



Session 2 – Authority

1. Authority is good. Very good.

- a. Genesis 1:26–28 – Mankind as God’s under-kings.
 - i. Being in God’s image requires our ruling over and subduing creation.
 - ii. It also requires rightly ordered relationships (male/female, parent/child)
 - 1. The rest of Scripture reveals how these relationships are to be rightly ordered (Ex. 20; Eph. 5–6; Col. 3; Titus 2; 1Tim. 2)
- b. Our age is anti-authority = egalitarianism
 - i. All things are equal, flattened. All relations must be equal in power, opportunities, outcomes.
 - ii. The air we breathe and the rust that naturally develops upon our minds and hearts.
 - iii. The antidote: rightful, loving authority as God designed, in men taking their places of authority in the home, the church, and in the world.

2. Children are Cretans, not angels

- a. The Apostle Paul: “Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.” (Titus 1:12).
- b. When discussing children, we must be guided by the unvarnished truth of the Bible regarding human nature and childhood.
 - i. “Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.” (Prov. 22:15)
 - ii. “The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.” (Prov. 29:15)
- c. A primary fruit of our children’s depravity/deadness (Eph. 2:1–3) and rebellion in sin will be expressed firstly and powerfully through disobedience and their craving of independence (to go their own way, have things their way).

- d. And unless there are devoted and immovable authorities involved to correct, discipline, admonish and teach a child against their impulses and cravings (“folly”, Proverbs), they will bend and break themselves into oblivion.

3. Fatherhood: loving subjugation and retraining of rebels

- a. In God’s gracious plans, children’s natural impulses and cravings can be restrained, redirected, and ultimately, redeemed. Parents, father’s **especially** (Col. 3:21; Eph. 6:4), are at the point of this process.
- b. God’s strategy: the subjugation of children under rightful, loving authority which tends towards their subjugation to God’s great authority. God’s chosen normal and natural means to his supernatural ends.
- c. The promise of blessing on the parental endeavor: children under the firm and faithful authority of a father (and mother) will be shepherded *to the Lord*. This is not a wishy-washy hope, nor a blanket-promise, but a firm expectation of grace (see 1Cor. 7:12–16):
 - i. For the unbelieving husband is made holy because of his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy because of her husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy. (1 Cor. 7:14)
- d. A Christian father’s concern is to have the heart of their children under their authority, thus positioning them to submit to the Heavenly Father.
 - i. “My son, **give me your heart**, and let your eyes observe my ways.” (Prov. 23:26)

4. Fatherly authority must be established and enforced

- a. Brothers, you must establish your authority: starting in marriage.
- b. And from our ruling in marriage, we rule in the home: “Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you strike him with a rod, he will not die. If you strike him with the rod, you will save his soul from Sheol.” (Prov. 23:13–14).

ASSIGNMENT: Duties of Parents, J.C. Ryle

Read this book through this course – then answer two questions (with some length and specificity, *involving wife*), and then meet with an older, mature Christian father to discuss:

1. What is the present health and state of my fatherhood?
2. What are the specific actions the Lord is commanding me to grow as a father?