



Authority
Pastor Rich Harris 11.16.2025

USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

We have provided all the Scriptures references in the sermon and some discussion questions for you to use to discuss the weekend message.

This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session. Give priority to the needs and pace of your group members.

While the questions are important, remember your group's goal is to create an atmosphere that will foster true friendships. Use the discussion questions as you see fit but emphasize the relationships.

3 Main Challenges in Submitting to Authority

We were sinful at birth (***Psalms 51:5***), and sin is always hostile towards God (***Romans 8:7***). Who is the Source of all authority (***Romans 13:1***).

Because humans are sinful at birth, our sin releases widespread pain and suffering amongst ourselves (***Romans 3:10-18***), which we sometimes experience at the hands of sinful leaders who break our trust (***Proverbs 29:2***).

We live in a culture that openly celebrates independence and rebellion while openly mocking and vilifying authority.

[Ephesians 2:2] (NLT)

You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God.

[Romans 13:1-2] (NIV)

Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves...

[Acts 4:18-19] (NIV)

Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, "Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges!

[1 Timothy 2:1-2] (NLT)

I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf and give thanks for them. Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity.

"True intercession involves bringing the person, or the circumstance that seems to be crashing in on you, before God, until you are changed by His attitude..." - Oswald Chambers, My Utmost for His Highest

[1 Peter 2:18-19, 21, 23] (NIV)

Servants, be subject to your masters with all respect, not only to the good and gentle but also to the unjust. For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.

Authority figures that God's word calls us to honor

1. Parents

[Ephesians 6:1-3] (NLT)

Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. Honor your father and mother. This is the first commandment with a promise: If you honor your father and mother, things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth.

2. Spouse

[Ephesians 5:22-23] (NIV)

Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.

[Ephesians 5:21] (NIV)

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

3. Spiritual Authority

[Ephesians 4:11-13] (NLT)

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

4. Governing Officials

[1 Peter 2:13-14] (NIV)

Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.

[1 Peter 2:17] (ESV)

Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

Our response to authority directly reveals the presence – or absence – of the fear of the Lord in our lives.

THE FEAR OF THE LORD:

- Positions our prayers to be heard by God (***Hebrews 5:7***)
- Ensures that we will experience the goodness of God (***Psalms 31:19***)
- Guarantees angelic deliverance (***Psalms 34:7***)
- Secures God's continual attention (***Psalms 33:18***)
- Promises God's provision (***Psalms 34:9***)
- Positions us for great mercy (***Psalms 103:11***)
- Guarantees God's help and protection in our lives (***Psalms 115:11***)
- Grants us fulfilled desires and rescue from harm (***Psalms 145:19***)
- Begins the development of wisdom in our lives (***Proverbs 9:10***)
- Is our strong confidence and fountain of life (***Proverbs 14:26-27***)
- Grants us to abide in satisfaction and not be visited with evil (***Proverbs 19:23***)
- Leads to riches, honor, and life (***Proverbs 22:14***)

[Psalm 128:1-2] (AMP)

Blessed happy and sheltered by God's favor is everyone who fears the LORD and worships Him with obedience, who walks in his ways and lives according to his commandments. For you shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands, you will be happy and blessed, and it will be well with you.

Key Points:

Authority figures that God's word calls us to honor.

- 1. Parents**
- 2. Spouse**
- 3. Spiritual Authority**
- 4. Governing Officials**

Applications for the Week:

Pastor Rich challenged us to pray for our leaders, not against them. Is there a leader in your life (work, church, government, family) you find it hard to pray for? What would it look like to start praying for God's help, wisdom, and blessing for them this week?

Discussion Questions:

- 1.** According to Romans 13:1-2, where does all authority ultimately come from?
- 2.** In 1 Peter 2:13-17, what specific instructions are given about how to treat those in authority, even if they are unjust?
- 3.** What does 1 Timothy 2:1-2 say we should do for those in authority, and what is the intended result?
- 4.** Pastor Rich mentioned that submission begins where agreement ends. What does this mean in the context of spiritual authority?
- 5.** Why do you think God calls us to submit to authority, even when those in authority are imperfect or even unjust?
- 6.** How does praying for leaders, rather than against them, change our hearts and attitudes toward authority?
- 7.** For those who have been hurt by authority, the sermon offered hope for healing in Jesus. If you carry wounds from past authority figures, what would it look like to bring those hurts to God and invite Him to begin healing you?