

# Authority & Kingdoms

A commentary on Matthew 8

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# The Authority of Law and Promise

Matthew 8:2-4 - *When Jesus came down from the mountainside, large crowds followed him. A man with leprosy came and knelt before him and said, "Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean." Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy. Then Jesus said to him, "See that you don't tell anyone. But go, **show yourself to the priest and offer the gift Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.**"*

After healing the leper, Jesus commands him to "show yourself to the priest", and "offer the gift Moses commanded". Jesus shows that the Mosaic law contains healing. In this case, Jesus is acting under the authority of the Old Testament law, or as we often refer to it, "the old covenant". Even in this old covenant, there is authority to heal. Healing has always been a part of God's plan and promise. Even when the common people were separated from God and required a priest to intercede. Even when only the high priest was able to enter God's holy presence; even then God made provision in the law for healing and for response to that healing.

The law provides authority for healing. However, Jesus came to fulfill the law and to supercede it. He came to enact an even greater covenant. Jesus came to fulfill the law as a greater priest. Jesus is our priest, our prophet, and our king.<sup>1</sup> When Jesus sent the leper to the priest, the leper was already healed. The leper was sent to the priest as a witness to the priest of Jesus' authority as the priest of the new covenant. Jesus told him not to tell anyone else but the priest. This is because Jesus respected the authority of the priest. Only a priest could witness the healing. This was laid out under the Mosaic law in Leviticus chapter 14. The priest was to go examine the cleansed leper to verify that they had been healed of the disease. He would then direct the appropriate ceremonies and sacrifices, and only then would the priest "declare the person healed". Declaring the healing is a priestly role. No one can say "you are healed" except the priest.

Before moving on to teach about the new covenant, Matthew shows us two examples of original design. We must understand the basic design and operation of the earth as designed, before building on this foundation. The New covenant is a fulfillment of the old covenant, but both covenants are built on top of God's natural laws. The laws of nature were in place at the creation of the universe. The old covenant built upon this, by way of relationship with God. God made a promise to Adam, then Abraham, then Moses; Each time, adding to the previous promise.

1. God promised Adam dominion.
2. God promised Abraham abundance and prosperity, within the established dominion.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Threefold\\_office](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Threefold_office)

3. God promised Moses his guidance and provision, within the established abundant dominion.

Within each promise God reveals a deeper layer of intimacy. In each layer there is assumed authority, but the authority grows more and more personal. God's long term plan is restore to mankind the intimacy that we had with him originally when Adam walked in the garden with God. This intimacy is somehow dependent upon our acceptance of and ability to steward the greater levels of authority.

## Authority of Design

Matthew 8:5-13 - *When Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, asking for help. "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly." Jesus said to him, "Shall I come and heal him?" The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you **come under my roof**. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and said to those following him, "Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would." And his servant was healed at that moment.*

The Centurion grasps an important concept of the design of the universe. He sees that there are real spiritual structures, processes, and patterns. He knows that the symptoms exhibited by his servant are not merely physical symptoms. His problem is not simply a problem within the physical body of his servant. When we see problems manifesting in the physical realm, we need to realize that there is something else happening that we can not see with physical eyes, in unseen realms. There are laws that govern the parallel universes of physical and spiritual planes. There are laws that govern how they affect each other, how they are in fact inextricably linked. The Centurion realizes that these patterns are designed by God, and that, humanity is designed to enact God's will on the earth. This is what God was talking about when he made the initial promise to Adam to "have dominion" over earth.

God gave Adam authority. This authority was to rule over the earth; but it was not limited to the physical domain. In fact, Adam's authority included spiritual realms. We wrestle not against flesh and blood. The flesh and blood were never the original struggle. In fact, in the original design, the physical struggle was actually a much smaller part of it. The garden of eden was a place of perfection. Adam and Eve didn't need to wrestle in the physical. The physical was still in a state of perfection. Yet, they were instructed to increase dominion and to spread this perfection; or as Arthur Burk says, "to take the garden to the non-garden parts of the earth".

Before Adam and Eve sinned, the earth was not the defiled place that we know. Thorns and thistles and toil and labour came as a result of the curse. The curse was the result of sin. It was not part of the original design - the initial pattern. It happened later. So how could Adam and Eve be expected to spread perfection? What was there to spread it onto? It was a spiritual realm; a non-physical space. When Satan came along to tempt Adam and Eve, they already had dominion over him. What they did, they did by choice. Satan did not act in authority. Adam and Eve actually had the ability to say "no". They had this ability because of their authority. They walked with God. They were "seated in high places". They inhabited the original design for mankind that we lost and that Christ later won back and restored.

Adam and Eve handed over their authority to Satan by agreeing with him and joining with his will. Christ bought back this authority with his blood. Yet, there is a paradox here that the Centurion instinctively knows. It is a knowledge exhibited by many of the Old Testament prophets. That even though our authority has been lost, it is not gone, and is still rightfully ours. Wise men of old who walk in intimacy with the creator begin to see things that we can not fully comprehend. Things that are outside of the possibility to logically understand. Truths based around the identity of God, and that, because we are made in his image, also apply to us in some strange mysterious way.

One of these "secrets" is that God exists outside of time and space. In fact, time and space are only relevant inside the created physical world. But the authority given to Adam and Eve was not limited to the physical world. Their authority has a component which transcends time and space. In this regard, it is no longer relevant to speak of timelines affecting authority, since the authority exists outside of time, where the concept of a timeline is meaningless. The reason that this is important, is that in the story of authority, sin, redemption, and restoration, there is an inherent timeline - an implied flow of time. Adam and eve HAD authority, THEN LOST it. Christ CAME, DIED, DEFEATED sin and death, RESURRECTED, and WON back authority, which he THEN GAVE to us. Look at the capitalized words. These all are written in the past tense. This makes sense to us because we are thinking inside of time. We are thinking from a physical perspective. However, this is a limited view. This view makes an illegitimate claim of completeness and truth. Yes it is truth, but it is not **whole** truth. Our eternal spirits exist beyond the physical realm. The story of any woman or man can not be wholly told within the framework of physical space or time. This is true of all humanity, and it is certainly true of Jesus, the Christ, the Creator, the Redeemer and King who sits upon the throne of heaven.

So let us reexamine this redemption story from a viewpoint of transcendency. When we sit in heaven, this is the way we will see it. Not bound by timelines and obsolete limited concepts like "before" and "after". "Then" has a very different meaning in that context.

Adam and Eve (and therefore, WE) HAVE authority, BUT LOSE it (by agreeing with Satan's deception). Christ COMES, DIES, DEFEATS sin and death. Christ RESURRECTS and WINS, and GIVES us authority.

In this heavenly perspective, we have authority from original design AND we have authority from Christ's sacrifice. Our authority comes from God as original design. Our authority is in Christ as new creations.

So for the Centurion and the Old Testament prophets, their authority was recognized as original design. It may even be possible that these great heroes of faith, in some mysterious way were able to connect with their spirits to the Holy Spirit and to their sanctified and atoned authority in Christ, even though Jesus had "not yet" completed the work.

In any case, the Centurion knew without a doubt that Jesus had authority over the spiritual and physical realms. He also knew that his own authority was a factor. He speaks to Jesus about the authority of being "under my roof" He tells Jesus, that it is not necessary for Jesus to physically come under his physical roof, his physical house. He realizes the spiritual authority that he and Jesus both carry, and that their agreement is sufficient to release that spiritual authority into the transformational power of physical healing. He realizes that this is a heavenly authority which overlaps earth.

Yet the Centurion recognized that his own authority is not sufficient. He senses the superiority of Jesus supreme authority. He recognizes the ultimate authority of this Priest/Prophet/King now standing before him. His own authority pales in comparison, and the Centurion bows in humility. He realizes that the only legitimate option is to fall under the authority of Jesus. He places himself under Jesus, referring to an explicit delegation of authority, using the example of military chain of command. The centurion knows that any authority that the sickness or it's causes may possess, can not stand up to the authority of Christ, and, because authority is explicitly transferrable, he can go himself, under the authority of Christ and enact the healing, without requiring Jesus to physically visit his home.

From the Centurion's exhibited knowledge, we can extract some important principles:

- 1) Sickness and/or its causes can not stand up to the authority of Christ
- 2) Authority involves both physical and spiritual dimensions
- 3) Authority is explicitly transferrable
- 4) Authority involves both us and God
- 5) Authority transcends space and time

## New Covenant Authority

Notice how in the first two stories there is a tension between old and new covenant. The healing of the leper was done entirely under the old testament model. The Centurion's servant was healed in an almost naturalistic way. There was an explicit assumption that God could heal, which somehow subtly happened without anyone really doing anything specific. Look at Jesus' choice of wording - "go, let it be done". He doesn't say, "go do it", or "go, I have done it", or even "go, God has done it".

Sometimes, acknowledging and understanding that things work a certain way, is enough to allow it to happen. Sometimes, God moves without anyone asking. Sometimes he moves, before anyone gets a chance to ask.

Sometimes. But not always.

The rest of the chapter reveals the times when waiting is not enough.

## Peter's House

The next short section of Matthew 8 focuses on Jesus coming to Peter's house. We saw from the Centurion, the beginnings of an idea which has to do with delegation and circles of authority. The Centurion has authority over his own house, and so he can speak and act on behalf of the members of his household to request healing. He can also grant Jesus authority over his household to speak healing into it. Matthew builds on this concept by showing us a scene taking place at Peter's house. Peter was already a follower of Jesus, having joined him in Matthew chapter 4, but this is the first time we are aware of of Jesus visiting his house. Notice though that Peter has made a commitment to follow Jesus and has been focused on doing so for some time. Exactly how long is not clear, but it was long enough for Jesus to develop a large following, as witness by the crowds present for the "sermon on the mount" of the preceding chapters. I bring this up to point out that Peter had by now developed a relationship with Jesus. He was not simply one of the many curious onlookers, but was a disciple, part of Jesus' inner circle. We will see why this is important momentarily.

Matthew 8:14-15

*When Jesus came into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever. He touched her hand and the fever left her, and she got up and began to wait on him.*

Here at Peter's house we see a deeper level of authority which flows from intimacy. Because of Peter's intimacy with Jesus, there is an implicit authorization in place. Unlike the centurion, Peter doesn't need to give Jesus any explicit permissions in his house, because Jesus is already the lord of Peter's life. That is to say, Peter doesn't need to give Jesus any authority at this point, because he has already done so. Peter has surrendered his kingdom to Jesus. He has placed his kingdom under the Kingdom of Jesus.

Jesus is able to walk right in and make himself at home. He simply touches Peter's mother in law, without a word, acknowledging her presence and her unspoken need, and his ability and will to provide. The house belongs to Peter, but Peter's kingdom falls under the kingdom of Jesus. Jesus has inherent authority up the chain of command purely by reason of Peter's commitment to, and faith in, Jesus. Just as the centurion refers to the military chain of command, so Jesus and Peter are part of an existing chain of command that is inherent in the kingdom of heaven. Jesus automatically blesses the household by his very presence. All the

grace and goodness of God flows out of Jesus, because there is an open channel of authority and alignment, made possible by intimacy.

Peter demonstrates an intentional coming under of authority, not for any advantages it may bring, but from a pure desire to follow. From this desire, Peter aligns and submits his own little kingdom to Christ. From this position, he is poised to receive automatic blessings from the presence of Jesus.

## Peter's Village

Matthew 8:16 (with Isaiah 53:4)

*When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: "He took up our infirmities and bore our diseases."*

In this verse, Jesus is still at Peter's house. But now we see that Peter has opened his house up to visitors. Because Peter's house is now an extension of the kingdom of heaven, it has suddenly become a place of healing. Before Jesus arrived, it was not a place of healing. Peter's mother in law was very sick, although she lived in the house. When Jesus arrives, he brings his kingdom with him. The place is changed. There is now an atmosphere for healing. An atmosphere which quickly become public knowledge. An atmosphere which is quickly recognized by the townspeople and acted upon, in two distinct ways.

People came from the village to receive healing from Jesus. They heard that Jesus was here, that the "kingdom of heaven is at hand" and they came gratefully to receive healing.

Additionally, "many who were demon possessed were brought to him". The verb tense here is interesting - many WERE BROUGHT. It doesn't say they came, but they were brought. They were not necessarily coming on their own accord. Being demonically influenced, they were not necessarily competent to make rational choices. Perhaps their caregivers took it upon themselves to decide for them. They correctly and rightfully claimed the authority that naturally comes with stewardship. They possessed their authority over the possessed. They made choice on their behalf to enter the kingdom of heaven. These loving caregivers, saw a truth about authority, and they acted on that truth. They intentionally purposed to override the demonic authority, with the authority of the kingdom of heaven. They realized that the power of the kingdom of heaven was far greater than the defeated kingdom of the devil. They came in the physical realm to Peter's house, and in so doing, they stepped out of the kingdom of darkness and into the kingdom of heaven.

# The Choice

Matthew 8:18-27

*When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake. Then a teacher of the law came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus replied, "Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." Another disciple said to him, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." But Jesus told him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."*

*Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him. Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us! We're going to drown!" He replied, "You of little faith, why are you so afraid?" Then he got up and rebuked the winds and the waves, and it was completely calm. The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!"*

Matthew switches gears for a moment, taking a break from talking about healing, because he needs to add an important concept here before moving on. Here we see Jesus teaching on will, choice, and priorities. He presents two micro parables to those who would desire to follow him. He makes it clear that the kingdom of heaven is not something to be entered lightly - not something that can be picked up with no cost or consequence. It is a world of different priorities than the world around us. A world of different values and assumptions. He then drives the difference home with a show of power. The kingdoms of earth and heaven are vastly different. What is impossible in one is normal in the other. What seems so important in one is trivial in the other.

# The Choice Rejected

Matthew 8:28-34

*When he arrived at the other side in the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men coming from the tombs met him. They were so violent that no one could pass that way. "What do you want with us, Son of God?" they shouted. "Have you come here to torture us before the appointed time?" Some distance from them a large herd of pigs was feeding. The demons begged Jesus, "If you drive us out, send us into the herd of pigs." He said to them, "Go!" So they came out and went into the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and died in the water. Those tending the pigs ran off, went into the town and reported all this, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men. Then the whole town went out to meet Jesus. And when they saw him, they pleaded with him to leave their region.*

The Gadarene residents were confronted with a choice. Two of their countrymen had been miraculously healed by a touch of the Kingdom of Heaven. These two men had been abandoned by their families and friends and left alone in the local cemetery to live out their days



in insanity and desolation, surrounded by death. These men had nothing. Even their own bodies were no longer theirs, as they were controlled by demons, to the extent that the demons did all the talking. They were less than a shadow of their former selves.

Then along comes Jesus and presents a chance to break out of the dark kingdom. The demons must have felt the desire for freedom, deep within their human hosts, for they protest to Jesus that it's not fair for him to come before "the appointed time". They know full well that the kingdom of death and darkness is destined for destruction. But they are bound by their choices. As fallen angels, they had their chance to inhabit heaven, but they rebelled, trading glory for a life of torment.

We do not know what happens to the two demon possessed men, other than the fact that the demons left them. We are left to conclude that they are fully recovered and could reenter society as normal productive men. The point is that this story is not about the two men, but rather about the citizens of the Gadarenes. Like the demons themselves, the Gadarene people did not approve of Jesus overriding the demonic authority. We do not know why, but these people found it offensive that Jesus would free the two men and drive out the demons. Perhaps they were satisfied with the status quo, the existing balance of power in the area. Maybe they had a good thing going in their eyes. Perhaps they were afraid of what the kingdom of heaven would imply - would require. They likely knew that the kingdom of heaven requires sacrifice, a laying down of their own kingdoms. Perhaps they understood that they would need to face hard words like righteousness and repentance.

so Jesus respects their authority over their region. He leaves "the dead to bury their own dead". The Gadarenes, like each and every man and woman on earth throughout all of history, have the right, the choice, the freedom, of rejecting the kingdom - choosing their own kingdom, or even choosing the kingdom of darkness over light. We have authority of, and in, whichever kingdom we choose.

## Authority in Realms

Matthew 9:1-8

*Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. Some men brought to him a paralyzed man, lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the man, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven." At this, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!" Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said, "Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, "Get up, take your mat and go home." Then the man got up and went home. When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to man.*

We have the right and authority to choose how we will live and to choose to reject God and his good and perfect ways. We often exercise this right unintentionally, when we fail to resist temptation and give in to sinful desires. Yet, Jesus shows grace to us. He forgives. He uses his authority in heaven to override on our behalf. The natural systems of the universe come with natural consequences. Yet Jesus goes above and beyond to “bend the rules” in our favor. He chooses to defend us from our own foolishness.

Jesus also shows that our authority works on multiple levels, in multiple kingdoms. As we inhabit the physical realm, we do things that affect our status and standing in the spiritual realm. Jesus acts on the planes of both heaven and earth; healing, cleansing, and setting free. He forgives and heals. His authority is in heaven and on earth and over the powers of darkness. This claim is reiterated by Jesus in Matthew 28 where he states “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me”.

The paralyzed man now walks as a forgiven man, free of sin and guilt. This is the effect of Jesus. We, as Christians; as representatives of Jesus who follow in his footsteps, can have the same effect. All authority belonged to Jesus. This authority has been passed on to us. When we yield and align our own kingdoms to the kingdom of heaven, we walk in the kingdom of heaven. When we follow Jesus we walk in his ways, and we do the things he did because we have the same authority. We have authority in heaven and on earth. We have authority over the powers of darkness. All authority has been given to us.

Matthew 28:18-20

*Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

Authority works on heaven and on earth. We can easily see the earth, but it is difficult to see and comprehend the heaven. We may tend to neglect the heaven side of things, but our authority is in heaven and on earth. We actually can choose which realm to act in. Look at Jesus’ choice when he meets the paralyzed man. He does not heal him. Instead, he forgives his sin. Jesus consciously chooses to act in heaven rather than on earth. He heals the man’s spirit rather than his body. Too often, we make the assumption that since we are here on earth, presented with earthly symptoms, we ought to enforce earthly solutions. That is true. We are here to destroy the works of the devil. Most of the time, Jesus did act on the earth to heal the physical problem. Jesus healed the sick; he didn’t just go around forgiving sins. But in this case, he purposefully ignores earth at first, to show us a point. It’s not all about the earth.

# The Kingdom of Authority and Discernment

Jesus knew very well that he could heal the paralyzed man. He also saw very clearly the man's sins. (do not assume here that the sins caused the disease). Jesus saw layers of information. He could see symptoms, causes, and effects, in both the physical and spiritual realm. Jesus had to make a decision about how to act on this information. What exactly would he do with this information? What should he focus on? This may be the hardest part of healing - knowing what to do, when.

We need to loop back to the Centurion.

Matthew 8:10-13 - <Jesus> *was amazed and said to those following him, "Truly I tell you, I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith. I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."* Then Jesus said to the centurion, "Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would." And his servant was healed at that moment.

Jesus is amazed at the faith of the Centurion. But rather than simply leave it at that, he makes a very intriguing statement. Earlier, I mentioned that the Centurion recognized the Prophet/Priest/King role in Jesus. He explicitly comes under the authority of his Kingship, and requests his Priesthood to perform the healing. I think that Jesus, notices that the Centurion has picked up on this important triune role, and decides to bless the Centurion with a taste of his Prophethood as well! Jesus says that many "subjects of the kingdom" of Israel will be expelled from the kingdom.

This harkens back to the previous chapter, Matthew 7, when, in wrapping up his "sermon on the mount" Jesus makes the same statement. I don't know if the Centurion had been on the mountain listening to Jesus' teaching, but I know that the disciples were. Jesus seems to be saying to them - "remember what I told you yesterday?!"

Matthew chapter 7 is such a great chapter in it's own right, I will only briefly summarize it here in point form.

- Everyone who asks receives (because God is good)
- Obey the law; whatever you want men to do to you, do to them
- Many will enter the gate, but few will find the way
- You Will Know Them by Their Fruits
- Beware of wolves in sheep's clothing
- I will say to them "I Never Knew You"

The concept of “I never knew you” is a difficult one. We do not like to think about it. It flies in the face of our tidy christian theologies and assurances. Our “sinner’s prayer” one-time repentance doctrines do not compute with what Jesus is saying.

Jesus tells us that not all “christians” will “make it” because he is actually more concerned about relationship, and having us “doing” the kingdom of heaven with him. He actually never told us “say this prayer and you are set for life”. He said “follow me”. Following is an active process of continually watching and moving. Following requires practiced discernment and active rest. But what does this have to do with authority? Let us inject “authority: into the outline of Matthew chapter 7:

- Everyone who asks for authority, receives it
- Do not abuse authority - treat others in love
- Authority will corrupt many. Many will begin the journey with authority, but few will finish intact.
- Many will abuse the authority, but the fruit of abused authority will give them away.
- Ultimately, the corrupted, and the abusers will not be allowed to remain in the kingdom when all authority is accounted for.

I’m not saying that Matthew 7 is actually about authority. Matthew 7 shows us general kingdom principles that apply to many aspects of kingdom living. Authority is one aspect that these principles apply to. Points 1 and 2 show us that in general, God is a generous provider, holding back nothing from his children, and turning no one away from his family. “Welcome to the family”, he says. “Here are many gifts - take them! Oh and by the way, in this family, it’s all about love. Really that’s our one rule - Love everyone!”

But right from the start, God has always given us free will. He always respects our choices; even when they are completely stupid. He gives us one rule, but he does not force us to follow it. He knows we may choose not to. Many will start off alright, but will make a mess of things. Many will seem like they are “doing the right thing”. Many will appear to be are acting in light, but inside, their hearts are dark. For some, the fruit will give them away. Their actions will produce darkness rather than light.

There is something deeper here about the fruit though. The fruit is one indicator, but it does not indicate all of the problems. Some will yield good fruit, and still face judgement.

*Matt 7:21 - “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ 23 And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”*

How is this possible? They have produced the good fruit. They have done all the “good stuff”. Yet Jesus never knew them? Even the right fruit does not necessarily indicate the right path. We

can tell some of the snakes by their rotten fruit, but some who produce good fruit are snakes too. Some will use their authority to do great works, yet they will be told "I never knew you"

We have authority to do all things.

BUT

God created us for relationship - for intimacy

The fact that we HAVE authority, does NOT imply how we should USE it. We want to fulfill our destiny. We want to do good works. We want to act in love and help people. We want to build the kingdom of God.

Using our authority outside of intimacy is perversion of God's design.

To build the kingdom of God we must use our authority in the right way at the right time to do what the kingdom needs at that moment. How do we know what the kingdom needs? It is not enough to assume based on principles. God designed us for relationship, not for structure. We must, like the Centurion, recognize Jesus authority in our lives and take our marching orders from him.

Jesus said "I only do what the father is doing". This was a huge priority for Jesus.

In John 5:19, Jesus says *"the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does."*

It is about more than simply knowing the God's will. It is an intimate connection with the Father, so that he reveals specifically what he is doing right here, right now, with these specific people. God always works with people. He works IN people, and he works through people. His desire is to work with people as his partners and colabourers. He can only partner with those who are in tune with what he is trying to do.

We come again to the Centurion - Jesus said *"Go! Let it be done just as you believed it would."*

LET

Let go of our agenda

Let the kingdom come/advance

Let God work - What is the Father doing?

Our will matters to God. Sometimes we need to give him permission to work. We might need to join with him and partner with him in the work, or we may just need to get out of the way. But we need to explicitly "Let" him. Even in these cases, though, God cares about our opinion. He listens to us. He seeks our input. When the Centurion "let God", God did "as you believed it

would". The Centurion moved his agenda under the agenda of the Father. His spirit dialogued with God. He saw the truth of the paradox of overlapping realms. He chose to move into the realm of heaven. Jesus remarked about the great faith of the Centurion. "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God".<sup>2</sup> It is imperative that we adopt a practice of listening and discernment.

## Principles

1. God promised Adam dominion.
2. God promised Abraham abundance and prosperity, within the established dominion.
3. God promised Moses his guidance and provision, within the established abundant dominion.
4. The law provides authority for healing
5. Sickness and/or it's causes can not stand up to the authority of Christ
6. Authority involves both physical and spiritual dimensions
7. Authority is explicitly transferrable
8. Authority involves both us and God
9. Authority transcends space and time
10. Intimacy implies authority
11. Aligning and submitting our "little kingdom", positions us to receive blessings from the presence of Jesus.
12. Authority comes automatically with stewardship
13. Authority is a choice
14. We have authority to choose kingdoms
15. We have authority within the chosen kingdom
16. All authority has been given to us
17. All Christians have authority
18. Do not abuse authority - treat others in love
19. Authority can corrupt.
20. Corruption and abuse of authority can cost you the kingdom.
21. We need to remain in intimacy.
22. We need to listen and discern the will of the Father.
23. We need to do "only what the Father tells us"

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<sup>2</sup> Romans 10:17