

The Principle of Authority

by J. Hampton Keathley III

Parents must exercise authority in accordance with God's standards and guidelines to raise their children as good stewards of God's blessings.

Scripture: Ephesians 6:1

Topics: "Parental Authority", "Gods Sovereignty"

Description

J. Hampton Keathley III preaches on the importance of parental authority as a delegated responsibility from God, emphasizing the need for parents to raise their children according to God's guidelines and authority. Parents are called to declare and promote what God's Word says is right and wrong, acting in accordance with His standards to fulfill their stewardship. The sermon also delves into the meaning of authority as the delegated right to rule or lead, highlighting God's absolute and complete authority based on His perfect righteousness and goodness for the good and blessing of His people.

Transcript

The Right of Authority

As the sovereign Creator of the universe and the One who has established the divine institution of marriage and the home, God has placed children under the authority of their parents. This is more than evident in Scripture by the fact that over and over God addresses parents and gives them the responsibility for the training of their children, not the state (cf. Deut. 6:7-9; Eph. 6:1; Col. 3:20). Parental authority, then, is a delegated authority which means parents are not free to do with their children as they please. Ultimately, the authority we exercise as parents is God's authority. Children are stewardships from God, blessings He has given to parents to manage for Him. But to be good stewards, parents must raise their children according to God's guidelines and authority so children come to know God and obey and behave as the children of God. In our goal to teach them to obey as an obedience to God, it means parenting is designed by God to bring about a changing of parents (Eph. 6:1f).

As parents, then, we are to be in a subordinate relationship to God; we are to exercise only the authority God has given us and do so in accordance with His standards. We are never to arbitrarily establish what is right and wrong by our opinions or those of society unless those standards are based on God's Word. The parent's job is to declare what God's Word says is right and wrong and then seek to promote that in their own lives and in their children's lives. When this is not the case, the parents are acting in rebellion themselves and ruining, by negative example, the stewardship God has entrusted to their care. This

naturally leads to our next point.

The Meaning of Authority

Authority means the delegated right to rule or lead. It means the power to act, decide, command, and judge; it is the right to set policy and this means the responsibility to bring about controls in our children's lives within the limits of the authority given by God. God has absolute and complete authority and the right of complete control because of who He is as the sovereign Creator (Ps. 47:2; 103:19; 115:3; Dan. 4:34b; Rom. 9:20b-21). There is an important lesson here. Even God's authority and control is never arbitrary because it is based on His perfect righteousness and goodness; it is always for the good and blessing of people. For instance, the commandments of God's Word are not designed to take away our fun and make life miserable. Rather, they are designed to bring safeguards that enhance our capacity for blessing. This is so because of the very character of God who is perfect holiness. This includes God's perfect righteousness and justice. Inherent in all of this is God's goodness as our loving Benefactor. As an illustration, when our children were young we gave them tricycles as soon as they were old enough to ride them, but we established a rule: they could ride their tricycle in the driveway or on the sidewalk but not in the street. That rule restricted them out of love and parental responsibility, but its design was to keep them from being run over by an automobile.

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