

RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY IS A SAFEGUARD FOR YOU

Note to the speaker:

Help the audience to cultivate proper attitude toward delegated authority. Show that such authority is a protection and is vital to peace and happiness. Show that by respecting authority, we uphold Jehovah's sovereign rulership

WE NEED TO BE SAFEGUARDED, SO WE SHOULD RESPECT AUTHORITY (4 min.)

We live at a time of great upheaval; institutions and relationships of all types are being attacked (*g90 8/8 9*)

Even institutions such as governments, the family, and religion are objects of criticism

While Christians do not share in revolts or protests, we can understand why some people are angered, frustrated (*Ec 8:2-4; w72 263-4; w86 8/15 4, 6*)

Each one of us is in real danger of being affected; how?

One can quite easily be hurt by increased crime, violence, or disrespect for law

Family relationships can be severely damaged as a result of the prevailing attitude, and in some ways this spirit could even rob us of joy in the Christian congregation (*yp 15-16*)

A fundamental cause of many of these problems is lack of regard for authority (*w72 261; g87 11/22 30*)

In view of this trend, just what authority should you recognize? Why?

LOOK TO JEHOVAH FOR GUIDANCE REGARDING AUTHORITY (4 min.)

Contrary to unreasoning clamor for total independence from authority, all of us acknowledge and benefit from authority (*w72 264-5*)

We respect and obey authority of our body—eating food, sleeping, eliminating wastes

Our Creator is the Source of this authority, so respect for it means cooperation with him

Logical to look to God, not to imperfect men, for guidance on matters of authority

Imperfect men often provide deluding guidance that is harmful (*2Pe 2:18, 19; g75 10/8 6-7*)

Jehovah knows the best course for us in all situations (*g75 10/8 15-22*)

Will consider three areas of delegated authority—in civil government, in home, and in congregation

Can personally examine yourself as to how you respect such authority

PROPER VIEW OF GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY AIDS CHRISTIANS (12 min.)

In connection with civil or governmental authority, it is difficult but important to have respect

No denying the fact that many governmental officials, on all levels, are corrupt

Still, God directs Christians to be in subjection to and respect these authorities (Read Romans 13:1, 2)

We have good reason to subject ourselves to these authorities (*tp 131-2*)

God permits human governments to exist and to maintain some order in society

Police, courts, and lawmakers serve as “God’s minister” (Read Romans 13:3, 4) (*w90 11/1 15, 20*)

While we do not admire corrupt individuals, we can show respect because of their office and work

Though admittedly not perfect, these authorities are a deterrent to disorder and crime

Tremendous increase of lawbreaking in areas when police went on strike proves they provide a measure of protection for your person and property; they minister to you

We daily receive other benefits from these public servants (Read Romans 13:6, 7)

(Speaker: Give examples of services we get from tax paid to governments [*w72 266-7; w90 11/1 20-2*])

True, tax funds are often misused, yet we benefit from what is used properly (*w90 11/1 24*)

Officials who misuse or steal tax funds are liable to prosecution and are accountable to God; wrong for us to take law into own hands out of spite

Christians must give attention to their attitude so that they can show respect for superior authorities

Do you recognize areas needing improvements: reporting income tax; laws as to your business, upkeep of your home, your legal status in the land; laws regarding your driving, parking, or insurance?

Even ones who have long been Christians must take care to maintain respect (*tp 135*)

Ignoring law in seemingly minor matters emboldens one to more lawlessness (*Ec 8:11*)

Obedying laws of superior authority safeguards and allows clear conscience (*Ro 13:5*)

Relative subjection to superior authorities is the course for Christians (*tp 133-4*)

Our obedience takes into consideration that highest authority is God; would have to obey him first if requirement of a government conflicts

Apostles set the example by declining to obey order to stop preaching (*Ac 4:19, 20; 5:29*)

In most avenues of life, such a clash does not occur, so we can follow Romans 13:1

Must be careful that when we do not conform to secular law, this is because it conflicts with God’s law, not because of inconvenience, seeming unimportance, or not agreeing with it

INCREASE YOUR PEACE BY RECOGNIZING AUTHORITY AT HOME (12 min.)

Man has been so unsuccessful in building happy, united families that some claim that the contemporary family structure is doomed (*g83* 5/22 14; *g82* 8/8 3)

A basic cause is failure to recognize degrees of authority that God provides for the family unit
The essential principle in family authority is headship (Read 1 Corinthians 11:3) (*w72* 266, 270)

As with subjection to governmental authorities, heaven is highest authority (Col 3:18, 20; *tp* 138)

Christ's example in lovingly caring for his congregation sets the pattern (*tp* 136-7; *pe* 240)

When a husband exercises headship authority with similar love, it is easier for family to respect him

Husbands, reflect on whether your pattern in the family is really in imitation of Christ; you are accountable to him for the way in which you exercise your headship

Being a family head does not require you to make *every* decision or govern *every* detail of life

If an unbelieving husband does not follow God's counsel, family should still respect his position (Eph 5:23; 6:1-4)

Wife is responsible to Jehovah for her attitude toward her husband and the attitude she cultivates in children

By a wife's caring for home duties, respecting husband's decisions not in conflict with the Bible, and continuing to work for unity and peace, respect is shown for the Originator of marriage

Believing children must not look down on unbelieving parent

Proper exercise of family authority as regards children involves obligations on both sides

Parents are obliged to discipline and direct children (Pr 13:1, 24; *w61* 176)

Means taking the initiative in this, not trying to avoid it because it may seem unpleasant (*g90* 1/22 28)

Respect for this God-given authority will help parents to resist letting children take control

Youths who respect authority in family manifest this by being cooperative and obedient (*yp* 12)

Sometimes child will obey, but resentfully and with obvious disgust or unwillingness

This is not manifesting true respect for authority; need to guard against this attitude (*yp* 15-17)

Bible does not limit obedience to preteen years or to certain matters (Pr 4:1)

Fact that you may be approaching legal age of adulthood does not dissolve your obligation to respect authority of your parents (Pr 23:22; *w82* 11/1 14)

Parents may establish specific guidelines about association with persons of opposite sex; respect for their authority will help youth to accept these

Your family will be aided and safeguarded by showing respect for authority in your home

Will enjoy more peace in the home, avoiding much of the heartache of those lacking respect

Respect for authority thus developed will also help one to respect authority in other fields

AUTHORITY IN CONGREGATION IS FOUNDED ON GOD'S WORD (9 min.)

As peace and success in family (arranged for by God) involves proper respect for authority, we can expect to find authority in Christian congregation (also arranged for by God) and peace resulting from that

An indication of this authority and how we fit in is presented in 1 Peter 5:1-3 (Read)

Elders, or overseers, are likened to shepherds; would expect them to exercise loving authority

Verses also suggest that "the flock" be, not rebellious, but willing to be led

These loving overseers merit our respect (1Ti 5:17; *tp* 139-40)

They handle Word of God in disciplining the disorderly, thus helping all of us

Overseers also work hard to prepare meeting parts and to take lead in congregation arrangements

Our proper respect for this authority is manifested by our being obedient (Read Hebrews 13:17) (*w89* 9/15 22)

Elders may provide Bible-based counsel, such as on gossip or excessive drinking (*w89* 9/15 24-5)

Do we dismiss counsel because of our familiarity with elder giving it, ignoring that it is based on Bible?

Better to accept such counsel humbly, with self-scrutiny as to our possible need for it

Respect for this authority will aid the entire congregation

We know that it will be successful, for it is based on God's Word

Congregation will manifest harmony and unity, with no undercurrent of dissent or rebellion

RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY WILL SAFEGUARD YOU FOREVER (4 min.)

If we cultivate respect for Jehovah's authority, obedience to lesser authority will be easier

No reason to believe that God will change his basic way of dealing when new world is here

Evidently, Jehovah will continue to administer matters through delegated authority (*w72* 273)

We can expect that in family arrangement fathers will still take the lead and be responsible to God

Apparently, there will be earthly representatives exercising authority in other matters (*w89* 9/1 22)

Respect we now cultivate for delegated authority will help us to fit in the new world

We will show, now and in the new world, that we uphold Jehovah's sovereignty and way of doing things

Thus, our respect for authority will be an eternal safeguard and blessing for us

(Adhere closely to the outlined material, and observe the indicated timing of each section. Not all cited texts need to be read)