



February 1983

### AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY

This lesson is about AUTHORITY and RESPONSIBILITY. The person with AUTHORITY is the one with the power to make and enforce his decision. The one who pays the price has the RESPONSIBILITY.

Most arguments that we all run into happen because of a misunderstanding about the difference. For instance, the teenager thinks that he has the AUTHORITY (right) to take the family car, but shows no understanding of RESPONSIBILITY regarding his state insurance laws; much less, he shows no RESPONSIBILITY to pay the insurance (and other car bills). The parent exercises RESPONSIBILITY about the car by paying the bills - result, arguments about the car.

The young lady argues about who she will date, how long they will stay out, where they will go, etc. because she feels old enough to make the decisions, giving very little thought to the fact that if she gets pregnant her family will have to pay the price with money, time, etc. She takes the AUTHORITY while her family shares a bag full of RESPONSIBILITY.

Why didn't the angel Gabriel tell Mary to take the baby Jesus to Egypt to protect his life? He told Joseph, not Mary. There is probably an important reason why.

Gabriel told the virgin Mary, not Joseph, about the coming pregnancy. That's because she had AUTHORITY over and RESPONSIBILITY for her virgin body, so the message was given to her. And she agreed.

On the other hand, Joseph had the AUTHORITY to decide if he wanted to complete the marriage because it would be his RESPONSIBILITY to pay all the bills

for Mary and the baby. So the angel Gabriel told Joseph, not Mary, to complete the marriage, and he agreed. Later Gabriel told Joseph, not Mary, to take the family to Egypt for protection.

Remember, the person with AUTHORITY is the one who makes the decision. The one who pays the price has the RESPONSIBILITY. Trouble comes when people try to split it.

The virgin Mary had to pay a great price for her pregnancy, so she was RESPONSIBLE for it. Gabriel got the agreement from her, not Joseph, because it was her AUTHORITY to decide if the price should be paid. But she was not the ONLY one with RESPONSIBILITY in the case - it was split. Joseph had to provide and care for both her and the baby. So Gabriel got Joseph to agree to exercise his AUTHORITY and pay his share of the price, too.

In our modern society things are not so clear and easy to see because girls are taking much additional RESPONSIBILITY for paying the bills, and are assuming more AUTHORITY over decisions affecting the family unit. But, boys are holding on to their AUTHORITY (because that's the way Grandpa did it) and, consequently - more divorces. When a man plans on, or agrees to having his wife work, he must also agree to the transfer of part of his historically (normal) AUTHORITY and RESPONSIBILITY. When a woman goes to work she must realize she is entering into a new (and historically unnatural) relationship. She must pay the price for much unfairness and misunderstanding.

Go very slowly my friend when you think about trading off your AUTHORITY and RESPONSIBILITY.

In the Bible, the word "COVERING" is used to describe "RESPONSIBILITY." Jewish men and Roman Catholic hierarchy wear hats in church (synagogue) to represent that their "COVERING-RESPONSIBILITY" is God.

At their marriage, Jewish men remove their YAMALKE when they step under the CANOPY, which is a symbol of their expanded ability to extend their "COVERING-RESPONSIBILITY" to the bride, who steps under the groom's CANOPY, to symbolize the marriage.

The Bible warns us - "Woe to the rebellious children, saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; and that COVER with a COVERING, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin:" (Isa. 31:1)

Right now, I think that very few marriages, employment situations, insurance, bank accounts, Social Security, political votes, schools, churches, etc., are excluded from that pronouncement of WOE. That is because the counsel they took and the covering they made was with each other - and not with God.

It is all right to DELEGATE RESPONSIBILITY in a corporate (denominational) structure as long as both parties are fully aware of what is going on. The boss says, "John, it will be your RESPONSIBILITY (to me) to see that this thing gets finished." Both must realize that the FINAL RESPONSIBILITY rests with the boss. If John doesn't get it done in time the boss has the AUTHORITY to fire him. But, the boss himself might get fired by the president because the FINAL RESPONSIBILITY was still with the boss. John may have to pay the price because he accepted DELEGATED RESPONSIBILITY and the boss may have to pay the price for the same incident because he had FINAL RESPONSIBILITY.

One of the biggest arguments in the New Testament was because of a misunderstanding about AUTHORITY and RESPONSIBILITY. Peter came to Antioch with the AUTHORITY that he possessed at Jerusalem. But he had no RESPONSIBILITY for the people at Antioch. Paul had the AUTHORITY at Antioch because he had the RESPONSIBILITY. Peter came in with a big name and much

(denominational) AUTHORITY from the boss Jews at Jerusalem. That's when Paul withstood Peter to the face! Paul refused to split AUTHORITY from RESPONSIBILITY, and rightly so, I think. (Gal. 2)

On another occasion, the FALSE brethren came to Galatia to exercise Jerusalem AUTHORITY over the saints at Galatia by returning them to the law of Moses (Gal. 1 & 2, Acts 21 esp. V. 20). Paul would NOT split AUTHORITY from RESPONSIBILITY, so he did not give them place, by subjecting himself, or the saints at Galatia to the self appointed Jerusalem bosses, not even for an hour (Gal. 2:5)

If someone tells you that God wants you to do this or that concerning an area wherein you (not that someone) have the RESPONSIBILITY then politely listen, but do NOT do what they say. Wait for God to confirm the order through someone else.

God speaks twice, remember? If the person becomes demanding that you do what they tell you to do, then they are most likely speaking to you from their soul, not spirit. In that case, set it aside. If they persist in their demand for obedience to their order - then firmly say NO. If you feel yourself starting to waver and starting to give in to their demanding ways, then just ask yourself, "Will that person pay the price, like I'll have to, if things don't go right?" That should return you to your senses and your adamant NO!

Presently, I don't think that God tells anybody to tell anybody else what to do. Naturally, God does approve of family, work, social and religious corporate temporal structures - but that is not what we are talking about. It is presumptuous to think that one person hears from God and another doesn't. I believe that no person is so insensitive that they cannot hear the voice of God. I cannot see why God would beat around the bush telling one person to tell another. When you have the AUTHORITY and RESPONSIBILITY for something that God wants to change - God will tell you!

Many people are trying to take your AUTHORITY away from you while you are left holding a bag full of RESPONSIBILITY. For instance, doctors, dentists, preachers, politicians, parents and children all want to tell you what to do. They are often offended when you question their authority

over your life. Some professionals are so egotistical that they will not give you another appointment if you question what they are doing to you. I recommend that you find someone else to ADVISE you. Giving ORDERS and giving ADVICE are two different things, and unfortunately, many professionals do not know the difference.

If you are tempted to give advice to someone, remember that advice unasked is usually advice unheaded. And if you are tempted to tell someone what to do - don't.

I am often asked, "Who should make the decisions at church?" The answer is, the one with the RESPONSIBILITY. In matters of SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY the leader is the Holy Spirit. I do not know of any scriptures to indicate that God has delegated His AUTHORITY to anyone else, but I am aware of the fact that an unhealthy number of Christians do believe that God did delegate His AUTHORITY to their own church leaders. I hope that this mistaken idea will be corrected soon.

God gave church leaders TEMPORAL AUTHORITY to make decisions about earthly matters such as, the day and time to meet, who should speak, where the church should be located, etc. But He reserved SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY to Himself. I admit that my own emotions suffer a terrible twist as I read and hear preachers twist the meaning of SPIRITUAL and TEMPORAL AUTHORITY.

If your church is organized so that the board has the final RESPONSIBILITY to get the bills paid, then the board has the final AUTHORITY, and they should make the final temporal decisions. If the pastor has the final RESPONSIBILITY to get the bills paid, then he has the final temporal AUTHORITY, and he should have the last "say so."

Young men and women presently are separating AUTHORITY from RESPONSIBILITY and the rampant divorces and shack-ups are the result.

Eichmann agreed to Hitler's order to split AUTHORITY from RESPONSIBILITY and AUSCHWITZ was the result.

The Jesuits agreed to the Pope's order to split AUTHORITY from RESPONSIBILITY and the infamous inquisition was the result.

Methodist ministers agree to give their AUTHORITY to their Bishops who decide who

will live where, and the problems with the "preachers kid" (P.K.) are the result.

Military people give their AUTHORITY to their officers and the broken military home is the result.

Corporate people give their AUTHORITY to the headquarters and the unhappy transferee is the result.

Assembly of God ministers give their AUTHORITY to the Presbyters and stifling of the Spirit is the result.

In the U.S.A. several religious leaders are still telling their followers that "God gave ME AUTHORITY over you," and I don't think so.

If you have got the RESPONSIBILITY to protect and provide for anything - then keep the AUTHORITY - and transfer it TO NO ONE ELSE.

The only transfer of AUTHORITY that you can possibly justify is to give it to God, because of Jesus, through the Holy Spirit. When you give up your own AUTHORITY to any prophet, priest, doctor, dentist, minister or vociferous Christian you are asking for trouble, no matter how insistent or infallible (he thinks) he may be. If God would have wanted them to have your AUTHORITY, I don't think that He would have given you the RESPONSIBILITY.

Keep it all together!

This ministry does not exist apart from your gifts.