

# **Sermon**

## **The Authority & Anatomy of the Church**

Part I

*Colossians 1:15-20, 1 Peter 5:1-4, Acts 6:1-4*

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**“Living For the One Who Branded Us...Jesus”**

# Authority

- 1 the power or right to give orders and enforce obedience.
- 2 a person or organization exerting control in a political or administrative sphere.
- 3 the power to influence others based on recognized knowledge or expertise.

- A. We don't like authority because we have a spirit of rebellion
- B. We don't like authority because we have a spirit of individualism
- C. Yet, authority is a logical necessity for there to be order in any community.

## The Attitudes toward Authority (Alistair Begg)

- A. **Conflict** – We have seen people abuse power
- B. **Confusion** – We have no idea who has the authority
- C. **Contentment** – We have submitted to the authority of Christ and those He has put in place and trust the process that Christ is in charge.

## The Attitudes from Authority

- A. A **Holiness** that's pure
- B. A **Hierarchy** that's clear
- C. A **Humility** that's real

### John Stott

**“The authority by which the Christian leader leads is not power but love, not force but example, not coercion but reasoned persuasion. Leaders have power, but power is safe only in the hands of those who humble themselves to serve.”**

## TEXT:

### Colossians 1:15-20

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. <sup>16</sup>For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. <sup>17</sup>He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. <sup>18</sup>And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. <sup>19</sup>For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, <sup>20</sup>and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

### **1 Peter 5:1-4**

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: <sup>2</sup> Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; <sup>3</sup> not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. <sup>4</sup> And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

### **Acts 6:1-4**

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews <sup>e</sup> among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. <sup>2</sup> So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. <sup>3</sup> Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them <sup>4</sup> and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

## **I. The Design of the Church Government Structure**

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **Matthew 16:17-18**

Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. <sup>18</sup> And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

### **Acts 14:23**

Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in **each** church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

## **II. The Divisions of Authority within the Church**

A. \_\_\_\_\_

### **Colossians 1:18**

Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body.

### **1 Peter 5:2**

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them...

B. \_\_\_\_\_

**Titus 1:7-9**

For an overseer, as God’s administrator, must be blameless, not arrogant, not hot-tempered, not addicted to wine, not a bully, not greedy for money, <sup>8</sup>but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, righteous, holy, self-controlled, <sup>9</sup>holding to the faithful message as taught, so that he will be able both to encourage with sound teaching and to refute those who contradict it.

C. \_\_\_\_\_

**Acts 6:2-4**

So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. <sup>3</sup> Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them <sup>4</sup>and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”

D. \_\_\_\_\_

### III. The Decision Making System of Church Government

Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

A. Not an *Autocracy* -

- Downfall – no person with a sinful nature should a dictator. A Benevolent Dictator is an oxymoron unless you are God Himself.

B. Not a *Democracy* -

- Downfall – voting creates division and a platform for politics where things are by popularity.

**Illustration:** “What is right is not always popular, what is popular is not always right”

C. *Theocracy* -

### CONCLUSION

God said it,  
I believe it,  
That settles it

OR

God said it,  
That settles it!