

LESSON 2.D

THE CHARACTER OF DELEGATED AUTHORITIES

“And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD? 4 And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face.” (Numbers 16:3-4)

1. There can be no rebellion on the part of the Israelites more serious than that which is recorded here in verses. The true character of a delegated authority is seen in Moses’ response to the rebellion, “*And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face:*” This is the verily attitude every servant of God must have.
2. Being truly gentle he was empty of personal feelings. He did not defend himself nor get emotional, but “*fell upon his face:*” Moses did not dare do anything of himself, because he knew God and he knew God would take care of things.
3. Moses displayed three critical areas of the character of God’s delegated authority.

A. Exhortation and Restoration.

- (1) Moses exhorted Korah with words so as to restore him. He knew the seriousness of this matter and was really concerned for the rebellious ones. Restoration is always the goal in the delegated authority toward one who walks in rebellion.
- (2) Exhortation is not an expression of lordliness; rather does it disclose meekness. He who exhorts in return for an attack is truly a meek person.
- (3) But he who allows people to be in the error without any intention of restoring them proves his heart to be hard and callous. To not exhort at such a time would be due to a lack of humility, it would obviously suggest pride.
- (4) Those who represent God’s authority seek for restoration, not division even after they have been rejected.

B. No judging spirit.

- (1) In all of the rebellion and rejection faced there was no judging spirit in Moses. Those who desire to be a judge can never judge righteous judgement. Because their intention or motive is to judge, God’s intention is to give mercy and to restore. The greatest sentence we can be given is mercy, even if we guilty. It is easy to give guilt, but very hard to give mercy.

(2) The only feelings Moses had was his concern for them sinning against God. Their sin of rebellion was not against Moses, but against God. And, God always shows up to protect His word and His delegated authority.

(3) Let us understand a very important point about God's judgement. His judgement is apart of His love. We are to wait on the judgement of God, or wait for God to judge the situation. Our part is to give mercy and forgiveness until God judges.

(4) But, for those who love God, God's love is mercy, longsuffering, and forgiveness. And, those who do not love God, God's love is judgment and punishment. There is always punishment associated with God's judgement.

(5) The way of rebellion leads to loss, destruction, and death. (In that order) The wages of sin is death, but before the man dies, he goes through great loss and destruction in his relationship, in his life. Everything he touches dies. No life can come out of it, only death.

(6) Authority is something which God establishes all who offend His authority despise God in their heart.

C. Intercession and atonement.

(1) Unless one has met the grace of God his inward condition remains the same. God came to judge the rebellion, and told Moses and Aaron to get away from the midst of the people. In the face of God's judgement Moses' heart condition toward the Children of Israel was unswayed, verse 45 says, "*he fell on his face.*"

(2) Three times in chapter 16 Moses falls on his face before God intercession for the people. Moses' spiritual sense was so keen that he knew immediately this problem could not be solved by prayer alone.

(3) Moses was certainly fit to be a delegated authority. The word "worship" is translated from the Greek "to bow down the head to the ground" or "to lower one's head in subjection to the ground."

(4) His heart was full of love, compassion, and a strong desire toward intercession and to see their sin atoned.

(5) The atoning grace seen in Moses was astonishingly similar to that seen in Christ. He loved God's people and he bore the responsibility of both the obedient and the rebellious. A person who cares only for himself and who complains of the responsibility he bears for others is unfit to represent God's authority. The way one acts proves what type of person they are.

(6) If we care only for our own feelings we will not be able to bear the problems of God's children. To be gracious and seek intercession and atonement for others is the character of all who are in authority.