

September 18 & 19, 2021

A few weeks ago, I had a conversation with a man who had grown up under a communist regime. I asked him, "What was it like to live under that authoritarian regime?" His response: "Everyone had to keep their head down. If you raised your head in defiance, you lost your head." In Canada, we may not compare our authorities with communist control or Taliban rule, but we do tend to view authority negatively.

Some examples come to mind quickly. What about the Canadian government and the Roman Catholic Church who took indigenous children from their homes against their will and placed them in residential schools? What about mask wearing and mandatory vaccines. When do we obey government and health authorities? What authority does the church have to encourage mask wearing and social distancing?

The conversation in relation to authority gets personal very quickly. Most of us have had negative experiences with parental, church, educational, and government authorities. We cannot escape the issue of authority. Could it be that a healthy understanding of God's ultimate authority would actually bring us healing? Could a fresh vision of Jesus and His exercise of authority help us? These are our questions today.

- Jesus has compassion on the untouchable
- Jesus has compassion on those who are excluded
- Jesus uses His authority to show us the way to life
- Jesus uses His authority to put us (people from every race) at His table
- Jesus has the authority to reverse the expectations of insiders and work justice
- Jesus has authority to reverse our situation and heal us with a word
- Jesus urges us to put our faith in His good authority. He can be trusted

Questions for Reflection:

- How have you struggled with authority in the past?
- How has your struggle with authority affected your personal well-being?
- What decisions do you need to make today in relation to Jesus' authority? What area of your life have you not surrendered to His good rule?
- In what area of your life do you need a healing word from Jesus today?
- In what way does Jesus' exercise of authority change the way you will exercise authority?

WILLINGDON CHURCH ELDERS

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| John Best | Ruben Heyn | Mark Reimer | Wayne Wiebe |
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| Ken Dyck | Paul Lee | Vince Reimer | |
| Jim Eisenhauer | Mark Loewen | Willy Reimer | |
| Alfred Gomez | Dave Marshall | Norm Schmidt | |

Please continue to pray for the elders.

If you wish to contact an elder, please email elders@willingdon.org.