



Testimonies

Dear Pastor Ashish,

Just wanted to share a testimony on the miraculous way in which God has provided in our family. My sister and her family, who live in Chennai have been undergoing financial hardship for a long period of time. Their business had wound up nearly 5 years back and were living hand-to-mouth. My sister had got a job as a construction supervisor and was supporting her family of 3 children. In the month of August, she had to leave that job as well and her situation turned from bad to worse.

In September, in one of the morning services at APC, you gave an alter call for people who wanted miraculous break throughs. I came upto the alter and placed a petition to God to provide a financial break through to my sister's family and fully believed that it was done.

During the month of October, my brother-in-law who has not had a job for nearly 10 years ventured into real estate business. Within 4 weeks, they got their first business deal and yesterday received their first payment (Rs. 1 lakh). This is their self earned income in nearly 15 years.

We want to Praise and Glorify God, as it is only He, who breathes life into what is dead - in this case, it did not make any sense to get into the real estate market under the present recessionary conditions. But HE has a purpose and a plan beyond our logic !

PRISE His Holy Name!

With Warm Regards
Samuel

Dear Sir,

I wanted to tell you that I have been blessed by your sermon.

A couple of months ago, you had preached about believers exercising our right as said in Mark 16:17-18. At the end of the sermon, you asked all those with a prayer request to come to the foot of the stage.

Then you asked those who were still at their places to come forward and exercise their right by praying for those who were at the stage.

I didn't budge. I didn't have the guts to pray for someone else in an "active" manner of speaking. Later at home, it shook me that if I couldn't pray for Christians in church, then in all likelihood the great commission of, "...Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel..." was not going to happen. The realisation that I was not qualifying as an ordinary believer was scary.

And so I decided to start with myself. A while ago I had noticed that there was a persistent numbness or rather a lack of sensation in the big toe on my left foot. I had kept putting off getting it checked and I decided to begin my praying and receiving in faith with the healing of my toe.

Today, I keep reaching down to enjoy the feeling in my toe.

This very small miracle has encouraged me to pray and receive in faith.

Before the end of this year, one of the things I wanted was a promotion and in my limited understanding of God's great plan I thought it would only come if I moved out of my current work place as the company had put a freeze on everything due to the recession.



However, any of my moves in this direction didn't seem to be going anywhere. I prayed for God's direction in this regard and like many of my prayer requests I forgot all about it.

Two weeks ago, I got a letter of promotion from my office.

It has finally hit home that our God is just waiting to give us what we ask, if we only believe that He will and that He is faithful to give even if we are forgetful.

But above all else, last week when you asked us to pray for those around us I was able to step up and pray for someone. Not just pray a "welcome-to-our-church-prayer," but pray and give thanks that her miracle is round the corner.

And while all this may seem rather trivial, I am thankful that being at APC has blessed me to walk closer with Jesus.

God bless!

Ruth



Sunday November 22, 2009
The Kingdom of God
Part 7 : Kingdom Government

Our God is King. The Bible tells us that “the Kingdom is the LORD’s. And He rules over the nations” (Psalm 22:28). Psalm 103:19 teaches us that “the LORD has established His throne in heaven and His Kingdom rules over all”. Today, God extends His government or rule over the nations. God has set authority structures through which His government is to be extended. Even in a Fallen world, we are to recognize God’s influence over governmental or authority structures He has set up.

We must also recognize that positions of leadership in God’s authority structures are roles and responsibilities entrusted to us, and not positions of superiority.

God’s Authority Structure

¹ 1 Corinthians 11:3,11,13

³ **But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God. ¹¹ Nevertheless, neither is man independent of woman, nor woman independent of man, in the Lord. ¹² For as woman came from man, even so man also comes through woman; but all things are from God.**

In God’s authority structure, the head of the woman is the man, the head of the man is Christ and the head of Christ is God. To be head means to be the one in authority, the director. We know that Christ is co-equal with the Father and yet in His life on earth and for the sake of redemption, Christ submitted Himself to the Father’s directives and the Father’s will. Similarly, man and woman are inter-dependent and co-equal when it comes to receiving the blessings and privileges of the Kingdom. Yet, in God’s authority structure, man is to be the leader and be the channel through which the government of God flows.

God’s Authority Structure for the Family

Ephesians 5:22,23

²² **Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.**

For the home, the husband is the head. God’s Kingdom government is to be extended in to the home through the leadership of the husband. The home comes under the jurisdiction of the husband. What happens within the jurisdiction of the home is his responsibility. He has to stand before God and before his family as king and priest, as leader and intercessor, as guide and teacher. The husband is the gateway of God’s government in to the home. The husband has the ability to place a spiritual covering of protection over his wife and family as the head of the home. The wife is to submit and respect the husband as to the Lord. The wife yields, shows reverence and gives honor to her husband, as doing it unto Christ. While the husband is the head, he is not to behave like a “big boss” around the home. He is to live in an understanding manner, give honor to his wife because both are co-equal and co-heirs in the Kingdom of God. If the husband does not fulfill this responsibility toward his wife, his prayers will be hindered (1 Peter 3:7).



The husband needs to correctly discharge his responsibility given to him in God's authority structure. Failure in this will affect his relationship (i.e. prayers) to his Head. Similarly, the wife needs to rightly relate to the authority God has placed in the home, that is, toward her husband. Failure to do this is essentially failing in doing this for the Lord.

Similarly, God has instructed children to obey their parents in the Lord, as this is the right thing to do. Children are to honor their father and mother, which brings the blessing of a good life, well-being and longevity (Ephesians 6:1-3). Children must therefore learn to rightly relate to the authority structure God has placed in the home, which is, their parents. It is true, that as time passes, children may know more than their parents in certain things because of their education, training and exposure. Yet, regardless of how qualified or successful a young man or woman becomes, the Biblical instruction is to show honor, reverence, respect and high regard toward one's parents. As children do this, they receive the promised blessing.

Parents being in a position of authority, as part of God's Kingdom government coming in to the home is a place of responsibility to train, discipline and nurture children in the ways of the Lord without hurting and destroying them (Ephesians 6:4). We are living in a time, before the Day of the Lord, when the hearts of the fathers will be turned toward their children and the children toward their fathers. God is bringing a restoration of His government in the home and families where parents and children will relate to each other as God intends. If this fails to happen, the Word declares that the world will be smitten with a curse (Malachi 4:6). However, when this does happen, both parents and children become recipients of God's intended blessings!

God's Authority Structure for the Local Church

Acts 20:28-30

²⁸ Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. ²⁹ For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.

The apostle Paul speaking to the Elders from Ephesus instructs them to watch over their own lives and over their congregation. He reminds them of their responsibility as being set in that position as overseers (episkopos, bishop) by the Holy Spirit Himself to watch over God's people who have been purchased with the blood of Jesus Christ. There is a need to do this as "savage wolves" and others can prey on God's sheep and lead them astray. In response, God's sheep, believers in a local congregation are given the instruction: "Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you" (Hebrews 13:17).

In the local church, God's Kingdom government flows through the local church pastor, through the spiritual elders and on to the congregation. God's people must learn to relate rightly toward their pastor and spiritual leaders by submitting and giving honor to them (1 Thessalonians 5:12,13). When people begin to rightly relate to their leadership they position themselves to receive not only spiritual equipping and impartation but also God's manifest blessing in all areas of life.

In the same vein, pastors and spiritual leaders in a local congregation have been given clear directives of what God expects of them, having placed them in positions of spiritual authority in His Kingdom government in the local church. Peter wrote to the Elders that they should shepherd



God's people, not out of compulsion, but willingly. Not for dishonest gain of monetary benefits, or as being big lords over God's people. Rather, be examples to the people of God (1 Peter 5:1-4). Peter clearly instructs the younger people to walk in submission to the older folks and invites everyone to walk in humility and submission toward one another. (1 Peter 5:5).

When the authority structure in a local church is in place and functioning according to God's design and intended order, God's Kingdom government increases and flourishes among such a people. There is unity, cohesiveness and a strong fellowship in the Spirit that nothing can break. Every one functions in their rank, place and in order. God's anointing flows freely from the head and on to the rest of the body in that local church. That local church becomes a place of refreshing, reviving and blessing (Psalm 133).

God's Authority Structure for the Body of Christ

1 Corinthians 12:28

And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.

For the larger Body of Christ, the Bible describes governmental gifts that Christ has placed. The word "first" is the Greek word "proton" which means first in time, order, rank and importance. This does not mean that apostles are "superior" as individuals, in quality, in blessings, in anointing, in capabilities, etc. It does mean that in God's Kingdom government in the Body of Christ they hold the place through which God's government enters in from the Head, that is Christ, in to the rest of the Body which Christ at that moment is ministering to through that particular apostle. We understand that as believers are all co-equal and all gifts and ministry anointing are important as they express the same Lord Jesus to the world. Yet, we must recognize and acknowledge Christ's government in the Body of Christ through the authority structure He has designed.

Those holding positions of authority in God's government in the Body are not to hold their positions as a title to brag about or a place of superiority over the rest of God's people. As always, God places people in such roles for them to discharge a responsibility toward the rest of the Body. Ephesians 4:11,12 describes this responsibility: "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ". The governmental roles of apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher, evangelist are to equip the saints for ministry so that the Body of Christ can be built up spiritually and numerically.

When God's people rightly relate to God's authority structure they receive a reward. Those who honor a prophet, because he is a prophet receive a prophet's reward.

God's Authority Structure for the Workplace

Ephesians 6:5-9

⁵ Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; ⁶ not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷ with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸ knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free. ⁹ And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.



God's Kingdom government flows in to the workplace through the authority structures prevailing in the workplace. When as employees, we do what we do with sincerity, with kindness as to the Lord and not just to please someone, we know that we will receive a reward that comes from the Lord Himself. Regardless of who the boss is, what kind of boss he or she may be. Regardless of what injustice, malpractice, etc may be taking place, if we work as "employees of Christ" and relate rightly to the authority structure in place, God is able to reward us in spite of bad bosses and injustices. Think about Joseph who was falsely accused and demoted (Genesis 39). Joseph not only found favour in his lower position, but soon God intervened and Joseph jumped several rungs of the corporate ladder and went straight to the vice-presidents post! Only God can do such a thing. So also with David. While David was being persecuted by his boss for no fault of his, he remained true to Saul. It was not too long before David became king and grew to be one of the most powerful kings Israel has ever known.

Many of us are in positions of authority in the workplace where we have subordinates reporting to us. We must understand that we are an expression of God's Kingdom government in the workplace and must do all things representing God, doing things with kindness, justice and without threatening or partiality.

God's Authority Structure for Civil Government

We live under two governments – the government of the Kingdom of God and the government of the nation and state we live in, the civil government. We must understand that God's Kingdom government is expressed in our world through the civil government that is in place.

One day the Pharisees wanted to lay a trap for the Lord Jesus and catch him faltering in His words. So they came to Him, acknowledged that He speaks the truth and is not afraid of man, and then present Jesus with this question "is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not?". This was a trick question. If Jesus said 'yes', they could accuse Him of not being a true Jew, of supporting the Romans and get the Jews to turn against Him. If Jesus said 'no', then the Pharisees could accuse Jesus of leading a revolt against the prevailing Roman government and hand Him to the Roman soldiers. Either way, Jesus would be trapped. So the rest of the narrative tells us what Jesus did: "But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, "Why do you test Me, you hypocrites? Show Me the tax money. So they brought Him a denarius. And He said to them, "Whose image and inscription is this?" They said to Him, "Caesar's." And He said to them, "Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." When they had heard these words, they marveled, and left Him and went their way" (Matthew 22:15-22). In essence, Jesus was teaching us to pay taxes to the prevailing government, regardless of who or what the government was.

Paul explains this for us when he tell us "Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God" (Romans 13:1). As believers we must learn to look at government authorities as those who are appointed by God. Paul continues, "Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but



also for conscience' sake. For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor" (Romans 13:2-7). Those in civil government are referred to as "God's ministers". Paul was writing to believers living under a Roman government, many of whose rulers and leaders were idolatrous, oppressive, blood-stained, and tyrannical. And yet Paul is calling believers to see God's Kingdom government being administered to them through the civil government they were under.

Regardless of what kind of government, what form of governmental system, who is in power, what rules are made, what abuses are carried out – as believers we are to respect, and give honor to those who are in governmental authority over us.

We must remember that a nation always receives the government it deserves. If a nation is filled with people who are corrupt, who have no regard for moral values, then they will have leaders who do the same, because after all the leaders grew up from among them. However, if the people change, then the government will change. The government therefore is an expression of the people it represents. As believers, we need to obey the laws of the land, pay taxes, and honor those currently in leadership. In addition to these responsibilities, we must also pray for the government (1 Timothy 2:1-3), exercise our rights under the laws of the land to vote and work to occupy positions of influence in the government, so that we can have a righteous government. "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; But when a wicked man rules, the people groan" (Proverbs 29:2).

Making a slight digression here, we must understand that unlike earthly governments, the Kingdom of God is a theocracy. Many of us living under democratic systems, like to bring our democratic mindsets in to doing things for the Kingdom of God. This is not always good. In the Kingdom of God, which is a theocracy, God speaks, and we do. No one gets to vote whether what God said should be done or should we do something else. When God told Joshua to get Israel to march around the walls of Jericho once each day for seven days, and seven times on the seventh day as a military strategy to conquer the city – no one got to vote whether this was the right approach or not. God had spoken, and every one had to obey. So also in our day, when we receive a clear directive from God, we follow, regardless of popular opinion, or community preferences, or collective mindsets. This does place a great responsibility on those in leadership to ensure that that they correctly hear from God, receive His directives and communicate that accurately to His people. However this is the kind of leadership that is necessary in the Body of Christ in this day and hour!

There will be times when the government of this world is in conflict with the government of God. In such situations, we must walk with wisdom and understand that we are free to violate the government of man in order to fulfill the directives of the government of God. Peter and John standing before the high priests were instructed not to preach and teach in the name of Jesus. They responded "whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge" (Acts 4:19). Later on, when Peter and John were brought before the council once again and questioned about their violation, they replied "we ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

When the Lord Jesus was brought before Pilate during His trial just before His crucifixion, Pilate said "Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?" Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." (John 19:10,11).



Jesus acknowledged that Pilate was in the position where he was, because God had allowed it to be so. Regardless of what Pilate's decision was going to be, Jesus recognized that there would be no sin on Pilate's part. Pilate had to make a decision, either way, because of his position. However those who delivered Jesus to Pilate, Judas, the high priests and the Sanhedrin, had the greater sin. The amazing thing is about Jesus' acknowledgment of Pilate's position as being given from above, or allowed by God. Jesus did not in any way devalue who Pilate was or the position he held in the Roman governmental structure. A lesson for us here, is to recognize that those in governmental authority have been allowed by God to be there.

God works in spite of the form of governmental system and regardless of who is in power. We must acknowledge what Proverbs teaches us that "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes" (Proverbs 21:1). God is able to influence and supernaturally affect change in the heart of the leader. The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart for a season so that God could demonstrate His miraculous power through Moses. Then when God told His people to leave, they packed and left in a single night, no questions asked because they had seen the awesome power of their God. When Nehemiah wanted to go and rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, God worked through king Artaxerxes, a Persian king to not only give Nehemiah permission to return, but materials to rebuild the walls and security to escort him back. God worked through Cyrus, again a Persian king to have the Jews sent back from captivity to Jerusalem. God works through leaders that have come to power to fulfill His purposes (Revelation 17:17). We just need to have this confidence in our King!

Blessings for Rightly Relating

We must understand that God's Kingdom government is released in our world through authority structures that are placed around us starting from the family, in the local church, the Body of Christ, the workplace and in civil government. We must learn to rightly relate to these authority structures for there is blessing in doing so. Rather than fighting it, and looking at them as oppressive burdens or systems that steal our liberty, we must acknowledge God's Kingdom coming to us through these structures. For those of us in positions of authority in these authority structures we must understand that we have a responsibility toward God and toward those under our authority to judge righteous judgment and do what is right.



USEFUL RESOURCES



Watch our online Sunday Church service live stream every Sunday at 10:30am (Indian Time, GMT+5:30). Spirit filled, anointed worship, Word and ministry for healing, miracles, and deliverance.

YOUTUBE: <https://youtube.com/allpeopleschurchbangalore>

WEBSITE: <https://apcwo.org/live>

Our other websites and free resources:

CHURCH: <https://apcwo.org>

FREE SERMONS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/sermons>

FREE BOOKS: <https://apcwo.org/books/english>

DAILY DEVOTIONALS: <https://apcwo.org/resources/daily-devotional>

JESUS CHRIST: <https://examiningjesus.com>

BIBLE COLLEGE: <https://apcbiblecollege.org>

E-LEARNING: <https://apcbiblecollege.org/elearn>

WEEKEND SCHOOLS: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/weekend-schools>

COUNSELING: <https://chrysalislife.org>

MUSIC: <https://apcmusic.org>

MINISTERS FELLOWSHIP: <https://pamfi.org>

CHURCH APP: <https://apcwo.org/app>

CHURCHES: <https://apcwo.org/ministries/churches>

WORLD MISSIONS: <https://apcworldmissions.org>