

**I. Authority & submission are *woven into creation***

**A. God Rules Everything**

Authority ↑	King of Kings	<i>Day 7: God</i>		
	King	<i>End of Day 6: humanity</i>		
	mini-kings	<i>Day 4: sun/moon</i>	<i>Day 5: sea creatures</i>	<i>Day 6: beasts of the land</i>
	kingdoms	<i>Day 1: day/night</i>	<i>Day 2: waters</i>	<i>Day 3: land</i>

“And God made the two great lights—the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night” (*Gen. 1:16*)

**B. Humanity Rules Creation**

“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’” (*Genesis 1:26; cf. Psalm 8:6-8*)

**C. Male & Female: head and helper**

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” (*Genesis 1:27*)

<sup>18</sup> Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him’ ...<sup>23</sup> Then the man said, ‘This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.’” (*Genesis 2:18, 23; cf. 1 Corinthians 11:3, Ephesians 5:23*)

‘Helper’ (Heb. *ezer*) ≠ inferiority. God is a ‘helper’ (cf. *Exodus 18:4; Psalms 20:2; 33:20; 70:5; 115:9-11; 121:1-2; 146:5*)

*Takeaways:*

- Authority & submission are not arbitrary, they reflect the order of creation
- Authority & submission were created good
- All authority goes back to God, everything submits to him

**II. The Fall reversed God’s design for authority & submission**

<sup>1</sup>“Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God actually say, “You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?”’... <sup>6</sup> She took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. (*Genesis 3:1, 6*)

<sup>9</sup>“But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, ‘Where are you?’...<sup>12</sup> The man said, ‘The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.’<sup>13</sup> Then the Lord God said to the woman, ‘What is this that you have done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’” (*Genesis 3:9, 12-13*)

“To the woman he said, ‘I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you.’ (*Genesis 3:16*)

*Takeaways:*

- The pattern of authority in the Fall was exactly the opposite of the creation design (*3:1-6*)
  - ◆ The “beast of the earth” → led Eve to sin → who led her husband to sin → against God
- The man’s authority means he bears primary responsibility (*3:9*)
  - ◆ Even though Eve ate first, God questions Adam first
  - ◆ Adam receives the longer rebuke for sin, the Bible puts the primary blame on him (cf. *Rom. 5:12-14*)
- The sins husbands and wives are prone to are denials of their authority/submission relationship (*3:16b*)
  - ◆ Eve will subvert her husband’s authority, instead of joyfully submitting to him
  - ◆ Adam will dominate Eve with his authority, instead of sacrificially loving and leading her

### **III. Israel’s history displays the abiding goodness of authority & submission**

#### **A. Kings & Citizens**

<sup>3</sup> The God of Israel has spoken; the Rock of Israel has said to me [David]: “When one rules justly over men, ruling in the fear of God,<sup>4</sup> he dawns on them like the morning light, like the sun shining forth on a cloudless morning, like rain that makes grass to sprout from the earth.” (*2 Samuel 23:3-4*)

<sup>18</sup> And when he [Israel’s king] sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests.<sup>19</sup> And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them,<sup>20</sup> that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel. (*Deuteronomy 17:18-20*)

#### **B. Parents & Children**

<sup>4</sup> “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>5</sup> You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. <sup>6</sup> And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. <sup>7</sup> You shall

teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.” (*Deuteronomy 6:4-7*)

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.” (*Exodus 20:12*)

“A wise son hears his father’s instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.” (*Proverbs 13:1*)

*Takeaways:*

- The relationships of authority and submission continue to exist in a post-Fall world
- Good authority is an immense blessing to those under it
- Authority that blesses those under it knows that it is under & answerable to God’s authority

## **IV. In Christ, authority & submission are redeemed**

### **A. The absolute authority of God in Christ**

<sup>28</sup> And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, <sup>29</sup> for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes. (*Matthew 7:28-29*)

<sup>31</sup> And the demons begged him, saying, “If you cast us out, send us away into the herd of pigs.” <sup>32</sup> And he said to them, “Go.” So they came out and went into the pigs, and behold, the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the waters. (*Matthew 8:31-32*)

### **B. The authority of man over creation in Christ**

“[Jesus] said to it, ‘May no fruit ever come from you again!’ And the fig tree withered at once.” (*Matthew 21:19*)

### **C. The sacrificial leadership of a husband and his bride in Christ**

“Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.” (*Ephesians 5:25*)

### **D. The blessing of a good king ruling over his people in Christ**

<sup>6</sup> For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. (*Isaiah 9:6-7*)

## E. The joyful submission of the Incarnate Son to the Father

<sup>49</sup> For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment...<sup>50</sup>  
What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.” (*John 12:49-50*)

“...the head of Christ is God.” (*1 Corinthians 11:3*)

## F. The authority of Christ over his church

“And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. (*Colossians 1:18*)

*Takeaway:*

→ Jesus doesn't destroy authority and submission, he redeems and displays them both perfectly

## V. In the Church, authority & submission are restored

### A. Pastors & Congregations

<sup>1</sup> I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: <sup>2</sup> preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. (*2 Timothy 4:1-2*)

“[The Bereans] received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things [Paul's preaching] were so. (*Acts 17:11*)

“Not many of you should become teachers...we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.” (*James 3:1*)

“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.” (*Hebrews 13:17*)

<sup>1</sup> So I exhort the elders... <sup>2</sup> shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; <sup>3</sup> not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. <sup>4</sup> And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. (*1 Peter 5:1-4*)

<sup>11</sup> Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. <sup>12</sup> I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. <sup>13</sup> For Adam was formed first, then Eve... <sup>14</sup> I am writing these things to you so that, <sup>15</sup> if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God.” (*1 Timothy 2:11-13, 3:14-15*)

*Takeaways:*

- The pastors' authority is derived from God's authority, so they must preach God's Word (*2 Tim. 4:1-2*)
- The pastors of a church are merely undershepherds, who will give an account to the chief Shepherd—for their reward or condemnation (*1 Pet. 5:4; Jas. 3:1; Heb. 13:17*)
- Church members must submit to the pastors because God has given them authority (*Heb. 13:17*)
- The office of pastor/elder is reserved for men, as a reflection of the creation order (*1 Tim. 2:11-12*)

## **B. Church Members & Each Other**

<sup>19</sup> Address one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, <sup>20</sup> giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. (*Ephesians 5:19-21*)

*Takeaway:*

- Part of what it means to be members of a church together is that we have a humble posture of putting the interests of others before our own, and receiving correction from one another in Christ

## **C. Husbands & Wives**

<sup>22</sup> Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. <sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her... <sup>33</sup> However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (*Ephesians 5:22-25, 33*)

<sup>1</sup> Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives...<sup>7</sup> Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered. (*1 Peter 3:1, 7*)

<sup>18</sup> Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. <sup>19</sup> Husbands, love your wives, and do not be harsh with them. (*Colossians 3:18-19*)

*Takeaways:*

- Wives are commanded to submit to their own husbands, not all men in general (*Eph. 5:22; 1 Pet. 3:1*)
- Husbands and wives have an equality before God, because both are heirs of the grace of life (*1 Pet. 3:7*)
- God does not hear the prayers of harsh or neglectful husbands (*1 Pet. 3:7*)
- Wives are to submit to their husbands “in the Lord”—that is, in recognition that they are ultimately submitting to a God's authority (and so, if in conflict, God's authority trumps her husband's; *Col. 3:18; Eph 5:22*).

## D. Bosses & Employees

<sup>22</sup> Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. <sup>23</sup> Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, <sup>24</sup> knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ...<sup>1</sup> Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven. (*Colossians 3:22-24, 4:1*)

<sup>5</sup> Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, <sup>6</sup> not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, <sup>7</sup> rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, <sup>8</sup> knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. <sup>9</sup> Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him. (*Ephesians 6:5-9*)

<sup>18</sup> Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. <sup>19</sup> For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. <sup>20</sup> For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. <sup>21</sup> For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. <sup>22</sup> He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. <sup>23</sup> When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. <sup>24</sup> He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. (*1 Peter 2:18-24*)

### Takeaways:

- Employees are to obey and serve their bosses as they would obey and serve God, for God sees them and will reward them (*Col. 3:22-24; Eph. 6:6,8*)
- Employees must even obey bosses who don't deserve it, because that's what Christ did (*1 Pet. 2:18-24*)
- Bosses should exercise authority with the conscious knowledge that they have a fundamental equality with their workers and will answer to God's authority in the end (*Col. 4:1; Eph. 6:9*)

## E. Governments & Citizens

<sup>1</sup> Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. <sup>2</sup> Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. <sup>3</sup> For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, <sup>4</sup> for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. <sup>5</sup> Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. <sup>6</sup> For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers

of God, attending to this very thing. <sup>7</sup> Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed. (*Romans 13:1-7*)

<sup>13</sup> Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, <sup>14</sup> or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good. <sup>15</sup> For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. <sup>16</sup> Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God. <sup>17</sup> Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor. (*1 Peter 2:13-17*)

<sup>27</sup> And when they had brought them, they set them before the council. And the high priest questioned them, <sup>28</sup> saying, “We strictly charged you not to teach in this name, yet here you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us.” <sup>29</sup> But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men.” (*Acts 5:27-29*)

*Takeaways:*

- The fundamental posture of a Christian citizen to their government is obedience.
- There are exceptional cases when disobedience is allowed, if the government's authority contradicts God's.

## **F. Parents & Children**

<sup>1</sup> Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. <sup>2</sup> “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), <sup>3</sup> “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.” <sup>4</sup> Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. (*Ephesians 6:1-4*)

<sup>20</sup> Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. <sup>21</sup> Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. (*Colossians 3:20-21*)

*Takeaway:*

- A child's obedience to parents sits under their obedience to God—so it is both an expression of that higher obedience and obedience to God “wins” when parental authority contradicts it

## **VI. In eternity, authority & submission are perfected**

### **A. The ultimacy of God's authority is reestablished**

“And he who was seated on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’” (Revelation 21:5)

### **B. Other relationships of authority & submission cease to exist**

“For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.” (*Matthew 22:30*)

## Applications

- God is at the top of every authority structure. All authorities are derived from and accountable to him.
- Not all relationships of authority and submission have the same shape
  - *Authorities of coercion*—where force (e.g. the sword, the rod) is used
    - Ex: government authority, parental authority (especially of young kids), a boss’s authority
  - *Authorities of counsel*—where a posture of submission must be exercised, but coercion is inappropriate
    - Ex: a husband’s authority, a pastor’s authority
- Authority and submission are good, beautiful, godly things that we should cherish and seek.
- In a sinful world, authority and submission can be misunderstood and misapplied to create terrible destruction

## Book Recommendations

- Authority & Submission in Marriage
  - *God, Marriage, & Family*, Andreas Köstenberger
  - *This Momentary Marriage*, John Piper
  - *The Meaning of Marriage*, Tim Keller
  - *Love that Lasts*, Gary & Betsy Ricucci
- Authority & Submission in Parenting
  - *Shepherding a Child’s Heart*, Tedd Tripp
  - *Instructing a Child’s Heart*, Tedd Tripp
  - *Parenting*, Paul Tripp
- Authority & Submission in the Church
  - *The Rule of Love*, Jonathan Leeman
  - *Church Elders*, Jeremie Rinne
- Authority & Submission to the Government
  - *How the Nations Rage*, Jonathan Leeman
  - *God & Politics*, Mark Dever
- Authority & Submission in the Workplace
  - *The Gospel at Work*, Greg Gilbert
  - *Every Good Endeavour*, Tim Keller