

## Short Answer Series # 18

# What is the order of authority in a local Church?

The Lord Jesus told His Disciples plainly what the order of authority among Believers should be. 'You know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them, But so shall it not be among you; but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.' Mark 10v42-44.

The word the Lord used for 'minister,' means a servant. 'Whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.' That's what the Lord did, 'I am among you as He that serves.' Luke 22v27. Church Fellowships are not supposed to be military organizations, with a chain of command passed down from the 'highest' at the top, to the 'lowest' at the bottom.

All believers are equal in the sight of God, with everyone having personal access into the Presence of God anytime they desire. There are no middlemen, or mediators, between a Believer and the Lord. We do not need anyone's permission, or help, to meet God, to ask forgiveness for sin, or to speak to Him anytime. We are to be guided by the Lord's Spirit, and answerable to the Lord alone. Romans 14v4.

So, is there any authority?

'...Christ is the head of the Church.' Ephesians 5v23,

'And He is the head of the body, the Church.' Colossians 1v18.

He is the Head and the only authority. All those who are filled with His Spirit, are His Body on earth. 'Now you are the Body of Christ, and members in particular.' 1 Corinthians 12v27. We all have a certain part to fulfil in that Body. 'But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man, (every member of the body of Christ,) to profit withal.' 1 Corinthians 12v7. Every Believer has a Spiritual ministry that will profit every other Believer. No one was created to sit on the side lines and cheer everyone else on. We all have a vital part to play in the Lord's plan, and every part of His plan is an important part of His plan.

Apostles (Missionaries,) Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers, are given to local Churches for 'the perfecting of the Saints.....till we all come in the unity of the faith...' Ephesians 4v11-12. They are the ones the Lord works through to bring unity and perfection to His Church. But, they are also the ones He called 'Servants of all.'

'Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief:...' Hebrews 13v17.

We must submit ourselves voluntarily to our Pastors, because they surrender themselves to the Lord, so He can perfect us through them. They must always be honoured, but not idolised, or worshipped.

If anyone needs to have a title before their name, to show the world they are above others, then they are in a wrong spirit. But, the Lord will fix them, because, 'God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble.' 1 Peter 5v5.

The Lord does not have any favourites, and He is no respecter of persons. If anyone wants to be known as a Pope, Cardinal, Archbishop, Bishop, Archdeacon, Reverend, or anything else that makes them feel important, that's alright for them, but it means nothing to the Lord. He has Sons, and Daughters, and they are the love of His life, and the ones His purpose in creation was designed for.

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