

Why is AUTHORITY Such a Big Deal?

Lesson 1

What is Authority & Why Does It Matter?

Authority (noun): the power or right to determine, control, command, judge, or prohibit the action of others; dominion; jurisdiction.

You interact with authority every day. You submit yourself to authority every day. You depend on authority every day. At the gas pump. In the grocery store. When you look at a clock. As you use money. When you drive. As you leave the pharmacy.

If you're asked how long this line is...



...what would you say? What would you do? Is there any way we could come to a common understanding of exactly how long that line is? It's all possible by appealing to a common standard of authority.

With that simple principle in mind, here's a really important point to grasp: God is the ultimate standard of authority. Listen to what he said to the Israelites in **Leviticus 18:1-5**:

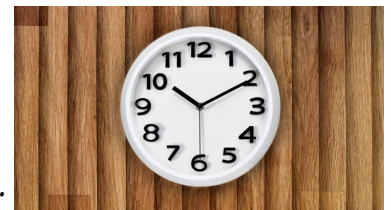
"Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, I am the LORD your God... You shall therefore keep my statutes and my rules; if a person does them, he shall live by them: I am the LORD."

Disciples of Jesus in the New Testament are called to "be holy" as "he who called you is holy" (**1 Pet 1:13-16**). His thoughts and ways are infinitely higher than our thoughts and ways (**Isa 55:8-9**), and he is the ultimate source of authority. Which means?

- My feelings, hunches, or goals (**Prov 14:12**)
- My past personal experiences (**Matt 7:21-23**)
- My relatives (**Matt 10:37**)
- The majority (**Matt 7:13**)
- Religious leaders (**Mark 7:6-8**)
- My own conscience (**Acts 26:9**)

...not the ultimate standard of authority.

So what do we need to do? Make sure we "understand what the will of the Lord is" (**Eph 5:17**). And where can we find that? "All Scripture is breathed out by God" (**2 Tim 3:16-17**). So let's talk about it...



For Class & Family Discussion:

- In your own words, what is authority?

- What happens when standards of authority are disregarded:
 - At home?

 - In school?

 - At work?

 - In society?

- When our Creator describes himself as “the LORD,” what is he communicating?

- “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” What does this mean and how does it relate to God’s authority?

- How does **Proverbs 14:12** help us understand that our feelings, hunches, and personal goals aren’t the best standard of authority?

- How could treating my relatives as the ultimate standard of authority put me in a dangerous place with God?

- Why is treating the majority as the ultimate standard of authority never a good idea?

- Why is **Isaiah 55:8-9** a really good thing for us to always remember, including this week?