jesus *in faith*. How did she get faith for her healing? Verse 27: “When she *heard* of Jesus...” She must have heard his willingness to use His power to heal.

What many people today are doing, is much like the multitude mentioned here. They “hope” to be healed. Faith and hope are NOT the same. Faith gives substance – materiality – to things hoped for (Hebrews 11:1a); Faith is the evidence of things NOT seen, that is, NOT revealed to the natural senses (Hebrews 11:1b). Evidence means confidence, assurance, or ground (foundation of).

Hope does not produce. Hope must have Faith applied to it. Hope can cause you to search or seek for answers to your questions or desires. But it takes the hearing of God’s Word to that subject under consideration that will produce the desired results. That’s called Faith (Romans 10:17).

“God might not heal you. He might be teaching you something.” “God is using this sickness to humble me.” Blah, blah, blah. ALL wrong. ALL excuses. The word tells us how He corrects us, how He teaches us, how He rebukes us. Read it in 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

All scripture [that is, the Word] is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

The **Word of God** is profitable (i.e. for our good): in doctrine, in reproof, in correction, in instruction in righteousness (righteousness meaning the ability to stand in the presence of God without sin). The Word is what corrects us. The Word is what reproves us. The Word is what instructs us. NOT sickness, disease, calamities!

I am a father. I have three beautiful children. They’re grown up now, but when they were young, and I wanted to teach them that the top of the stove was hot, I told them not to touch it else they would get burned. Later, if my child says, “I wonder if daddy told me the truth,” and

touches the stove and gets burned – did I burn them? Did I allow it to happen? Did I orchestrate the scene? NO! I gave them my word. I told them what would happen if they touched the top of the stove. If they would have believed my word and kept my word, they would never have touched the stove and never would have been burned. BUT since they touched the stove, they did learn a valuable lesson: THE STOVE IS HOT!

Proverbs 13:15 says it this way: “The way of a transgressor is hard.” My child transgressed and learned the lesson that what daddy said was true. My joy comes from seeing my children obeying me, taking me at my word. If my word is no good, then I’m no good. The same thing applies to our heavenly Father. He gives us His Word and if we would believe it and act upon it, we won’t get burnt! His Word is good because He is good. If you transgress God’s Word, you will learn that indeed the way of a transgressor is hard.

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth” (3 John 1:4) And what is truth? THE WORD. It gives our Father great joy to hear that we walk in His Word – taking Him at His Word.

I like what Joseph E. Wilderman said in his book, *“A Study in the Plan of Redemption”* concerning the importance of the Word:

“This [the Word] is the means whereby God has made known to us our redemption, and the means whereby a man becomes a new creature in Christ. Our heavenly Father has given to us a revelation of our redemption in Christ, the new creation in Christ, and a revelation of Father-God Himself. This revelation is not only a witness of Himself, but also a witness of the New Creation, its privileges, authority, and responsibility.

“That Revelation is His Word, the Bible. Words can give no adequate estimation of the place the Word of God holds in redemption and the life of God’s child. My desire is to show forth the utter sacredness of God’s Word, and the vital place it holds in the life of the Believer. It is the Word that is the food of the New Creation, the nourishment of the Christian, and his source of strength and power. Lacking God’s Word in their lives, His people are literally destroyed for lack of the knowledge of the Word.”

No knowledge, no freedom. (John 8:32)

Chapter 3

TYPES OF AUTHORITY

Getting back to our text: “By what authority do you do these things? Who gave you this authority?” (Mark 11:28)

There are three different authorities I find in the world.

1. YOU. Your opinion; your interpretation; your feelings; your experiences; your knowledge of the situation ... etc.

Based entirely upon your sense knowledge that is, your experience in life.

Notice Jesus did not reply: “By my own authority. After all, I’m the Son of God!”

Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25 both say: “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.” We can be some of the most stubborn people on earth. We refuse to acknowledge God in our lives. If we would allow His authority to rule, life would be so much better.

2. OTHERS. Someone else’ opinion; someone else’ interpretation; someone else’ feelings; someone else’ experiences; someone else’ knowledge of the situation ... etc.

Examples: Doctors, Lawyers, Parents, Professors, Tradition, News Media, Elected Officials, etc.

Notice: these priests, scribes and elders reasoned among themselves (v. 31, 32).

“For they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit. For to be carnally (fleshly) minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. For the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” (Romans 8:5 - 7)

The natural mind running amok is not going to side with God. It can’t. Only a spiritual mind will allow God to take His rightful place in our lives. How do we get a spiritual mind? That brings us to the third type of authority – the God kind, the right kind.

3. THE WORD OF GOD.

2 Timothy 3:16,17 “All scripture (Word) is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness [so] that the man of God may be perfect (mature), thoroughly furnished (equipped) unto all good works.”

All scripture is given by God in order to help us get our heads screwed on correctly. It is “quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” Hebrews 4:12

The Word is ‘quick’ – that is, it’s “alive.” It’s a living thing. Not just ink and paper; but it’s the Word of the Living God! It doesn’t just contain the Word of God; it is the Word of God! It is also powerful. It has within it the capability of doing exactly what it says it would do. God’s Word is a seed (Luke 8:11; 1 Peter 1:23), and when received (planted) in the soil of your heart (Mark 4:20), will produce after it’s kind (Genesis 1:11,12 – the law of Genesis: Every seed produces after it’s own kind). You can bank on it. Why? ***Because it is the Word of God.***

Notice also, that it’s sharper than “any two-edged sword.” Meaning, there are other two-edged swords out there, but the Word of God is sharper than any of them. Jesus said once that the Word of God is like a mustard seed, “which is smaller than all the other seeds.” Again, informing us that there are other seeds out there that we need to be aware of. When we place ourselves under a man, or a denomination, and take everything that he or they say as gospel, we could be in trouble. We need to be like the Bereans as recorded in Acts 17:11, “... they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily whether those things (that Paul and Silas taught) were so.” How often? DAILY! Don’t just sit there and accept whatever flies out of the mouth of anybody or any denomination. Check it out. Take heed WHAT you hear. Knowledge OF the Word will set you free. Free from sin, sickness, and disease. Free in knowing who you are, what you have, what you can do in and through the name of Jesus. It’s moving from a theological point of view to experiencing the Life and Power of God in your life!

Look at what Peter tells us:

- 1 Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ:
- 2 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,
- 3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:
- 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. (2 Peter 1)

How is grace and peace going to be multiplied to you? By the *knowledge* of God and of Jesus our Lord. How is His divine power giving all things that pertain to life and godliness going to be given to you? By, or through, again, the *knowledge* of Him.

How does one obtain knowledge of Him? By reading, hearing, meditating on the things He has to say about Himself and His ways. All these are given to us for the purpose of conforming us into the image of His dear Son.

Romans 12:2 tells us not to be conformed to this world, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, so that we may prove the good, acceptable and perfect will of God. It doesn't say "so that we may *know*... the will of God;" it says that "we may *prove* the will of God." Big difference. Moving from the "talking the talk" to the "walking the walk" mode. And what conformation is He looking for? Again, to be conformed into the image of His dear Son (Romans 8:29).

It's by the Word of God that we can become partakers of His nature; we can be transformed into His likeness – by our speech, by our walk, by our actions and by our attitudes.

Transformation (Romans 12:1,2; Ephesians 4:22-24) includes:

- ♦ **Manifesting the Glory of God.** John 14:9, 10
Manifest means to *reveal, make known, to show forth* - the Glory of God.
This gives the world a clear image of God (John 2:11).
- ♦ **Living His Life** – showing God's Character.
- ♦ **Speaking His Word** – showing God's thoughts and intentions.
- ♦ **Working His Works** – showing God's power.

It is all the above that each of us need to incorporate in our lives. There's a dying world out there in dire need to be shown that God is alive – that He is alive in us, through us, and upon us. They have a hunger deep down for the real thing. Too much of the time, they have seen "religion," and not Christianity.

We must show that authority in the earth is still among us. We must show that God does answer prayer. We must show that God loves them right where they are today, and that He will help them in every area of their lives, if they would come to Him believing that He is, and also believe that He is a rewarder to them that diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).

All this we can do when we, ourselves, diligently seek Him, when we take the responsibility of being under His authority and when we allow the transformation mentioned above in our lives. All those that hunger and thirst shall be filled; seek and you shall find.

Remember: God is *for* us – not *against* us.

Chapter 4

VESTED AUTHORITY

We see that this God-kind of authority is needed, but how do we come to be the ones representing that authority on earth? Good question. I have the answer.

First, you must be born-again. You must be a child of God. God does not give his authority away to any one outside His family. (See what happened to the seven sons of Sceva, as recorded in Acts 19:11-16, when they tried, on their own, to exercise God's authority without being part of God's family. This also shows that God's authority is recognized by devils). There is NO way around this... you must be born-again.

Secondly, you must become aware of WHO you are IN CHRIST JESUS. You must become aware of what you have because of Christ Jesus. This is all in the scriptures, so you must become aware of the scriptures. Knowledge gives understanding; understanding gives hope; hope gives confidence; confidence builds assurance knowing that God will confirm His Word in your life with His power.

There are roughly 134 New Testament scriptures that says something about WHO you are, WHAT you have or can do IN CHRIST JESUS. For example, "If any man be in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature; old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). Realize that IF you are born-again, you are IN Christ Jesus. And IF you are IN Christ Jesus, you ARE a new creature, or creation (NIV). You don't have to try to be one – you are one. I don't try to be a male – I am one. So, in this one verse, I renew my mind saying, "I am a new creation; I am a child of God; God created me." In like manner, I see other characteristics about this New Me. "I am (not gonna be) the righteousness of God IN CHRIST (2 Corinthians 5:21); I have the Peace of God that passes my understanding (Romans 5:1 and Philippians 4:7); I am a son of God – not servant-hood, but sonship (Galatians 4:7); I can do all things because Christ Jesus strengthens me (Philippians 4:13); Greater is He that is in me, than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4)..." etc.

I simply agree with the Word that tells me Who I am, What I have, What I can do – because of me being **IN** Christ Jesus; and how does one get in Christ Jesus? By being born-again! Receive the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ PERSONALLY, allowing that work on the cross to be in your stead. You should have been on that cross. You should have died. You were the guilty one. Jesus took YOUR place and paid the price for YOUR sin. You couldn't have done it – it took the perfect, blameless, sacrifice of Jesus in your behalf to accomplish justice in the case of YOUR sins. Now, all that is required of you is to accept (receive) that sacrifice personally. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved... If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth **unto** righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made **unto** salvation" (Acts 16:31 and Romans 10:9, 10). The word "unto" in this latter part can be translated "resulting in". I like that. My belief, my confession of the

Lordship of Jesus, results in my salvation. He did the work, paying the penalty of sin (Romans 6:23), but it is me personally that reaps the benefit of that payment. I owed a debt I could not pay; He paid a debt He did not owe. But it was ALL done FOR ME PERSONALLY. My, my... how great is the grace of God! That gets me excited. In the scheme of things, I am important enough to God that He sent His Son, Jesus, to redeem (to buy back) ME. Not me only, but YOU as well. The IOU DUE TO SIN HAS BEEN PAID... RECEIVE THAT PAYMENT FOR YOURSELF! Don't reject it. "But to as many as received him (Jesus), to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name... For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved" (John 1:12 & 3:17). He did it all for you. YOU personally!

Agree with the Word of God concerning Who you are, What you can do, What you have IN CHRIST JESUS. First the New Birth, then knowledge of all that the New Birth gives. Jesus said it this way in Matthew 11:28-30:

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and
ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Notice Jesus said: ¹ Come unto me, ² take my yoke, and ³ Learn of me. Too often, people want to jump to number 3 and skip numbers 1 and 2. You can not LEARN OF Jesus without going to Him and receiving Him in your life.

Knowing about Jesus is not the same as knowing Jesus. Numerous times Jesus used illustrations showing forth the "Depart from me, I never KNEW you" principle. In the Old Testament, the Israelites knew *about* God – but didn't *know* God. In Psalm 103:7, it states God made known His way to Moses, but His acts (what He did - His deeds) to the children of Israel. Why did God reveal Himself to Moses and not the people of Israel? Because Moses sought God's (not man's) approval. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God..." (Matthew 6:33) Moses choose to be a doer of God's Word and God honored Him for it.

"For not the hearers of the Law (Word) are just before God, but the doers of the Law (Word) shall be justified" (Romans 2:13).

"Why call me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?" says Jesus in Luke 6:46.

Continuing in verse 47, "Whosoever comes to me, and hears my sayings and does them I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built an house upon the earth; against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell; and the ruin of that house was great."

Matthew 7:24 through 27 has the same passage and uses the word "sand" in lieu of the words "without a foundation" as mention here in Luke's account. A wise man builds upon the ROCK of the Word of God. A foolish man (Matthew's account) is one that builds upon sand with no

foundation. Both have the same storm of life come their way, but only the one that did the Word of God stood afterwards. That is the way it is in life. Those that build their lives upon the Word of God and STAND on the solidity (rock) of that Word in their life will come out the other side; whereas those that hear, but do not walk in that which they hear, are foolish and will not successfully come through the other side. Homes built on man's wisdom, or any other thing, other than the Word of God, are being destroyed or damaged. Head knowledge, and not full assurance concerning God's Word, will not be able to stand up against the pressures of life that come our way – and come they will. You must be like it is said of Abraham:

He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he (God) had promised, he (God) was able also to perform. (Romans 4:20, 21)

Fully persuaded – not half, not three-quarters; **fully** persuaded. Trusting completely in the Word of God to do whatever you are standing on, believing.

This passage goes on and tells us because Abraham stood on the promise of God that it was therefore accounted (credited) to him for righteousness (verse 22). But it goes on and says that it wasn't written for his sake alone but for those that believe on Him that raised Jesus Christ from the dead. It is counted for us as righteousness when we believe and receive the sacrifice of Jesus for us personally.

The word "righteousness" is the doctrine concerning the way in which man may attain a state approved of God, like the word "justified" – the act of God declaring men free from guilt and acceptable to him. Romans chapter three talks about "justification" and us "being justified freely by His grace" (verse 24). Chapter 5, verse one, confirms this stating: "... we have peace with God," (how?) "through our Lord Jesus Christ." It goes on to say we stand by faith in this grace. What grace? US being justified. We didn't have to "DO" anything to earn this; it is entirely by His grace, His willingness to give "whosoever" that comes to, and trust in, the finished work of Calvary, the right of justification. As the definition above says, that the "whosoever" is declared by God free from guilt and is acceptable to God as well.

Justification, like sanctification, has been made into a religious word. Consequently, we fail to understand the meaning of the words themselves. Sanctification simply means to be put aside (set apart) for the work of God.

In a sense, we ALL are sanctified (John 17:17; Acts 20:32; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 1 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 13:12). We all are "set apart" to be used by God. Then there are the ministry gifts, mentioned in Ephesians chapter four, to the body of Christ that is of a different sanctification – a different setting apart by God.

I have a calling upon my life to the body of Christ, but I also have exactly the same calling on my life as every other believer does – that of being a child of God, witnessing of the truths concerning the Kingdom of God, the things of God. It doesn't make me better than any one else; it's a calling, a responsibility that I'm going to be held accountable for.

What I'm trying to say is justification and sanctification are a couple of Bible doctrines that have been put in a jar of religion, wrapped with instructions that "one cannot obtain" or "one has to be some super-duper Christian" in order to achieve it. Don't be blinded by religious systems that teach such. If you are born again, then you are justified; you are sanctified. Now, a deeper **work** of sanctification can take place as you allow the Word of God to have influence, or have authority, in areas of your life. Remember, Jesus said, ".. and LEARN of me"? That's why the Apostle Paul says "I declare unto you the gospel which I preached to you, which also ye have received and wherein ye stand" (1 Corinthians 15:1). Also Philippians 4:9, "Those things that ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me, do..." "Follow me **as** I follow Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). Don't just follow Larry. Follow Larry **AS** he follows Christ. You can learn from Larry's example or learn from Larry's experience. **BUT** don't just blindly follow Larry in everything Larry does. Larry makes mistakes (ask my wife).

I thank God for my own personal mentors. At the same time, I know of things that I have seen and heard from **them** that I disagree with. Notice I said from "them" and not from "gossipers" who spout their poisons, wagging their tongues. It doesn't shake me to see someone else's weaknesses, "for I know **WHOM** I have believed, and am persuaded that **HE** is able to keep that which I have committed unto **HIM**" (2 Timothy 1:12). I understand that they, too, are in the process of maturing. That's one thing I like about the Bible. Not only does it tell of the exploits of men and women, it also tells of their failures. King David was a man after God's heart, we're told. Yet this same man took another man's wife, then had that man killed while attempting to cover up his sin. In the New Testament, Paul and Barnabus was a team that God put together. Paul's stubbornness broke up the team. Peter gets called on the carpet by Paul for being two-faced in his faith. Etc... These were people like us. They had their ups, their downs; but they maintain the eye of faith. I was told long ago "Obstacles are those things that you see when you take your eye off the goal." Sometimes we see various obstacles in our lives. We allow those obstacles to cause us to stumble, to lose hope. This is where we need to stand on the promises of God and allow Him to work in our lives, knowing that that which He started, He is **FAITHFUL** to complete. I like to rephrase the above quote to this: Obstacles are those things you see when you take your eye off the **WORD**. The Word works and it'll work for you.

Turn your stumbling stones into stepping stones. Learn from your mistakes; learn from other people's mistakes. Associate yourself with people who lift, who stimulate your faith. Disassociate yourself from those that put you down. It bothers me that other people think I must answer to them or to their denomination. Don't they know, that I'm not (and you're not) their servant. They aren't my masters. My master is Jesus Christ and it's to **HIM** alone I must and will give an answer to as Romans 14:4 says: "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand."

When we associate with the virtuous we form ourselves in imitation of their virtues, or at least lose, every day, something of our faults. - Agapet

"Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation (manner of life), in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12).

After the New Birth, comes growth (maturity). Growth takes time. Growth involves failures. But failures do not mean defeat. Like children in the natural, we learn from our mistakes. God our heavenly Father knows this. That's why He put in 1 John 1:9... "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." He is faithful. He is just. He will forgive. He will cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If you're cleansed from ALL unrighteousness, then there isn't any unrighteousness left in you. This is how we Christians maintain our fellowship with our Father. Relationship isn't in question here; fellowship is. The difference between relationship and fellowship is thus: my children are related to me. Good, bad or indifference, they are my children. They are in relationship with me, their natural father. Now, the fellowship we have may come into question. They may say or do something that is contrary to my permission, my will, and consequently, have broken, or fallen out of, fellowship with me. To be put back in right standing (righteous) with me, they must come to me and ask forgiveness.

In like manner, we often strain our fellowship with our heavenly Father. In the process of growth, we stumble, we make mistakes. This is called sin. This must be gotten out of the way to enjoy complete fellowship with Father-God. We do this through the avenue of confession. We go to Him and confess our wrongdoing. He – and He alone – forgives and cleanses. He's pulling for us as well, desiring us to grow up in all things. So, IF you sin, either by stumble or by the outright process of it, DON'T RUN FROM GOD – RUN TO HIM! Confess it to Him and get RID of it in your life. Don't play around with it... get rid of it now! The reason sin is so deceptive, is that it only shows you its pleasure, but never its consequences. Sin has this consequence: death (Romans 6:23). Paul tells Timothy to resist the devil and he – the devil – will flee. As we learn obedience, the temptations we encounter lessen because we have trained ourselves in that area. Life is like that. We learn here and there... eventually more and more of our lives are under His authority. Meanwhile, all the time, we're being translated into the image of His Son, Jesus. Glory!

The Apostle Paul tells the Galatians (1:15, 16) "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among nations; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood..." Notice carefully the sequence of events here. Paul was separated and called, then Jesus was made known to him, finally Paul started preaching and no longer conferred with flesh and blood, that is, he no longer concerned himself with what others thought.

We could say for ministers that are truly called by God, the sequence is:

1. You're Born-Again.
2. You're Called.
3. Then the Revelation.
4. Then the Preaching.

If you're called into the ministry, get yourself in a place where God can teach you and prepare you for the work of the ministry. Never preach from a theological viewpoint. Preach from a factual or experiential view; one that you yourself walk in. (I heard a preacher interviewed on a Christian talk show. The host asked him "Do you practice what you preach?" The preacher replied, "No. I preach what I practice." Now, that is good advice!)

God's desire is that we come into an intimacy with Him – to hear the softest whisper of His voice, and be the reflection of His Truth, His Life, and yes, His Glory on this earth.

Knowing *who* you are in Christ Jesus, *what* you can do in Christ Jesus, and *what* you have in Christ Jesus will give you the assurance – the confidence – of doing the work He has called you to. This is where the anointing of God upon you will manifest itself.

It was 30 years before the anointing of God manifested itself in Jesus' life for the work of the ministry. When it happened, Jesus realized it and spoke of it: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and (preach) recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

In Acts 10:38, we read "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." How was God with Jesus? By way of the anointing. That's why people received their healing – received their deliverance – via the anointing (see Luke 4:18 again).

It's the anointing that breaks the yoke of bondage (Isaiah 10:27). The anointing is the reason burdens are removed and yokes destroyed. I truly believe that the degree of God's anointing upon a man's life is in direct proportion to the Word-level in that man's life. Higher, or more of, the Word in a man's life, the more of the anointing of God. Scripture tells us that God anointed Jesus without measure. Why? Because He's all Word – He is the Word. This signifies that we as followers are anointed to some lesser degree. Why? Because our Word-level is not 100%. In some areas of our lives there may be a higher degree of anointing because we have developed, and are walking in a higher proficiency of success concerning the Word in that area of our life.

When our Word-level goes down, our sensitivity to operate in the things of God go down as well. Our hearing the voice of God more clearly goes down. Success in areas of our lives that once were evident, starts to wane. God's anointing and God's Word goes hand-in-hand. We can't have one without the other.

Another part that comes into play here is prayer. To be any kind of success in the Kingdom of God, one MUST have a prayer life. Even though Jesus was the Son of God, He separated Himself to a quiet place and spent time communicating with God. If He needed it, how much more do we?

Jesus knew that prayer was not just an avenue in which to request things of God, but also an avenue to praise and worship Him – seeking God's face, seeking His purpose, seeking His direction. Seek God in everything you do. Ask for guidance, for direction, for wisdom. He knows the future. He knows the spiritual forces that are out there trying to stop you from succeeding. Remember, God is *for* you; not *against* you.

The anointing on you is what will flow out of you into others. (Recall the woman with the issue of blood in Mark 5:25-34 also in Luke 8:43-48). In John 7:37 –39, we read:

“... Jesus stood and cried saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

And in Isaiah 12, verse 3: “Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.”

Water is a type of the Holy Spirit. The anointing is the Holy Spirit upon your life. What Jesus and Isaiah are saying is this. When you get born again, there is a well of salvation (John 4) that is for your drinking, where you receive refreshing. But there comes out of your innermost being rivers of living water (the anointing – the Holy Spirit) that is for others. Others may drink from that river, that is, they may receive refreshing themselves as you minister among them.

Pentecost Day, May 23, 1999, God used me to deliver a message to the Church. I’ll present it here as I believe it is good today as it was then.

To the Church:

The Word of the Lord came unto me saying: “I have looked upon your hearts and know the desires therein. There are some here that desire to be filled with my Spirit, but have hesitated at the shoreline so-to-speak, fearing the cost, fearing what would be required. There are some here that have received my Spirit, and are satisfied with wading in the waters but are fearful of wading in deeper, and allowing Me to use them. Then there are those, whose lives are dedicated to Me, enjoying the waters of refreshing, and are allowing Me to be LORD of their lives, experiencing the way of the Spirit and Life abundantly.

“I desire to have you in fellowship with Me, with My Father, but my desires can only be wrought by you releasing your fears, and the things of this world that would hold you back, preventing you from entering into the deep, yea even the fullness of the Spirit. Come unto Me, ALL ye that are heavy in burdens; call unto Me – I will answer. Don’t be of a timid spirit, or allow the evil one to cause you to doubt My Love for you. Come boldly, come expectantly, to the Throne of Grace and receive. We are always there. We always have you in mind and desire to be your savior... your helper... your deliverer... your healer... your lover... your friend. More than you know at this time, even more than you can imagine are My plans for you.

“Set your minds and hearts to seek Me totally – not for a day, a week, a year, but forever. I will not disappoint you. I will never forsake nor leave you. Come.”

By way of the anointing, special gifts come to the body of Christ. These all work by way of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church today. His desire is to use each of us helping, encouraging, comforting one another. It is sad that, as in Paul’s day, there are today “Corinth-type” of churches where abuse and misuse of the Gifts thrive. But that doesn’t mean that the Gifts of the

Holy Spirit aren't real or not for us today. You can not have a counterfeit without having a genuine. There's no counterfeit \$3.00 bill – why? Because there's no genuine three-dollar bill! How can we tell the difference between the two? Sometimes, it's difficult. Especially when you're new to these things. But sooner or later, ole slew-foot shows himself. Sometimes, just by sensitivity of heart you'll be able to tell that something is not right. You may not know exactly what it is, but there's a red light inside of you warning you that something's amiss.

Don't murmur against something just because you don't understand it or just because "our denomination doesn't believe in it". Good-hearted people can be wrong as well. There may be, that at this time you're in a lack of knowledge in this area. We ALL have those – various degrees, various areas of ignorance – but even with that, if you listen carefully and prayerfully, you can sense these things.

Why am I going on about these things? Because as your Word-level grows, so does your anointing; and with that anointing will come Gifts of the Spirit.

In closing, let me say that the twelve disciples in Matthew 10:1-14 were given commandments (verse 5) concerning the use of the authority that Jesus passed on to them (verse 1, "power" in the Greek is *exousia* meaning "authority"). Luke chapter 9 reflects the same event. The twelve are sent out with authority and with power (Luke 9:1) over all devils and diseases. They departed (verse 6) and when they returned (verse 10), they told Jesus of the exploits.

Later, Jesus commissioned another 70 disciples to do likewise (Luke 10). When they returned (vs. 17), they were filled with joy that even the devils were subject to them by the use of Jesus' Name. Use of Jesus' Name... think on it, They used the Name of Jesus and did the marvelous works that they rejoiced about. That's DELEGATED AUTHORITY!

"In my Name, you cast out the devil..." (Mark 16). Jesus gave the right to use His name to cast out devils, to heal the sick.

Mark 16 and Matthew 28 are what we call the Great Commission. Some think that these verses refer to the Apostles only – "they HAD the power, but not us; we're nobodies". But that isn't true... "All scripture is given to us...."

One of the most important things I did concerning scripture was to take scripture *personally*. Meaning, I didn't just read the Bible as a book of history, (although it is that as well) but I took it as a Love-Letter to me from my heavenly Father. For instance, 3 John 1:2, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou may prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospers." I see "Beloved" – my Father calls ME His beloved; "I wish", "I desire", "I pray" however you want to translate it—but the 'Big' "I" is God my Father Himself speaking. Sure, there are some scriptures that are to individuals but those are self-evident. In general, make the Bible a personal message to you from the heavenly Father. It'll change your outlook from the outside to the inside.

Notice verse 20 of Matthew 28: The disciples were given the charge of “teaching them (the nations) to observe ALL things WHATSOEVER I have commanded you...”: What things did He command them? Well, look at Matthew 10:5. He commanded them to go and preach, heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead and cast out devils (v.8).

I see a pattern here. First he sent out the 12 disciples; then the 70 disciples, and now the Church. We have a part in this end-time harvest. All authority is given to Jesus both in heaven and in earth. With this authority, Jesus says, “you go in my name – you heal the sick – you cast out devils.” Delegated authority. Today, we have a legal term for this. It’s called the “Power of Attorney”. Power of Attorney means one can act in someone else’s stead. A delegated authority in the behalf of the person who had the Power of Attorney drawn up.

So, IN HIS NAME, you go forth; you heal the sick; you raise the dead; you cast out devils; you preach the gospel (the Good news) concerning Jesus.

You can do it for He has commanded us to do so – and that means we can do it, otherwise, we could challenge Him for commanding us to do something we’re not capable of doing. But because He has given the commandment, then that tells us we can do it.

We can, when we start Walking as Men Under Authority.

End