

**THE PRINCIPLE
OF
AUTHORITY**

authority

1. When a child leaves home, God wants him to leave physically and emotionally.
2. When he leaves in rebellion, he only leaves physically.
3. When he leaves home with an obedient.
4. could you have had different Parents?
5. Is God Bigger? Prov. 21:1
6. Would you be willing to cooperate with God by obeying, respecting + assuming your responsibilities.
7. If his decisions would destroy God's purpose - God can change his heart.

8. If his decision does not change -
Then it's more important to God that
you cooperate.

Insights on authority

1. Respect the authority in spite of personality differences.
2. God's purpose for authority
 - A. Increase your faith
 - B. Learn how to obey
 - C. Learn how to respect others.
 - D. To develop security
3. Rebuild relationship with parents before following God's leading elsewhere.
4. Develop deference - develop a cooperative spirit even though you disagree.
5. you will develop objectivity in a crisis to comprehend the leaders underlying motives.

6. Develop confidence in God so work
thru authority.

7. The exception when you are told to
violate scripture.

8. Distinguish between submission +
obedience.

1. Submission - an attitude + absolute

2. obedience - an action + relative.

9. Do not manipulate - authority by spiritualizing,
rationalizing or justifying ideas.

"steps to correct"

1. list their faults

2. List your wrongs toward them

3. Purpose to go back + ask forgiveness

4. Pray + sincerely forgive them for
their offenses toward you.

RESPONDING TO AUTHORITY

● An important key to a successful life is the ability to see the hand of God in the attitudes, actions and reactions of those in authority over one's life.

● PARENTS HAVE THE MOST SINGULAR IMPACT IN A PERSON'S LIFE.

The attitude of a child toward his parents' authority in his developing years and the attitude in which he leaves his parents will have a direct bearing on other authority figures in his future. The unique impact of the parents is clearly emphasized in the following passage.

● "My son, keep thy father's commandment, and forsake not the law of thy mother: Bind them continually upon thine heart, and tie them about thy neck.

When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee.

For the commandment (father) is a lamp (source of light); and the law (mother) is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life."
Proverbs 6: 20-23

● FAILURE TO SEE GOD'S HAND IN AUTHORITY WILL RESULT IN AN INABILITY TO SEE HOW TO LIVE.

To be able to lead and give proper direction, a person must know how to take orders. Young couples who have rebelled against the authority God placed in their lives are today experiencing tremendous frustrations and failures with one another and with their children. This deficit in insight is predicted in Proverbs 30: 17.

- "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it." Proverbs 30: 17

A KEY TO FREEDOM

There is a strong tendency today to think that the key to freedom is to get out from under authority. (especially the authority in a teen's life.) But God clearly emphasizes that the key to freedom is to learn how to relate and respond to the authority He has placed over one's life.

● RESISTING AUTHORITY IS RESISTING GOD.

The big mistake is in failing to recognize that God himself is behind the authority in a person's life. "The right thing for you to do is to obey your parents as those whom the Lord has set over you." Ephesians 6:1 (Phillips)

● A TEEN RESISTS HIS PARENTS:

Therefore, rebellion against a parent is not really rebellion against that parent but rebellion against God.

Ofentimes, I will ask a teenager,
"How would you like to solve 90%
of your family problems in two weeks?"
His reply is usually, "Ha! You don't
know my parents!"

- The teen who responds that way has lost sight of some very important insights for a successful life.

KEY INSIGHTS:

1. God was responsible for giving him his parents. It was within God's power for him to be born or raised in a different family.
2. God is bigger than his parents. He must come to the place where he is willing to trust God to direct his life through his parents' authority.
 - "The king's heart (the one in authority) is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water; he turneth it whithersoever he will." Proverbs 21:1
3. He must realize the purpose for which God has placed his parents over him. God's purpose for the parent is to break the will of the child so he is obedient; this will produce mature attitudes in the child's life. (See insights on disciplining children.)
 - "Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." Colossians 3:20

- A person's freedom to submit to the Lord's authority when he is "on his own" or married is directly proportional to the degree to which his will is broken when he leaves home. The areas of authority he rebels against at home will be reflected in similar problems with those outside the home.

- 4. The hard-to-get-along-with characteristics of a parent represent an underlying purpose of God in the teen's life. God knew the parents were going to have certain personality traits that would be difficult to respond to. The issue, therefore, is not that they have these traits, but that the teen learns how to respond to these irritations and pressures. (See materials and related Scriptures on "Responding to Irritations and Offenses.")

- 5. But what if my parents are unfair or wrong in their decision? The teen who uses injustices on the parent's part to justify his disobedience has failed to distinguish between the parent's position in which God has placed him over the teen and the parent's personality traits. When a teen rationalizes his disobedient behavior on the grounds of his parent's personality traits, the parent will invariably assert himself in his God-given position and exert greater authority.

- 6. Only a broken will toward the parent will assure the parent that he "can trust" his teen to make his own decisions. This is true even if the parent is not a Christian. When a parent discerns the obedience, respect and responsibility he expects from his child, he has a sense of fulfillment: he has instilled the important traits that will guarantee the child's independent success when he leaves home.

- "Complete freedom" and a new chain of authority actually begin when a person gets married. Genesis 2: 24

- Nevertheless, many young people "earn" their freedom long before they marry because of their maturity in responding to their parents' authority.

AN ILLUSTRATION - A DYNAMIC CHRISTIAN TEEN

A teenage girl who had recently become a Christian came into my office one afternoon. She was captain of the cheerleaders and had an outstanding testimony for the Lord with her peers. Four of the six cheerleaders had already accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

HER PROBLEM WAS DAD.

Since she had become a Christian, she sensed God wanted her to attend a Christian college. She related the following account to me: "The first time I mentioned the idea of going to a Christian college to my father, he blew up! He told me that he had been raised in a strict religious background and he wanted no part of it! I tried to reason with him but he just wouldn't listen. Since that time, I've brought the subject up several times and now he's told me that I have to go to the same college he, Mom, my brother and sister attended. Furthermore, he said that if I didn't go there, he would not give me money for my education as he did for my brother and sister.

MY DAD'S NOT A CHRISTIAN!

I asked her what her response was when her dad told her she couldn't go to the Christian college. She replied, "Well, not very good. Besides, he's not even a Christian so what does he know about God's will for my life?"

DO YOU KNOW THAT GOD WILL SHOW YOU HIS WILL THROUGH YOUR DAD?

When I made that statement, she asked, "What do you mean?" I re-emphasized the statement by saying, "God wants to reveal some very important aspects of His will through your parents. If you want to really please God the first thing you must do as a Christian is learn to obey your parents. CO-OPERATION WITH GOD MEANS OBEYING YOUR PARENTS. So many young people make the mistake of thinking that since they've become Christians they will look to all other sources (Holy Spirit, Scripture, prayer, sermons, counsel of others, circumstances, and their own intuition, etc.) for direction, at the expense of obedience to their parents.

THE NON-CHRISTIAN PARENT FEELS GOD IS REBELLING AGAINST HIM.

Especially to the non-Christian parent, it seems that the child with whom he felt he had a reasonable relationship has, all of a sudden, become stubborn, self-righteous and rebellious in order to follow this new "religious kick."

Since the teen is now following God, the parent concludes that He's the one who is really rebelling against him. She replied, "That's exactly what I've done! What can I do?"

SHE WAS ANXIOUS TO TRY GOD'S SOLUTION!

After pointing out the six key insights (pages 3, 4) I asked her if she was willing to go back to her father and (1) ask his forgiveness for her failure to respond to his authority and (2) tell him that from now on, he could count on her cooperating with whatever he said?

She said she really believed God was bigger than her dad and able to work through him.

NOTE:

HOW TO GO BACK.

● BEFORE GOING BACK IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR AN INDIVIDUAL TO:

ASSUME HIS RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE BEHAVIOR.

1. A teen can do this by listing the areas and situations where he knows he has wronged his parents.
2. Purpose to go back and ask forgiveness and state intentions for future behavior.

(See "Developing Transparency," pages 7-10.)

BE FREE FROM ANY RESENTMENTS.

1. Here it is important for the teen to specifically identify unforgiven wrongs or faults which he feels the parent has committed against him.
2. A sincere prayer to the Lord, forgiving his parents for these wrongs, will remove resentments and bitterness. (For further insights see "Responding to Irritations and Offenses," pages 15-17.)

HE DIDN'T BELIEVE ME !

She called me back the next day to tell me what had happened. "You won't believe what happened!" She exclaimed. "I asked his forgiveness and told him I would obey him. He replied by saying, "Oh, yeh! Well, you don't go to the basketball game tonight."

I KNEW THIS WAS A TEST.

"As soon as he said that, I knew God wanted to see if I would really trust Him as well as prove to my dad I meant what I said. After supper I helped Mom with the dishes. I hadn't said a word about the game. In the past, I would have started arguing and reasoning to get my way as soon as he told me I couldn't go."

IT WOULD BE FUN TO SEE WHAT GOD WANTED TO DO!

"At 7:00 I went upstairs to my room. Dad was reading the newspaper, I told the folks I was going up to study. Well, of course, I couldn't study so I started to pray.

Lord, you're bigger than my dad. If my not going to the game would in any way jeopardize your testimony, then you'll have to change dad's heart. But if it's more important to you that I demonstrate my obedience to him, then I'll be willing to stay at home and know more will be gained this way.

At 7:40 Dad called up and said, "If you're going to the game, you'd better get your clothes changed fast!"

Several months later she told me how her dad had changed his mind and given his permission for her to attend the Christian college; he would even give her the same financial help he had given her brother and sister!

● A COLLEGE GIRL'S TESTIMONY

In October 1970 I was having real spiritual struggles. I couldn't get close and communicate with God. When I came to my youth director for help, I was so uptight and had so little freedom in my life that I could hardly even talk to him about my problem. I had violated and was violating a basic principle in my life and then finally the results were coming to a head. The basic principle was submitting to my parents' authority.

My parents and I had had a running conflict for several years. I considered it "normal" for a teenager because most of my friends had similar conflicts with their parents. The conflict involved my appearance. I wanted to wear short skirts, make-up and jewelry, all of which they heartily disapproved.

The process in which I got my own way was gradual. I slowly started wearing more make-up and jewelry, and gradually kept shortening my hems. The conflict finally came to a head when I accepted a beautiful ring from my boyfriend and my hems went up three inches more.

When I first started college, I decided I was going to dress the way I wanted to - at least while I was at college. When I went home I would dress much more modestly. Somehow, I didn't completely fake out my parents.

So, here I was with this beautiful ring, very short skirts and a guilty conscience.

Then I heard that the only way I could get real peace of mind was to conform to my parents' standards of dress - not only at home, but also at school. This was a hard pill for me to swallow, but I really wanted peace of mind and freedom. I gave my right to dress the way I wanted to God and asked Him to forgive me for disobeying and dishonoring His authority through my parents.

Then I started the long process of letting down all the hems I had just shortened. The next time I went home, I talked to my parents about my decision and asked for their forgiveness. My dad almost cried and my mom was really astounded.

Since that time, my parents have given me permission to wear the beautiful ring that my boyfriend gave me and I have been able to communicate with my parents more than ever before in my life. I can tell that they really respect me for submitting to them. I love to be home because there are no guilt feelings and I really enjoy any time I can spend with my family. We don't fight any more either.

Soon after I lengthened my skirts, another very interesting thing happened: my boyfriend confided to me that he had really been bothered and upset when I had shortened my hems, but he didn't feel that he had any right to say anything. That, most of all, made me so glad I had submitted to my parents authority. God not only gave me a peaceful relationship with my parents, but with my boyfriend, too!

ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES

IN DEVELOPING A PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARD AUTHORITY:

● Important as it is to go back and correct past disobedience and irresponsibility, it is even more important to know how to deal with new confrontations in the days ahead.

- The following insights are "handles" to help a person keep his perspective in what God is doing through the authority He has placed over him.

1. SHOW DEFERENCE.

Anticipate and look for opportunities to cooperate and even take the initiative in seeking to please your parents (or other authorities).

Deference is giving in to the wishes of another. When this is done with a cheerful spirit, it has great impact in communicating obedience.

2. DON'T REACT TO WHAT A PERSON SAYS - DISCERN WHAT HE MEANS.

When commands appear to contradict your wishes or convictions, before you react, discern the purpose for the command. The underlying purpose is usually for your benefit.

- This is illustrated in Daniel 1. The king commanded Daniel and the other Jewish boys to eat the king's meat and drink the king's wine. Daniel discerned that the purpose of the king was not to destroy their religious convictions, but rather to make them healthy.

Because Daniel had developed a rapport with the prince of the eunuchs (shown deference), he was able to suggest a possible alternative which would accomplish the same results, but not at the expense of his convictions.

3 REALIZE THIS IS GOD'S WAY.

Have confidence in God's ability to change decisions in any area of life, whether it be parents, employer, teacher or government.

4 KEEP ACCOUNTS SHORT.

Whenever mistakes are made in the future, don't procrastinate in asking forgiveness. Go immediately to the one in authority and ask his forgiveness. This will emphasize the sincerity of your intentions to be obedient.

Scripture emphasizes the application of this principle in every relationship. For example:

● HUSBAND TO GOD

"But I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ."
I Corinthians 11:3a

● WIFE TO HUSBAND

"and the head of the woman is the man."
I Corinthians 11:3b
(See also I Peter 3: 1-5)

● CHILD TO PARENT

"Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."
Exodus 20: 12

● EMPLOYER TO GOD

"And ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him."
Ephesians 6: 9

● EMPLOYEE TO EMPLOYER

"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as unto Christ." Ephesians 6: 5

● CITIZENS TO GOVERNMENT

- Even the civil governments whose laws regulate man's relationship to man - God says obey. He can work His plan and purpose in spite of their inequities.
- The Roman government was vile and corrupt, yet Jesus said, "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." Matthew 22:21
- Jesus never lost sight of the fact that a person's objective must be to change men's hearts if society is to change.

"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.

For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:

As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.

Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.

Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also the froward."

1 Peter 2:13-18 (See also Romans 13:1-7.)