

Introduction: How to Relate to Authority

Objective

To show that the Holy Scripture and the Commandments of God necessitate that a true Christian abides by the authorities in his life

Key Verse

"Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities" (Romans 13:1)

Body

- What authorities might we have in our life?
 - Our parents
 - Our father the priest/bishop
 - Our boss at work
 - Our teacher/principal/dean at school
 - Our Sunday School Servants
 - The government and law enforcement officers
 - The owner or manager of a business you are at or a house you are visiting
- One day, you will find that you have authority in something.
 - You might become a parent
 - You might become a Sunday School Servant
 - You might become a priest
 - You might become a manager or leader at work
- How does one become an authority?
 - "Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord." (Matthew 25:23)
 - One is faithful in little things before being entrusted in big things
 - Someone who does not know how to treat his parents, will find it difficult to get married and will not be ready to bring up children
 - Someone who is not working hard at work, will not get promoted to a manager or leader position
 - Someone who is breaking the law, will never become a law enforcement officer or a politician and may even find difficulty advancing his career

- Someone who is not faithful or committed in serving God, will not be entrusted with the service of God's children
- Etc.
- Sometimes we are looking ahead to when I am finally in a position of authority - when I'm the boss - when I don't have to answer to anyone... but to get there, you must first learn to be a disciple and to submit to the authorities God has placed in your life.
- It is not about being a slave to someone else, or being UNDER someone else, but about putting yourself under someone else as a disciple.
 - When you go to school, you are discipling under a teacher in a certain subject
 - When you come to church, you are discipling under some priest and some servants
 - In all the rest of your time growing up, you are discipling under your parents... this is why people grow up to be similar to their parents
- Let's read Romans 13:1-5 together
 - ¹ Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. ³ For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. ⁴ For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. ⁵ Therefore *you* must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake.
 - Authorities are appointed in your life by God
- Introducing our Stations
 - Authority of Parents
 - Authority of the Church
 - Authority of Scripture
 - Authority of the Law
- What if there is a conflict?
 - What do I do if the law says to do something, but God says not to?
 - What do I do if my parents say to do something, but God says not to?
 - Will the Scripture tell me to do something that is against God's commandment?
 - Will the Church tell me to do something that is against God's commandment?
 - In all cases, remember that the Supreme Authority is God's Authority. The Authority of God is above all other authorities. If there is a situation where there is a conflict of authority, we must give the first priority to the authority of God
 - St Theodore of Shotep had a Christian father and a pagan mother. His mother wanted him to be educated in the pagan temple, but his father refused. His mother drove away his father and kept little Theodore with her. His father kept praying for

him. When the child grew, he had learned philosophy and wisdom and literature and he went to a bishop to be baptized. His mother heard and was so upset but he did not mind her.

- If the Scripture is telling you to do something that is against God's commandment, then it is not the Scripture but a faulty interpretation of the Scripture. Nowadays many people in the world claim that the Bible commands us to go and slaughter nations of idol worshippers, but of course that is completely contrary to the Scripture. Rather it is people taking the stories in the Old Testament history out of context in order to distort God's message.
- The Church and the hierarchy of the Church will never intentionally tell you to do something against God's commandment. Bishops and priests and servants are human and will make mistakes, but if you find yourself in a position where someone is telling you to do something that you don't feel is right, it is good to seek counsel from your father of confession or another father priest.

Application

Contemplation

Resources

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