

CHAPTER D6

AUTHORITY

God is the ultimate authority. Even death is preferable to not obeying and glorifying Him. All authority, whether it is good or bad, saved or unsaved, is of God (Ro 13:1; 1 Pe 2:18). Therefore, resisting any authority, no matter how corrupt, inept, or wrong that authority may be, *can result in damnation* (Ro 13:2). Since our orders to obey every authority come from God, our faith in Him and our learned discipline to not lean on our own understanding cause us to be obedient even if we don't like the authority or agree with it. To resist earthly authority would be rebellion against God. The Bible uses *witchcraft* as a synonym for rebellion because of Satan's resistance to God. That is why resisting authority can result in damnation (1 Sa 15:22,23). Authority is a very big deal with God and this topic cannot be overemphasized.

Notice the main theme of "the Lord's Prayer" is authority (Mt 6:10,13b). Also, Christ was so mindful of authority He refused to correct the wrong of Lk 12:13, and He rebuked the man for failing to think about the fact that Christ had no authority to interfere (Lk 12:14). Christ then pointed out that *covetousness* (v.15) is the reason people resist authority – which is why Lucifer rebelled.

Because authority is so important, all authority is to be obeyed completely. In order to better understand this fundamental concept not taught in our modern Babylonian Christianity, consider some examples of authority: Moses was to be obeyed as if he were God Almighty (Ex 4:16), wives are ordered to obey their husband as if he were God (Ep 5:22), servants are to obey their masters as if they were God instead of men (Ep 6:5-7), and, of course, we are to obey the king and lesser governors (1 Pe 2:13-15).

But isn't there a problem with some of what Moses wrote in the Bible? (A lack of understanding of this topic has caused some to divide the word of God into the part they call the "law of God" and the lesser part they call the "law of Moses" – in spite of their synonymous use by God in Lk 2:22-24.) For example, Moses wrote Dt 24:1-3 and 21:10-14 permitting divorce for various vague reasons. And then Christ in Mt 19:7-9 said it wasn't that way from the beginning as He overruled Moses' commands. So, is Dt 24:1-3 authoritative, is it Holy Scripture, or is it – as unbelievers say – proof that the Bible is really the fallible word of man? Seventh-Day Adventists, for example, have tried to convince me that men such as Moses received "thoughts", "ideas", or "concepts" from God and then did the best they could to put them into the words of imperfect human language! Why is that wrong? Gee, let me count the ways: 1) It *ignores* the word of God by not being based on anything the Bible says. 2) It is a carnal theory based on Reason. 3) It *contradicts* what the Bible says. Since the issue is authority, the carnal – and therefore *Naturally independent* rather than submissive – mind will search for inventive ways to get out from under the binding authority of the word of God. Anyway, the words Moses penned in Deuteronomy are correct as written. They are Holy Scripture. They are the word of God because God authorized their inclusion in His Book – otherwise they wouldn't be there. God wanted Moses to put that stuff in the Bible so He could later overrule it in Mt 19 in order to teach us something about rules and authority. You see, with God the rules are not what is important, the authority who makes the rules is important (1 Co 7:19).

For example, if my wife were my authority (if I may be permitted to use an example that is unscriptural), and she had told me she wanted the dogs fed at 5:00. Well, one day she comes home at 5:15 from running errands and asks me if I've fed the dogs. "No, ma'am" I reply. "Why not?" "Because when we went down to the mailbox I ran into our neighbor and spent quite a while talking with him. On the way back we went through the pastures and the dogs did a lot of running. We got to the house at 5:00 but, because you've said feeding them right after they exercise can be bad for them, I decided to wait until they calm down. As you can see, they are still panting." In that way I please my authority by *deliberately sidestepping a commandment* in order to do what is expedient for the dogs in accordance with Pv 12:10. Our purpose must be to please our authorities, not keep their laws. In most cases, obviously, that would mean obeying the laws of the authority, but not necessarily always. That's what 1 Co 7:19 is saying: Circumcision was a commandment of God but it is here treated as if it were not. The point is God doesn't care about our penises; He cares about our obedience. Our purpose in life is not to feed the dogs at five o'clock; our purpose is to please God.

Authority is a person not a thing. The laws in the Bible are things. We obey the Bible *because our Authority told us to*. And we obey earthly authorities and treat their orders as if they were the words of God *because God told us to*. There is no difference. When God made Moses the authority and then Moses granted divorce for various reasons, God not only backed up Moses' authority, He authorized the inclusion of Dt 24:1-3, etc., in the Bible as His word. To doubt that would be to doubt the greatness, the power, the control, and the providence of God, and would reveal a lack of faith, understanding, and belief in just who God is and how much of an authority He is. By reflecting on Dt 24 and Mt 19 we gain insight into the importance of obedience to authority. It was Moses' job to *discern* right and wrong, it was the peoples' job to do as Moses said whether it was right and good or not. The people would have been a lot better off had they done so.

Now note in 1 Co 7:6,10,12,25,40 that in some places Paul knows what God wants and in others he's not sure, and is speaking "by permission and not of commandment." In other words as an apostle – an authority over the church like Moses in Deuteronomy – he knows he is allowed some discretionary authority by God because he understands Ro 14:21; 1 Co 6:12; 8:9; and 10:23,24, as well as Mt 12:1-8 and Mk 2:27, which we'll cover shortly. God put these initially confusing words of Paul's in the Bible so that, when we put them together with the other things we've looked at, we'd learn about the importance of authority and its prerogatives.

Now, because the general concept of obedience to authority is easy to swallow, let's move into some specific examples God gave us to show just how far He expects us to go with this obedience to authority stuff:

- Abraham ordered his wife on two separate occasions to tell a lie and also, if necessary, to sleep with other men (Ge 12:10-20; 20:1-18). It was Abraham's job to *discern* right and wrong, it was his wife's job to obey him. Had she refused to obey Abraham's awful orders she would have been a rebellious witch in God's eyes. Abraham was weak and wrong to so order and Sarah undoubtedly knew that. But she also knew that, from her perspective, the goodness or sinfulness of Abraham's orders wasn't a relevant issue; the issue was strict obedience to her husband as if he were God, so she was right to dutifully obey. The reason both pagan kings in these examples got mad at Abraham for the deception but did not get mad at Sarah is they also understood authority: Abraham was the authority, Sarah therefore had no say in the matter and was duty-bound to obey. The

two kings probably viewed Abraham with contempt as a weak man, but they certainly admired Sarah as a strong and righteous servant (just like God does) because *there is no nobler deed than the performance of one's duty*. That's why God singled her out for us to study as a model New Testament Christian wife (**1 Pe 3:6**).

Three other Christian women are worth studying as behavioral examples. Rebekah (**Ge 24:18-20**), Esther (**Es 2:13-15**), and Abigail (**1 Sa 25:23,24**). David was certainly impressed with Abigail (**1 Sa 25:39-42**) and so am I; what a woman! In fact, because of **Lk 7:38,44-48**, and to a lesser extent **Lk 10:38-42**, I'd say the Lord also likes Abigail. These three women together with Sarah represent the kind of bride I aspire to be to Christ.

- Perhaps Abraham was a better servant to Christ than he was a lord to Sarah: When God told Abraham to kill Isaac as a sacrifice, even though he probably felt worse than Sarah had when she received Abraham's awful orders *he still obeyed!* It was God's job to *know* right and wrong, it was Abraham's job to obey. I said *know* rather than *discern* because God doesn't have to take the extra step required to *discern*; having no authority over Him, He *knows* – He never has to discern. A submissive servant, on the other hand, does not dare to *know* something on his own; he humbly *discerns* his master's will. The evil equality we acquired at the tree of *knowing* made us as God by giving us the equality-induced confidence to trust our instincts, our gut reactions, tradition, and our "self-evident" *knowledge* of what's right and wrong. Instead, we should humbly, fearfully, and dutifully devote the time and energy necessary to learn to overrule and subdue the god of our gut, to die to self, in order that we might always take the extra step necessary to *discern* God's will as revealed in His Written Instructions. The issue is authority. If you do not obey you have rejected authority – also called Lordship (**Lk 6:46**). Whoa! Did you just object to the fact that I equated the lower-cased *authority* with the upper-cased *Lordship*? Because most Christians today do not understand the concept of authority, they tend to pay more attention to *Lordship* (because the capital L tells them it means God) than they do to *authority* (because the lower-case a gets no respect). However, because all authority on earth – good and evil, saved and unsaved – is of God, as far as we are concerned the word *authority* – when it is over us in our chain of command – can properly be capitalized; because when a mother tells her child to do something *she is the voice of God* and is that child's God-ordained Authority. For the child to resist the Authority of the mother is to resist the Authority of God. (Technically – and to be consistent with my point – I should have capitalized *Mother*. If you noticed the error – good; if you didn't notice you need to put your thinking cap on because I'm not going to start capitalizing every title, and I'm not going to stop and explain the chain of command in every instance. Just remember, any authority with dominion over you is to be obeyed as God. Any authority not over you, such as the leader of another country, is not your concern.)

- Absalom commanded his servants to murder Amnon. They knew murder was wrong, but they had no choice because they were Absalom's servants and would have been unknowingly hindering the cause of Christ had they not obeyed. (For example the soldiers in **Mt 2:16-18** would have hindered the cause of Christ if they had resisted the ungodly orders of their authority. Now can you see why **Pv 16:10** not only applies to Herod but should also be applied to all authorities over you?) When Absalom said, "Fear not: have not I commanded you?" (**2 Sa 13:28**), he was reminding his reluctant servants about authority and duty in order to remind them they wouldn't get into trouble for obeying his sinful order because he, as the authority, was responsible. It was his duty to *discern* right and wrong, it was their duty to obey. *There is no nobler deed than the performance of one's duty*.

- A good, clear, and undeniable example of how the Lord Jesus Christ wants us to treat ungodly authorities over us today can be found in **Mt 23:1-33**. He starts by telling the multitude of Christians – including His own disciples (v.1) – that the scribes and Pharisees were *authorities* over them because – like it or not – they sat in Moses' seat (v.2). And just as Moses was supposed to be obeyed as if he were God Almighty, so, too, were Christians ordered to obey whatsoever the Pharisees told them to do (v.3). Christ then goes on to tell Christians not to treat others like the Pharisees did, and He backs it up by saying some very damning things about the Pharisees.

Didn't Christ know the Pharisees were ungodly hypocrites who were not only overburdening Christians, but were also dragging them to hell (v.15) with them? Oh yes. Didn't our f-ing fathers "justify" their disobedience to King George III by portraying him as an ungodly authority who was overburdening them? Oh yes. Did Christ tell Christians the Pharisees were not proper authorities because they had lost their "right" to rule by betraying their duty to be godly authorities? No! But isn't that exactly what over four hundred years of Enlightened Christians have fervently believed? Yes! Didn't Christ tell Christians they should obediently submit to the wrongful treatment of their authorities? Oh yes. But didn't our f-ing fathers convince over two hundred years' worth of preachers and pewsters the "godly" course of action was to resist ungodly authority? Oh yes.

The Bible is both clear and consistent about this doctrine throughout both Testaments. In spite of that, when born-again Christians today are presented with these "words of Christ in red", they will *still* deny His Lordship and idiotically respond with things like, "But I just don't think God would want His people to sit around and let evil rulers remain over them. I think God wants us to *fight* against those who are His enemies rather than actually help them stay in power by submitting to them." Many, many people have been proselytized by Enlightened Christianity and been led down the broad way that leadeth to destruction and been made twofold more the willful, rebellious, carnal children of hell than those who "led them to Christ." But more on that later in the book.

- At the end of World War II Nazi "war criminals" were tried at Nuremberg. (David would have been on trial, too, for randomly executing columns of people from other countries (**2 Sa 8:2**), mutilating the genitals of hundreds of enemy dead (**1 Sa 18:27**), houghing hundreds of horses (**2 Sa 8:4**), and for **1 Ch 20:3**, none of which, based on **1 Sa 18:6,7,14**, was offensive to any Christians – including the women and God. And Moses, too, would have been tried because his "war crimes" made David look like a Boy Scout: When Moses found out his army officers had spared all the Midianite women and children (**Nu 31:9**) he was very angry (v.14,15). He ordered the executions of every male child and every girl old enough to have lost her virginity (v.17), but all the little virgin girls, which numbered 32,000 (v.35), were to be "kept alive for yourselves" (v.18). None of this offended God, who then gave Moses specific instructions (vv.25-47) on how to divvy up the surviving pagan virgin girls and the livestock.) At any rate, at Nuremberg Hitler's subordinates' pleas of "I am not guilty of murder because I was just obeying orders" comes right out of **2 Sa 13:28**. It also brings to mind King David's ordering General Joab to murder good and loyal Christian soldiers along with their admirable and innocent officer, Uriah (**2 Sa 11:14-17**). In God's eyes David's subordinate, General Joab, was guiltless of those multiple murders because he was just obeying orders. The Lord held only King David responsible – because it was David's job as Joab's authority to *discern* right and wrong.

And since General Joab was guiltless, how could the subordinates at Nuremberg be found guilty according to our sole authority in all matters of faith and practice? Hmm? But, of course, the Nuremberg trial had nothing to do with *discerning*; it

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was all about *knowing* good and evil in accordance with the philosophy of Reason and the forbidden tree of *knowledge*. To a subordinate, according to the Bible, “right” is doing whatever his authority wants him to do. That doctrine is the way God set things up and is the way the world was until Western civilization became Enlightened by philosophy. Nuremberg attacked the modern vestige of belief in that doctrine, decreed it to be evil and unacceptable, used the military monkey trial as a very public example and “legal” precedent, and made people think the above Scriptural examples are misleading and false. Today our acceptance or rejection of that doctrine depends on which master we choose as our authority.

The Christians under kings David and Herod knew what evil those kings had done. Do you know why the people didn’t impeach, try, imprison, or execute them? It was because a king is untouchable; he has no earthly authority over him. And that is why, for his part, David would not harm evil King Saul; the king – the Lord’s anointed – is neither accountable nor answerable to subordinates. It doesn’t matter if the king murders innocent people, taxes the people without representation (**Lk 2:1,4,5**), or spends your tax dollars on ungodliness – he is supreme.

If Sarah, Absalom’s servants, General Joab, Hitler’s subordinates, and Herod’s soldiers on the way to Bethlehem had asked me for advice I would have replied, “All authority is of God and must be obeyed; demonstrate your faith in God by carrying out your orders.” This position is not popular today with carnal brethren, but it is the position God ordained in His Book – and it is the way He will require His kingdom to be again at His Second Coming.

Since the Bible tells us to obey the earthly authorities over us as if they were God and not men, when any authority such as husband, teacher, cop, boss, etc., tells us to do something, *that is the word of God* for all intents and purposes. That is why God put Moses and Paul’s instructions to the church in the Bible; *they are the word of God because those men were in positions of authority over God’s church*. And that is why resisting an earthly authority over you damns you to hell – *you’ve not only resisted God’s orders in the word of God, but you have also resisted the Word of God Himself!*

Verses like **Ac 4:18,19; 5:28,29; Re 13:7-17; and 14:9,10** do not contradict this principle of obedience to authority. The “obey God rather than men” passages are references to tests of the strength of our faith in Christ when facing the fearsome worldly power of church and state as they pressure us to be untrue to Him. The line may be a fine one but it is not so fine as to be an excuse for today’s rampant rejection of authority. Most Christians are so messed up on this they would use the “we ought to obey God rather than men” phrase as an excuse to ignore the entire rest of the Bible and to, in some of the above examples, say No! to Abraham, No! to Absalom, and No! to King David – which according to the Bible is saying No! to Christ.

The above examples teach us something about the relationship between authority and right and wrong: The authority determines right and wrong, and if there is no authority there is no right and wrong. That’s why God told His servants to stay away from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If the members of the body ignore the head and decide what they want to do it destroys authority and the standard of right and wrong; every man does what is right in his own eyes. When a Christian’s head thinks it is time to study the Bible and his body thinks it is time to watch TV, a struggle for authority/supremacy is occurring because the body should *never* resist the will of the head. Depending on whether the Bible or the TV wins, that person is either a monarch ruling well his own household or a democratic servant without sovereignty. Any Christian who is not an expert on the Bible like God ordered is not only a disobedient rebel, he also has no choice but to live his life by constantly going to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to decide what to do. That is carnality. It is an abomination. It is enmity against God because it is an attack on who He is. Without a Bible version that is accepted as authoritative and absolute there is no way for God, the authoritative Head who determines right and wrong, to clearly dictate His will. Christians who ignore the infallible authority of the word of God by not taking it literally must compensate by partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. They do so by running to the Greek and Hebrew in order to choose a definition that seems right in their own eyes. They are destroying Christianity by dividing the Kingdom of God against itself. A kingdom is divided whenever there is more than one authority in it.

How far we have fallen! The issue in the Bible is authority, but we’ve gotten rid of authority by exalting the individual. It is then only Natural that soul winning has gained the ascendancy. And equality has been working to make us “respect the beliefs” of carnal ignoramuses so that “getting along” is now moving to the forefront. There is only one way to reverse the damage in your life: Have faith in God by believing the words He put in His Authorized Bible, and then change your viewpoints, actions, and life to conform to the Book that will judge us.

WHY AUTHORITY IS

The above is what the Scriptures tell us directly. This information is nothing new – democracy has just made it “evil.” But *why* is this stuff true? *Why* does God make such a big deal of authority – no matter whom that authority is? And why does His Book tell us about instances of resistance to authority to which He seems to overreact with irrational and deadly violence? The answer is the key to understanding this, the greatest issue in the Bible.

We learn about God from His word. By faith we accept those words as gospel. Accepting those words forms doctrines or beliefs. Doctrines or beliefs are *concepts* we cannot physically see and are therefore only seen by those who have eyes to see (**2 Co 4:18; 5:7; Ro 8:24; Co 3:2; He 11:1-3,13**). If those concepts do not become our reality we cannot succeed in our Christian walk. Authority is a concept.

The issue of authority is so important God made it easy to learn how we are to treat all authority; His Bible plainly spells it out. But I didn’t understand the reason behind the importance of authority until I’d wrestled with something else. For years I had a vague notion from my Bible studies that there is something wrong or bad about **ownership of property**. (I’m not telling you I think I should sell my farm; I’m merely helping you see how God looks at things so you can better understand the big picture.) My initial questions about property ownership had to do with things like Lucifer’s coveting material wealth, with the love of money being the root of *all* evil, with **Ps 50:10** and **Ac 4:32-5:11**, and with the contrast between the covetous willfulness of Naboth in **1 Ki 21** and the submissive generosity of Araunah in **2 Sa 24:18-22**. I know the incident with Naboth is always used to show what jerks Ahab and Jezebel were, but it bothered me that Naboth was willing to be a *rebel* (a witch) by resisting the will of his king. And it looked like Naboth never read **1 Sa 8:9-18** with emphasis on v.14. Anyway, those are some of the things the Lord used to turn my attention to the subject of private property, and here’s what I learned from Him:

The existence of God – Who and What He is – establishes **inequality** as the good and right status quo (**Is 40:25; 46:5**). God is the Alpha and the Omega; He is all-knowing, ever-present, and omnipotent. What else is He? He’s the Creator.

That means everything and everyone else that exists came from Him and belongs to Him. And nothing and nobody has *any* of His qualities listed above. And we never will have any of those qualities. That means none of us will ever be equal to God.

But there's more to God than His capabilities. There is the fact that He is. Because He exists, because there is a God, and because He is that God, inequality exists and will remain because – to quote an old song – *there'll never be another You*. (I frequently use popular love songs as hymns in my mind.) Therefore everything and everyone else in existence is inferior to, owned by, and subordinate to Him. All of this makes God the Authority – it's just Who He is. All other lesser authorities, no matter who they are, occupy their positions as types of the Supreme Authority Who, in His omnipotent omniscience, allowed them to be in power. The Bible makes that quite clear. Nobody would be so stupid and suicidal as to dare to be His equal in anything. To do so would challenge the fact that He is everything that He is. That is why I think the evil God created back in the beginning was the concept of **equality**.

Before Lucifer accepted the wicked idea of equality it wasn't possible for him to consider his own thoughts, his will, or his capabilities to be in any way equal to God's. When Lucifer incorporated the idea of equality it enabled him to covet God's prerogatives: Even though God owns everything, Lucifer wanted to have something of his own. Here's what we learn when we put together **1 Ti 6:10; Ezek 28:4-6,15,16; Is 14:13,14**: When Lucifer wanted to have some of God's creations he began using his brain to accumulate physical wealth. Lucifer's covetousness made him no longer view the physical objects God made as neutral *things*; they became *possessions* in his eyes – things to *have*, to *own*. We also learn that as those possessions grew in number they caused his heart, his mind, to be lifted to a point where he thought he was God's equal. Lucifer's independent – or equal – mind is called both *iniquity* and *violence*, which just happens to be the definition of the carnal mind in **Ro 8:7**. Thus, Lucifer's love of material wealth (money) led him to covet (rob) God's things. That challenged God's position as God and it made Lucifer rise up as another head. That started the war, caused Lucifer to seduce Adam and Eve into partaking of the forbidden fruit of knowledge, etc., etc. In other words, Lucifer's love of money really was and is the root of all evil; it all started with him, his coveting started the war *against* authority and *for* equality.

Lucifer wanted God to allow him to *have* things, to *own* things. God rejected that and said He'd continue to own everything in His creation. God rejected it because of what ownership of property – or **private property** – does: It makes God, as we've defined Him, cease to exist. Let me explain.

God not only wants His servants to be His wives, He wants us to rule many kingdoms within His Kingdom. He wants to be the King of kings. All lesser kings will remain subject to Him and their kingdoms will remain God's property. But if any of those kings actually *owns* something such as land, that means God doesn't own it. That takes some of God's sovereignty and transfers it to the property owner. The sovereignty the lesser king now has over his property is unique because nobody else has ownership of that property – according to the definition of private property and ownership of property. That means, at least in that one area, God has no authority over the property owner – the lesser king is truly sovereign. Property ownership and sovereignty are attributes of God. If they become attributes of others, God by definition ceases to exist, being reduced from *the* God to a god.

Look at it this way. If Job truly owned anything such as house, barn, pastures, sheep, wives, children, slaves, and an "act of God" (such as His sending a thunderstorm, or Satan, or murderers and thieves) destroyed the house and barn, and killed the sheep and wives, it wouldn't be a neutral "act of God." Why? Because nobody has the authority or prerogative to destroy, kill, or take things that *belong to another*. If Job owned anything those acts of God would become either criminal vandalism and murder or acts of war. The fact is we own nothing – not even ourselves. The reason Job didn't get angry with God was his understanding that we own nothing and God owns everything (**Jb 1:21**). When Lucifer began to merely **covet** things, it was an act of war (see **Mt 5:28; 1 Jn 3:8,15**, and note the lust/covetousness in **Jn 8:44**) because God owns everything. This should help you better understand Ac 4:32 and 5:3.

Let's say God approved Lucifer's plan of property ownership. And let's say the plan called for each angel to possess – to own – a coffee cup. Those cups would make their owners kings; the cups would be their kingdoms. Each king/angel would therefore have true dominion and sovereignty over something. That would give each angel a measure of independence from and equality with God. God would have no authority to do anything to those cups without the permission of the owners. He could in theory *forcibly* do things to the cups, but because that would be wrong – and therefore out of God's character – He wouldn't do it.

All of this would mean God was no longer the Authority; He'd become an authority. He wouldn't be God; He'd be a god. Oh, He'd be the biggest, smartest, and strongest god, but He'd still just be another king with limited sovereignty and authority. He would cease being God. And if He ceased being God, true authority, hierarchy, and order would cease to exist and chaos would reign.

You may have noticed the recurring use of **covetousness** in this section. It is helpful to understand covetousness in order to see the big picture. Why is covetousness so bad? Because it causes people to resist authority whenever the authority wants something contrary to what *they want*. Covetousness is when people want something so much they are willing to become witches rebelling against their rulers to obtain or keep that which they covet. As servants we are to covet **nothing**, because our job is to accept and do whatever our Master (and masters) wish. To put it another way: Whenever we *disagree to the point of resistance* against our rulers (no matter what the disagreement is about), it is because we want something so much we actually exalt our wishes over and above the wishes of our authorities. *In practice* that makes us our own ruler/idol/god, when *in fact* (from God's perspective) we are willful servant-witches in active rebellion against authority.

Lucifer wanted to go from being a husbandman who took care of God's things, to an owner who took care of his own things. That makes *self* the motivator instead of God and is why covetousness is *idolatry* (**Co 3:5,6**), which will get us disinherited (**Ep 5:5**). Since God is the Authority, He is to be our motivation for everything. Covetousness makes *self* the ruler, and that is an attack on the Kingship of God, an attack on the capital *G* in God. That is why covetousness, which is idolatry, is closely linked with *rebellion*, *witchcraft*, and *stubbornness* (**1 Sa 15:23**), which are the result of rejecting the word of the Lord. Notice Saul rejected the word of the Lord because he democratically *feared the people and obeyed their voice* (**1 Sa 15:24**). That *fear* is supposed to be reserved for God. Saul's idolatry, like all idolatry, is linked to covetousness (**1 Sa 15:19; 1 Ti 6:10**). And democracy is the opposite of Godly order and is rebellion against Him because it makes servants rulers and rulers servants.

Not surprisingly, carnality is tied into all of this. Since God, the One Supreme Authority, is to be our motivation for everything, that makes discernment mandatory. If we do not use discernment we are *ignoring* God. (Pause and think about

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how bad and how inexcusable it is to ignore God.) We ignore God because we get wrapped up in Self, which is covetousness, which is idolatry. Ignoring God, which is carnality, causes the authoritative order He established to break down into chaos. God is not the author of confusion, Satan is. That's why carnality, rebellion, covetousness, independence, equality, and all related principles and concepts are idolatry, witchcraft, enmity against God *Himself*, and are Satan's religion. In the absence of the *authoritative* word of God there can be no order in Christianity.

Now read **Josh 7:1,11,12,15,21**. I'm going to draw upon some of the things we've learned, and I'm going to use the wording of v.11 to make a point. The **accursed thing** did not consist of the things listed in v.21. Those were the physical things Achan saw and stole. But there was something invisible, some concept that enabled Achan to sin. I think the accursed thing is the *evil* in **Is 45:7**. That evil is the concept of equality. Equality, once partaken, enables the autonomous *self*. The autonomous existence of self is covetousness because covetousness cannot exist without selfishness. That makes self another head in a realm in which there is but one Head. That is *automatic* rebellion against the authority of God and His continued existence as God. I think that's why God wanted the children – to use another example – who partook of the accursed equality, exalted self, and therefore became *stubborn and rebellious towards the authority* of their parents – stoned; it was to *put "evil" away from among Christians (Dt 21:18-21)*. The *stoning* in **Josh 7:25** is punishing the dominant old man and getting rid of the leaven he carries that could infect others, and the *burning* represents punishing the loser new man in the lake of fire. Do not partake of the accursed thing.

Adam and Eve were God's children. When Satan got them to swallow equality at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he consummated them as his wives because all fallen women belong to him (**2 Co 11:2**). That's why sex before marriage is unlawful for Christian women. And that's why sex with a woman is called *taking* her. Satan *took* God's property, God's children, Adam and Eve, away from Him and made them his wives. That is covetousness. Compare **Ex 20:17** with Mt 5:28 to see that each has to do with wanting something that belongs to someone else to be yours. That is idolatry and rebellion against authority. Now compare **1 Ki 3:5,9-14** with **Mt 6:33** to see that selfless devotion to the cause of Christ will eventually result in dominion and physical riches. But remember, Solomon and Lucifer are proof that power and riches are things *on loan* from God and are not to be coveted, even when we have them.

Now I want to apply the fact that Achan's accursed thing was *equality* rather than the *physical things* he stole: I often say Adam partook of equality when he ate the forbidden fruit. But when you think about it, Adam would not have touched that fruit unless something within himself was *already* corrupted, a corruption that allowed him to rise up and be independent and to act contrary to the will of God. In other words, Adam partook of equality *before* he ate the fruit; it was that equality that *enabled* him to rise up from the position of God's *subject* or *servant* to the position of *citizen*. A *subject* or *servant* is one who is bound by the rule of an authority over him. An example of servants would be the multiple members of a body serving one head, as in *one kingdom under God*. A *citizen*, on the other hand, is one who lives in a democratically level society of the people, by the people, and for the people in which the majority rules. An example of citizens would be a multi-headed beast, as in *a nation of gods*.

Therefore, it becomes apparent that God created the physical fruit and declared it to be off limits so there would be, if Adam ever ate it, hard evidence of his sin that he (and we) could not deny. In other words, eating the fruit was physical proof *to Adam* that he was a sinner, proof that he had, indeed, risen up. Hence, the *fruit* was to Adam as the *laws* in the Bible are to us – ways by which we can clearly see that we are sinners in constant need of *dying* to self in order to be obedient *subjects* rather than willful, independent citizens.

Because covetousness is related to idolatry let's look at an example of unintentional idolatry. God is very sensitive about idolatry because it – like everything else in the Bible – is related to authority, and understanding that helps us see things more clearly. Read **Lk 9:30-36**. Peter unthinkingly wanted to exalt lesser authorities to a position of equality with the Lord Jesus Christ. God jealously and quickly spoke up with irritation and reproof in His tone by saying, "This is my beloved Son: hear Him." And then Jesus was found alone. He alone is God. Don't let ignorance and Reasonable sincerity reduce Him to a god.

All of this comes from the notion of equality. When God created the evil concept of equality He knew what He was doing. It was a brilliant way for Him to test us. (I say that in humility knowing I have neither the ability nor the prerogative to make judgments and pronouncements about the quality of my Master's actions.) As we've seen, equality is an abomination of such magnitude as to produce wonder, and yet it is so subtle we've missed its significance: If equality exists, God does not. And if God doesn't exist, authority breaks down into chaos.

God is. And because of that, authority is. Because there is no God but the Lord, there is no authority but Him. That's why Godly order is a dictatorial hierarchy and why all authority is of God. And that is why people who have been given authority by God are to be treated by their subordinates with deferential respect and obeyed as if they were God – unless that obedience would challenge God's authority. If we were to ask God why authority is such a big deal, He'd reply, "Because I AM", as in, "Because I exist."

In order to win the war, Satan must get us to resist or destroy Godly authority. Here is a partial list of authorities who got their authority from God and were therefore to be submitted to by Christians who found themselves under these men: Moses, Nebuchadnezzar, King Charles I, Herod, Pilate, King George III, Pharaoh, Ahab, Caesar, Hitler. The list also includes their appointees and underlings. It also includes the usual list of parents, cops, preachers, judges, etc. All authority is from God because God is. He has always – because of Who He is – been in complete control of history. He was in complete control of every authority listed above.

Philosophy takes God and His Bible out of our thinking by making us ignore Him. Democracy makes those who participate in it sovereigns. Private property makes each of us owners and sovereigns. Freedom of religion makes God just one of the gods. Satan uses all of these abominations in his war against God.

If Satan wins the war, make no mistake about it – God's goodness, integrity, and truthfulness will cause Him to abide by the articles of war and step down from being God. I don't like saying that. But this war is not a sham – it's real. The seriousness of all of this helps illustrate why God has demonstrated such sudden, lethal violence in the Bible: The carnal mind and its fruit are direct and personal attacks on the God we are supposed to be serving.

The issue is authority.