

LESSON 9

SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY: PART ONE

I. OUR PLACE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

- A. The world's concept of authority is not the same as God's concept of authority. You should never come under the will or control of someone but walk according to the spiritual authority defined in the word of God.
- B. Ephesians 4:11
"And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers..."
- C. 1 Peter 5:1-3
"The elders which are among you I exhort...Feed the flock of God...taking the oversight...not by constraint, but willingly...Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock."

II. GOD'S PERMANENT WORK IS THE LOCAL CHURCH

- A. Matthew 16:18
 - 1. Everywhere the apostles went they established churches.
- B. God has placed spiritual authority in the local church.
 - 1. James 5:14
"Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord"
 - 2. Matthew 18:15-20
Disputes between brethren should be dealt with through the local church.

III. ALL MINISTRIES BEGIN AND END IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

- A. All the work of God anyone does in his or her lifetime can and should be vented through the local church.

1. Acts 13:1-4
 “Now there were in the church at Antioch certain prophets and teachers...As they ministered to the Lord...the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them...and they laid their hands upon them and sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed...”
2. Acts 14:26-28
 “And thence sailed to Antioch from whence they had been recommended to the grace of God for the work which they fulfilled. And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them...”

IV. DISCIPLINE IN THE BODY OF CHRIST ALWAYS COMES THROUGH THE LOCAL CHURCH

- A. Acts 15
 There were men who were teaching that you had to be circumcised to be saved. Paul challenged their doctrine and took them back to the local church in Jerusalem to determine who was right.
 1. Notice how each different faction gave its option.
 v5: Pharisees
 v7-11: Peter
 v12: Paul
 2. v13-19: James, who was the Pastor of the church at Jerusalem, held the spiritual authority to rule on the matter.

V. THE LOCAL CHURCH IS GOD’S PROTECTION AGAINST DESTRUCTION FROM SATAN

- A. 1 Corinthians 5:1-13
 These scriptures show that people who live knowingly in sin and will not repent should be delivered over to Satan. This means that the members of the church will not fellowship with them.
- B. The value of the local church to the believer:
 1. Teaches how to operate in God’s principles.
 2. Allows testimonies of other believers to encourage the rest of the church.

3. Believers pray for the needs of one another.
4. Gifts of the Spirit operate for healing, deliverance, exhortation, comfort, etc.