

Eternity Daily Bible Study - No. 305
Series: St. John's Passion - Gospel of John chapters 12-21
Today's verses: John 17:1-3
Today's Topic: The Authority To Give Eternal Life
Date: 13th April 2004
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John 17:1-3 MKJV Jesus spoke these words and lifted up His eyes to Heaven and said, Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son so that Your Son also may glorify You, (2) even as You have given Him authority over all flesh so that He should give eternal life to all You have given Him. (3) And this is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

What would you do with unlimited power - with "authority over all flesh" ? Would you crush some enemies, live the high life - or use your authority to give people eternal life even if it entailed your own self-sacrifice?

Let's commence with the phrase "even as you have given Him authority over all flesh". Authority is always given - that is it is bestowed as a gift. Even if someone works very hard to please their superior they cannot demand a higher post, it still has to be awarded to them. There are many cases of people working hard for years to gain a certain high post such as a Prime Minister or Cabinet Minister only for it to be awarded to someone else. Even Pilate's authority was "given from above". Thus for Jesus His authority was a gift from the Father.

The first clear instance of the Father's gift of authority to Jesus is the healing of the paralytic: **Matthew 9:5-8 MKJV** For which is easier? To say, *Your* sins are forgiven you, or to say, Arise and walk! (6) But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins, then He said to the paralytic, Arise, take up your bed and go to your house. (7) And he arose and departed to his house. (8) But when the crowds saw, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

Later on Jesus claims the Father has given Him authority to have life in Himself, and for judgment: **John 5:26-27 MKJV** For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has given to the Son to have life within Himself, (27) and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is *the* Son of Man.

Finally Jesus says the Father has given Him total universal spiritual and temporal authority and that this immense authority would back the missionary efforts of the apostles (and all who carry out the Great Commission) "until the end of the age." **Matthew 28:18-20 MKJV** And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority is given to Me in Heaven and in earth. (19) Therefore go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all things, whatever I commanded you. And, behold, I am with you all the days until the end of the world. Amen.

Now Jesus also gave authority to others - His disciples:
Luke 9:1-2 MKJV And He called His twelve disciples together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases. (2) And *He* sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

Luke 10:19 MKJV Behold, I give to you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the authority of the enemy. And nothing shall by any means hurt you.

Matthew 10:1 MKJV And when He had called to *Him* His twelve disciples, He gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.

Mark 6:7 MKJV And He called the Twelve and began to send them out by two and two. And He gave them authority over unclean spirits,

And to all believers He gives a basic authority to enter into the courts of Heaven as children of God. **John 1:12 MKJV** But as many as received Him, He gave to them authority to become the children of God, to those who believe on His name,

Thus eternal life and the right to become children of God is a gift of Jesus that He gives by the exercise of His authority over “all flesh”.

Spiritual authority is spiritually transmitted and seems to have been greatly increased by the Pentecost event. So much so that Jesus told His disciples:

Acts 1:4-8 MKJV And having met with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to await the promise of the Father which you heard from Me. For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized in *the* Holy Spirit not many days from now. .. But you shall receive power, the Holy Spirit coming upon you. And you shall be witnesses to Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to *the* end of the earth.

How then are spiritual authority and the salvation of Christians connected? The spiritual authority enables us to break the powers that Satan uses to blind people, harden their hearts and thus prevent them from believing in Jesus.

2 Corinthians 4:2-4 MKJV (2) But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness, nor adulterating the Word of God, but *by* the revelation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. (3) But also if our gospel is hidden, it is hidden to those being lost, (4) in whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving ones, so that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ (who is the image of God) should not dawn on them.

In an imaginary face off between Jesus and the Devil 26 years ago - Christ might say “John is mine, I have bought him with my blood and chosen him for salvation before the foundation of the world, now hands off him, for I will draw him to Myself.” Yet my salvation was not that “easy” there were a dozen people at least praying for me, so Jesus’ authority to save and human intercession worked together to deliver me from darkness into the light.

We need to use our delegated spiritual authority to stand in the gap for others so that they might come to know Jesus and thus inherit the gift of eternal life: “And this is life eternal, that they might know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”

Let’s sum up:

1. Jesus has been given authority over all flesh. (John 17:2, Matthew 28:18)
2. This includes authority to forgive sins and heal the sick (Matthew 9:5-8), and to give life and

execute judgment (John 5:26,27).

3. It also includes the authority to give eternal life to those who believe and to grant them status in Heaven as children of God. (John 1:12; 5:26,27; 17:1-3)

4. Jesus delegates that authority to those undertaking ministry for Him and empowers them to heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons, and preach the Kingdom of God. (Luke 9:1, 10:1-3,)

5. That authority is spiritually transmitted through the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-8) just as it was also given to Jesus when He was baptized with the Spirit and then did "power ministry" (Matthew 3:13-17, 4:23)

6. Jesus is now at the right hand of the Father with universal authority over all things in Heaven and on earth and exercises this vast authority on behalf of those who engage in the Great Commission. (Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 2:34,35; 5:31)

7. In the process Jesus gives authority to people like Paul for the building up of the Church. (2 Corinthians 10:8, 13;10)

8. One use of this authority is to "tear down" the Satanic resistance to the progress of the gospel so that people may come to faith. (2 Corinthians 10:3-6)

[If you feel you need to grow in this area of spiritual authority:

a) read Charles Kraft's excellent and balanced book "I Give You Authority" ,

b) for a rather terse dot-point presentation of my material (free) go to

<http://www.aibi.ph/warfare/> and download the book.]

Blessings,

John Edmiston

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