

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's day Propheying Message Twenty : Authority, Rebellion, the Vindication of Delegated Authority, and a Proper Representative of God

I. Overview:

God is the supreme authority; He has all authority. All authority, including spiritual, positional, and governmental, derives from God. Only God is the direct authority to man; all other authorities are indirect authorities, such as delegated authorities, deputy authorities, appointed by God. God requires that we submit not only to Him but to all delegated authorities. There are two great principles in the universe, that is, God's authority and Satan's rebellion. The centre of dispute in the universe relates to who has authority; we need to set ourselves to submit to God's authority and uphold God's authority. Chapters 12 and 16 of Numbers speak of rebellion against God's delegated authority; chapter 17 speaks of God's vindication of His appointed authority. The budding rod indicates that authority is based on resurrection. One who has been appointed by God to be a deputy authority must submit to authority and realize that in himself he has no authority being a person in resurrection, living in the resurrection life of Christ.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Expound God is the supreme authority, then He has all authority.

All authority is from God because everything is ordered by God. Once we touch God's authority, we touch God Himself. Basically, God's work is not carried out by power, but by authority. Creation came about through the word of His authority. Because all authority was in the Lord's hand; meeting God's authority is the same as meeting God.

B. Why is that the first thing we touch is the matter of authority as we work in the Lord's work?

Touching authority is as real as the matter of touching salvation. For us this is a deeper lesson. We must be touched and smitten at least once by authority. Only then can we work the work of God. In our relationship with God, nothing is more important than touching authority. Once we touch authority, we will see it wherever we turn. Only then can we be restricted by God, and only then can we begin to be used by God.

Day 2 —

A. Why do we say that we need to receive the other members' function and supply?

Never forget that we are just members. We need to receive the function of the other members. When we submit to the authority of the seeing function, we will have no barrier with the Head, because the supply is in the authority. Whoever has the gift has that ministry; and whoever has the ministry has the authority. Everyone wants to receive God's appointed authority. But God wants us to submit to indirect authorities that we may receive spiritual supply.

B. Explain that submission is the first lesson for those who work.

We should see authority everywhere. Some never realize who their authority is. They have never submitted to anyone. If you know who you have to submit to, you will spontaneously know what position you should occupy in the Body, and you will stand in your proper position. Submission is the first lesson for those who work. It is actually the major part of their work.

Day 3 —

A. Expound how Paul met God's authority.

Before Paul realized authority, he wanted to eradicate the church from the earth. But after he met the Lord on the way to Damascus, he realized that it was difficult to kick against the goads (God's authority) with his feet (man's energy). He immediately fell down, acknowledged Jesus as Lord, and submitted to the instruction of Ananias in Damascus. Here Paul met God's authority.

B. Explain how Paul submitted to God's authority.

Paul was an intelligent and capable man, while Ananias was a very insignificant, small brother. If Paul had not met God's authority, how could he possibly have listened to the words of Ananias? This shows us that anyone who has met authority will deal with the authority alone; he will not deal with the person involved. We should only think of the authority, not of the person.

Day 4 —

A. Why is it our inward problem to seek ambition for position and power?

Ambition for position and power is always a problem to God's people. Ambition is a "gopher" that undermines God's plan and damages His people. The ambition for power and the struggle for power are in our blood. The rebellion of Miriam and Aaron against Moses proves this. I believe that this rebellion was instigated by Miriam. We all need to be careful to guard against the "gopher" of ambition within us.

B. Explain the first generation of Christ's followers being troubled by the struggle for power.

When the Lord Jesus was going to Jerusalem to be crucified, He told His followers what would happen to Him. They heard Him, but they did not care about it. While He was telling them about His death, they were struggling for power. The mother of James and John even brought her two sons to the Lord, begging Him to put one on His right and one on His left in the kingdom. The other disciples were indignant toward these two brothers.

Day 5 —

A. Explain that resurrection is the basis of God's selection as the dead rod shall bud.

God commanded the twelve leaders to take twelve rods according to the twelve tribes of Israel, and put them in the Tent of Meeting before the Ark. Then He said, "And the rod of the man whom I choose shall bud". All twelve rods were leafless, rootless, dry, and dead. Whichever one budded was the one that was chosen by God. Here we see that resurrection is the basis of God's selection. It is also the basis of authority.

B. How did God vindicate of His appointed authority to stop man's murmuring?

Numbers 16 speaks of man's rebellion against God's deputy authority and chapter 17 speaks of God's vindication of His appointed authority. The basis of God's vindication of His appointed authority is resurrection. By resurrection He stopped man's murmuring. Man, of course, has no right to question God, but God condescended Himself to tell man the reason and basis for His appointment of authority.

Day 6 —

A. How should we become a representative of the highest authority on earth?

The apostle Paul was an ambassador of Christ. An ambassador is one who represents the highest authority. The highest authority in this universe is God, and God has given all authority in heaven and on earth to Christ. For this highest authority there is the need of some ambassadors on this earth who are qualified to represent Him. First, we need to be captured by Christ, and eventually, we need to become a representative of Christ on this earth.

B. How should we move according to God's measurement to be limited in the church service?

In the church service we need to realize that God has only measured out so much to us, and we should not overstretch ourselves. We need to know our limitation, our jurisdiction, and not go beyond it into others' territory. Like Paul, we should move and act according to our rule, that is, according to how much God has measured to us.

III. Conclusion:

Chapters 11 to 16 of Numbers speak of failures and rebellion of God's people; rebellion is related to God's authorities. We must know that God is the supreme authority in the universe. Only God is the direct authority to man; all other authorities are indirect authorities—delegated authorities, deputy authorities, appointed by God. God requires that we submit not only to Him but to all delegated authorities. Those who do not submit to God's indirect authority cannot submit to God's direct authority. Once a person touches delegated authority, he touches God in that delegated authority. A person who represents God rightly must submit to authority, realize that in himself he has no authority, and be a person in resurrection always with grace, living in the resurrection life of Christ for building the believers up.