

Authority Issues Unpacked

(Insights from Romans 13:1-7)

Pastor Bob Johnson, Grace Point Church, April 15th, 2018

One Loaded Lingerin Question:

(Romans 13:1-7, Matthew 22:15-22)

Two Key Definitions:

1) “Everyone”

2) “Be subject”

(Acts 18:1-2; 4:17-20; 5:28-29, Daniel 3:16-18, Daniel 6:5-11)

Three Truths To Take Home:

1) The goal is ...

(1 Peter 2:11-19, 1 Timothy 2:1-4)

2) God is ...

(Daniel 2:20-21, 5:21)

3) We are called to ...

(Acts 23:1-11, 2 Timothy 2:24-26)

This Week’s Discussion Guide:

Welcome to “Week 1” of our small group season!

This small group season for GPC will last for 11 weeks with the week of August 24 being our last meeting before our July-August break. May God use our times together to help us encourage and support one another and help deepen our spiritual maturity as we discuss and apply His Word.

Looking Back:

Each week we’ll look back and have an opportunity to share with our group how the week went and also share a few things to help us get to know each other better. What is something encouraging that happened since our last meeting?

Since this is our first meeting for this season, along with something encouraging that has recently happened, what is something about you that most likely the rest of our group doesn’t know about you?

If you could have one prayer request answered in the next 11 weeks, what would you want our group to pray with you about?

What are looking forward to this small group and/or what might be causing you a little bit of anxiety in being part of a small group?

As we begin this small group season, what are some things we should keep in mind in order to have healthy, supportive group discussions? What do we need to be careful to avoid in order to honor and support one another?

Last Sunday’s focus was on how to relate to those in authority over us. There are some who are easier to respect than others! Who was one of your former bosses or someone in authority over you somehow that were relatively easy to respect? What did they do or not do to help you think more highly of them?

Before we dive in to our discussion for this first week, let’s spend some time praying for our group and the other small groups that are meeting for the first time this week.

Looking back at your notes from this week’s teaching on Romans 13:1-7, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention or raised a question for you, encouraged you or challenged you?

Looking Up: (DIGGING DEEPER)

1. Last Sunday we heard how Daniel was able to thrive in Babylon despite the pressures of a godless culture and a corrupt leader.

What insights can you find in the following verses that could help you thrive despite the pressures we all face in our world and culture today?

Psalms 119:9-11

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

1 Peter 1:13-16

Matthew 5:14-16

2. It is not surprising to most of us that there is a struggle with the thought of Biblical submission to authority, even when we know God is in control. A challenging relationship with an employer, teacher, parent or commanding officer can lead to a lot of frustration, especially when we are called to submit to someone who doesn't seem to deserve our respect. How can the following verses help us gain perspective on why Biblical submission to authority is not only encouraged but also essential for us as followers of Jesus?

Hebrews 10:32-36

James 1:2-4

Romans 5:1-5

Can you think of any significant character building lessons you have learned in the past when having to deal with a difficult authority figure?

3. When it comes to figuring out how submission works in real life situations, it is important to remember that Jesus isn't asking us to do anything he didn't do for us first. As you read Matthew 20:20-28, how does Jesus' teaching and example impact your thoughts on having to submit to authority?

Matthew 20:20-28

If your employer, teacher, parent, etc. were to read this passage, how would they say you are doing at imitating this passage?

4. One of the last points from Sunday was that God wants more than for us to be close to Him. If that was the primary goal He has for us, he could accomplish that goal better if He just took us home!

Re-read the two passages Bob shared that emphasized that God desires for us not only to be close to Him but to live in such a way that we can be salt and light to others even in difficult situations.

1 Peter 2:11-19

1 Timothy 2:1-4

What further insights do you see from these passages that can help us stay 'on mission' when we would rather God remove us from a difficult situation or relationship?

Looking Forward:

This last section is based on passages like the one below.

But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. 23 For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. 24 You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. 25 But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.

James 1:22-25 (NLT)

Let's all take a few minutes to silently pray and reflect back on last week's message and what we discussed in our group. As we reflect, let's all pray and ask God for a specific application that He might prompt us to live out this week.

How might you apply one or two insights from this week's discussion?

Before we wrap up, let's share some prayer requests and pray for each other.