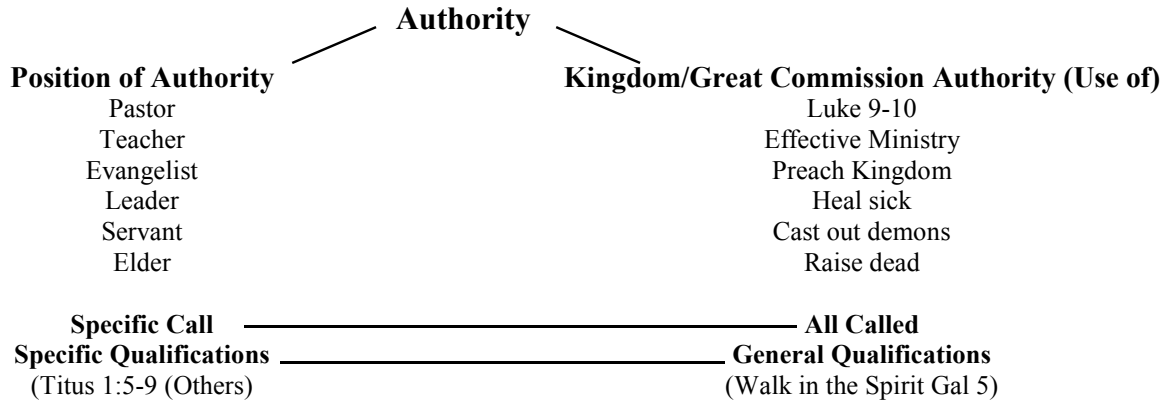




Spiritual Maturity is Essential to Spiritual Authority

The proper exercise of 'spiritual authority' is dependent on 'spiritual maturity' which comes from a deepened and committed walk with Christ.



Because someone is being used to minister 'Kingdom' authority does NOT mean they have a 'position' of authority or are called to a position of authority.

A. What is Maturity? *1 Cor 14:20; Eph 4:13; Ro 12:2*

1. Gk: Teleios—finished; lacking nothing; perfect; full grown; mature.
2. Spiritual maturity is growing in Christ each day—a life long process of becoming more and more like Him!

1Co 14:20 Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.

Eph 4:13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; **Eph 4:14** that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, **Eph 4:15** but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—

Rom 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect [mature] will of God.

When we receive salvation we become God's children, meaning that we are heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ (Romans 8:15-17). We start off as spiritual infants (1 Corinthians 3:1), and we must begin cooperating with the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit so that we grow up and become mature in Christ (Ephesians 4:11-16). It is only as we "come up higher" in spiritual maturity that God will be able to trust us with greater levels of spiritual authority.

B. Maturity and Authority—The Connection *Gal 4:1; 1 Cor 4:16*

1. Example: A teenager may own or have the use of a car and the ability **power** (dunamis) to drive it, but his driver's license gives him the **authority** (exousia) to drive. He can get into a lot of trouble if attempts to use the power before he has reached the legal age of maturity and received the authority (driver's license).
2. In Gal 4:1 Paul is saying that an heir owns the whole estate, but the heir cannot walk in the fullness of his authority until he grows up.

Gal 4:1 Now I say *that* the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, **Gal 4:2** but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father.

C. Growing in Maturity and Power *James 4:7*

1. Denying self *Mat 6:24; Ro 8:7-8; Gal 5:24; Col 3:5-10*

Are we being led by the Holy Spirit or by our feelings and desires? Habitual submission to God is essential to the exercise of spiritual authority.

Mat 6:24 "No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.

Rom 8:7 Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. **Rom 8:8** So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Gal 5:24 And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. **Gal 5:25** If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Col 3:5 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. **...READ FROM BIBLE through vs. :10**

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Rom 8:13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

2. Conquer the tongue *1 Cor 10:10-11; Jam 5:9; 1 Tim 5:13* —————

Jesus was oppressed and afflicted but did not open his mouth! (Isa 53:7). The story of Israel and her problems is the story of a people who complained. If we want to move in the power of God we must get control of our tongue.

Quit grumbling, murmuring, complaining, gossiping, and fault-finding

Jam 5:9 Do not grumble against one another, brethren, lest you be condemned. Behold, the Judge is standing at the door!

Jam 1:26 If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion *is* useless.

Jam 3:4 Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. **Jam 3:5** Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! **Jam 3:6** And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.

If you really want to move up in the things of God and begin operating in the power and authority that Jesus died for you to have, then you need to get control over your mouth!

See also: Jer 9:1-3; 7-9

3. Learn to submit to authority

Ro 13:1-2; Heb 13:17; 1 Pet 2:13-17

To minister with 'authority' I must be under authority.

(See side bar.) **Will cover this topic in the next message!**

4. Be thankful *1 Thes 5:16-18; Jam 1:2-4; 1 Pet 1:6-7; Phi 4:4*

A mark of maturity is giving thanks (praise) in all circumstances—not because of circumstances but in spite of them. (See 'Perfecting Praise' VillageAlive.com).

1Th 5:16 Rejoice always,

1Th 5:17 pray without ceasing,

1Th 5:18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1Th 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit.

1Th 5:20 Do not despise prophecies.

1Th 5:21 Test all things; hold fast what is good.

1Th 5:22 Abstain from every form of evil.

1Th 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jam 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials,

Jam 1:3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. **Jam**

1:4 But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

5. Sow seed *Luk 6:38; 1 Cor 9:11; 2 Cor 9:6; 2 Cor 9:10-11*

Every farmer knows that he must sow some seed if he wants to reap a harvest. God is the One who invented the principle of seed-time and harvest-time. This is a principle which affects every area of our life. _____

Luk 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."

1Co 9:11 If we have sown spiritual things for you, *is it* a great thing if we reap your material things?

2Co 9:6 But this *I say*: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.

2Co 9:10 Now may He who supplies seed to the sower, and bread for food, supply and multiply the seed you have sown and increase the fruits of your righteousness, **2Co 9:11** while you are enriched in everything for all liberality, which causes thanksgiving through us to God.

2 Cor 9:10 (above) says that God supplies the seed, but notice that He supplies it to the sower! Are you a sower? Sow generously and reap generously!

6: Spend time with Jesus *Prov 13:20; Luk 10:38-42*

The more time we spend with Jesus the more we become like Him. _____

Pro 13:20 He who walks with wise *men* will be wise, But the companion of fools will be destroyed.

Luk 10:38 Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house.

Luk 10:39 And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.

Luk 10:40 But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me."

Luk 10:41 And Jesus answered and said to her, "**Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things.**

Luk 10:42 But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

State of Readiness

Spending time with Jesus is like spiritual training. The purpose of training is maintain a state of readiness. Readiness to fulfill God's will in season and out of season.