

Holy Defiance – A Survey of Thought

Below is a list of perspectives from a diverse group of Christian professionals regarding today's use, abuse, and confrontation of different kinds of authority.

(16 individuals from 13 different fields represented - Medical Doctor, College administration, professors, farmer, public school administration, teachers, small business owner, Company CEO, Circuit Judge, Highway Patrolman, Corporate Professional, City Administrator, Minister) One respondent spent time in jail for participating in a pro-life peaceful act of civil disobedience.

2/26/12

1. As **a leader in your field**, would you say America's view of authority has changed over the past 25 years? "YES, since the 60's & 70's"
2. If yes, how has it changed, in your perspective?
 - *It starts at home with less respect for the parents*
 - *The rebellion of the 60's has continued to grow*
 - *The U.S. has always had a degree of anti-authoritarianism (i.e., American colonists revolting against the authority of England's authoritarian control), but the most recent onset of anti-authoritarianism seems to have devolved from the counter-cultural revolution of the 1960s. While earlier anti-authoritarianism often had fundamental philosophical objections that drove their rejection of authority, the more modern form of anti-authoritarianism often seems to arise from a sense of existential values (i.e., I can do whatever I want and nobody can tell me differently!). As such, the past 25 years has simply seen the continued progression of a lack of respect for authority and a greater sense of personal entitlement with no regard for others or their needs.*
 - *There is little respect for those who are in most authoritative positions. I believe the trend has definitely changed towards law enforcement officers and the duties they carry out.*
 - *Through the years there seems to have been a gradual erosion of the view of authority among our culture. More and more parents take the side of their children (as early as KDG), and teachers and administrators are not looked upon with utmost favor. With the breakdown of so many families, naturally students are coming to school with more baggage, which manifests itself negatively in the classrooms. At the same time parents seem to think all of the problems their students have are caused by the teacher. Discipline at home has become much less severe, and parents certainly think almost any discipline used at school is very unfair. The news media has also had a bearing on this situation - speaking so often unfavorably about teachers and administrators in the public schools, even though at times these were warranted. This year I've had the joy and privilege of doing some substitute teaching and tutoring in a Christian School setting, and have been amazed at the difference of increased parental support given the school, the behavior of the students, and the respect these students show to their classmates, teachers, and all school personnel.*
 - *This dislike of authority is not limited to school alone. The loss of respect for any authority is evident with our politicians, policemen and other law officials, judges, and the list goes on and on.*
 - *There is an antiauthoritarian tsunami that rushes through the Western culture, even the North American Christian landscape. Primarily the shift has been toward placing ourselves at the center of reality and elbowing out a God-centered, Scripturally led worldview and way of life. Neal Postman, Chuck Colson, Tim Keller, Brad Waggoner, and others have also spoken widely of this shift.*
 - *As a physician, it's clear that America's view of authority has changed over the last 25 years. In my field, the doctor used to be up there with God in status. Anything he said was golden and never questioned. Physicians are not held in such high regard anymore, which is not necessarily a bad thing.*
 - *I'd say America has a lower view of authority, and is less likely to respect and submit to authority than it used to*

- *I think that much of the confusion regarding authority is because of the church. How can the people trust authority when authority figures are saying opposite things, or not saying anything at all. Pastors, preachers, reverends, priest will say abortion is OK and that it is wrong. Some will say homosexuality is wrong, some will say it is OK. Many do not even bother saying anything for fear that it is a political issue instead of a moral issue. God forbid a tax exempt status would be threatened. This is true on every issue. When one pastor says something is wrong and another is it is right, many will start to ignore all pastors. When authority is confused, people will be confused.*
- *Consequences have been removed from actions. In the pursuit of treating everybody the same, so that they are treated fairly, no judgment is allowed. Even the church is afraid to judge one issue over another. I am not talking about judging a person per se but judging actions.*
- *Many people do not seem respectful of authority today. BUT older generations have always thought that younger generations are not as respectful, so maybe I am just getting older.*
- **AUTHORITY HAS CHANGED...AWAY FROM PARENTAL AUTHORITY TO MORE GOVERNMENTAL INFUSION INTO PEOPLE'S LIVES. WITH THE POLITICAL CORRECTNESS MANTRA THAT PERMEATES ALL LEVELS OF AUTHORITY, THE STAND FOR TRUTH HAS BECOME WATERED DOWN IN THE INTEREST OF NOT WANTING TO OFFEND ANYONE--EVEN IF WHAT THEY ARE DOING IS AGAINST GOD AND MAN.**
- *The role and authority of the parent had been diminished by the continuation of progressive social policies and cultural rot.*
- **DULY CONSTITUTED AUTHORITIES ARE NOT RESPECTED. THE UNDERLYING CAUSE IS SPIRITUAL: THE FEAR OF GOD IS NOT PART OF THE THOUGHT PROCESSES OF MOST PEOPLE.**
- *People have a general disregard for authority. They have no qualms about walking out of a classroom, coming in late, failing to do their work and expected grace. They rarely use respectful titles or even sound respectful when using your name. They tend to not show consideration to those older than they are. It "used to be" students would let a professor through the door first, speak with respect, etc. Anymore, it seems it's all men/women for themselves. That sounds harsh—a generalization about those who have disregarded the respect due to authority figures. Others are very respectful, etc.*
- *Everyone is more skeptical of authority after the 1960s. Those who were told not to trust anyone over 30 believed it. Most people in authority are over 30. It's rare to find loyal submission and trust in very many areas.*
- *I've seen the change in schools, both high school and college. I've seen students tell teachers, "You can't tell me what to do." I could never imagine saying that to a teacher . . . and I'm not that old!*

3. As **a leader in your field**, what are the various authorities you must submit to?

- *Elders, church at large, fellow believers, government officials, older people, and the church secretary*
- *In my position as a university professor, I must submit to the administrative authorities of my institution, as well as to the academic standards that have been established by various accrediting agencies and state legislators for someone in my position. It should also be noted that I deem my students to have "authority" over me in a very technical sense of that term. Students pay to obtain information about certain area of study that I have been hired to provide. Therefore, I feel that I am under an obligation to provide them with the best education I can offer in my area. Nevertheless, I probably would not actually refer to them as my "authorities."*
- *Agency leadership, law makers, judges, supreme court, other law enforcement agencies*
- *What God has also revealed in and through His Written Word is wedded into what I would call "Divine authority." There is a category of authority that I like – we might call it*

“Delegated authority.” This would include my submitting to our lead minister and the other elder team members. It would include those who oversee the School through which I offer the MA in Spiritual Formation, it would include relationships with other brothers and sisters in Christ who walk with me and hold me accountable, and it would also include federal, state, and local governments (Romans 13 is my go to text) that God has ordained and set over me. I am first and foremost a Jesus-follower, not an American. We often get these two identities confused and mingled.

- *Universities to get pre-med and med degrees, then submitted to innumerable physicians and faculty to make it through residency. I now submit to my employer to fulfill my contractual obligations, the MO State Board of Healing Arts to meet their requirements, countless insurance agencies, the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the American Board of Family Medicine*
- *Elders at church and Health Dept., State Department of Natural Resources*
- *the Mayor, and City Council. By extension, the citizens of the community*
- *I submit to government at the local, state and national levels. Also I need to submit to my supervisor at work. My work as a Hospice Volunteer Coordinator requires me to be careful about adhering to Medicare regulations, which are a form of government authority. In a very general sense, I believe I’m obligated to subordinate my desires and my will – at least to some extent – to everybody (especially the family of believers), since the Bible calls us to “submit to one another.” And of course, I owe supreme and unconditional submission to God.*
- *I submit to the authority of the two pastors at my church. I submit to the authority of my parents and, since, my wife and I are one, my parents-in-law. Many people do not understand the pastor and parent thing. It is not that they tell me what to do and that I blindly obey their command. It is that I recognize that I need to respect and listen to them. I need to take their opinions and considerations into mind when I, as a free moral agent, make my decisions. I submit to the governmental authorities. I submit to managers at work. At Rotary, I defer to the wishes of the current president because he is the president.*
- *As a Judge I must submit to the authority of the presiding Judge, the Court of Appeals, the Supreme Court and personally my God.*
- *AS AN EDUCATOR, I HAVE TO SUBMIT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, TO THE ACCREDITING ASSOCIATIONS, AND TO GOVERNMENTAL POLICIES THAT PRESCRIBE WHAT IS PROPER.*
- *Ethically I must be obedient to the Creator. I must also submit to the needs of my family and duties as a father. I must submit to local, state and federal governmental bodies, that tax and regulate. Often the taxes I pay go toward the running of programs and to fund activities that I find objectionable and often immoral. The regulations often create burdens for no apparent benefit to the company or the employees.*
- *GOD, HIS WORD (PROPERLY INTERPRETED), THE ELDERSHIP OF THE LOCAL CHURCH, GOVERNMENTAL OFFICIALS, AND THOSE WHOSE PLACE IN THE LINE OF AUTHORITY IS OVER ME WHERE I SERVE*
- *First, to God and to my own values/ethics. Employment wise, to the elders of the congregation. As a servant, to those I serve.*
- *Government regulations, board, president, donors*
- *Academic Dean and President. (Also all civil authorities)*

4. As **a leader in your field**, what are the various authorities you hold over others in order to do your job?

- *As an educator, I have the authority of knowledge and classroom control. In my classroom, no students have a comparable grasp of the field of study in which I am the expert. As a result, I am the authority based on my knowledge. Students pay to learn from my position as an authority on a particular subject. Moreover, as the leader/teacher of the class, I am in control of the class. And, armed with the ability to pass or fail students, I am the classroom authority figure.*

- *To enforce laws, effect and take custody of individuals*
- *I hold authority over my nurse practitioner, nursing staff, support staff, patients, and some community supports.*
- *I supervise a large group of volunteers. I am responsible for ensuring that they are following guidelines and serving effectively.*
- *The Constitution of Missouri and the United States grants me many powers which I hope I carefully exercise, including personal liberty.*
- *The delegation/empowerment of authority to others. The creation, implementation and enforcement of policies and procedures. Hiring, discipline, rewarding, promoting, terminating employment.*
- *AT THE PERSONAL LEVEL, IT IS TO OVERSEE THE STUDENTS IN A CLASSROOM.*
- *Technically I'm over the staff as their supervisor. I need them to accomplish their tasks so the job of ministry gets done*
- *Policies, assignment of responsibilities*
- *Mostly over students. If they don't turn in assignments, I have the responsibility (authority) to fail them. I also have the authority to determine specifics like length of assignments, due dates and quality expected. Students don't always see the reason but the grade is a reflection of their submission to my authority.*

5. At what point do you feel the right or responsibility to criticize those in authority over you? How can that be done appropriately? What does inappropriate criticism of authority look like?

- *When they violate what I understand to be the truth of Scripture or when they are acting in ways that do not adorn the gospel. We rebel with respect. Any rebellion where we are demeaning to the one we are disobeying that is probably wrong. We do have to be willing to take the licks for rebelling against authority without a spirit of retaliation.*
- *We are directed in the Bible to give honor to whom honor is due. On the opposite side of that coin, I believe it is appropriate to offer criticism when criticism is due. In my estimation, appropriate criticism arises out of a sense of purpose. Criticism for no other reason than to be critical is always inappropriate. However, criticism for the sake of betterment and improvement is both a good and a healthy thing. To simply criticize because of dislike for someone or because of some other selfish motivation is inappropriate. Authority figures may appropriately be criticized when the critique is for betterment or improvement. It should be remembered, however, that even criticism should be done in love*
- *If given in humility and with the best interest of my authority in mind, then I think it can be beneficial to my authority to hear honest feedback from me – even of a negative or critical nature. But that doesn't necessarily give me license to speak up every time I see the need. So "at what point" is it right to speak up? I'm not sure. Perhaps when others are being unfairly and unnecessarily hurt or disadvantaged, directly or indirectly because of my authority. And also when my authority is doing or promoting something that is unethical or illegal.*
- *When I had someone report to me and I asked them to do something, I tried to always let them do it the way they thought it needed to be done. Even if it was not exactly how I would do it so long as it was reasonable, I let them do it that way. So, I feel justified to criticize when a decision made by a person in authority over me is no longer reasonable or when it contradicts an agreed standard. The agreed standard would be the Bible in the realm of the Church, a law in the realm of the State, standard business practice in the realm of employment. The appropriateness of the method I think is variable. Different methods for different situations and different realms. However, there are some standards. Romans 12:21 states we must overcome evil with love. I am not stating that every breach of "reasonable" or agreed standard is "evil" but the principle of love I think must remain in all situations. I also think that there should be respect displayed. I am not sure if showing respect is always necessary. I can think of some examples where I would really only*

have contempt but I might be wrong for thinking it is ever right to show contempt. It is always inappropriate to just continually nit-pick. John 6:43 Do not grumble among yourselves. I cannot remember where but the bible says somewhere that God hates grumbling. People, including leaders, should have the freedom to be who God made them to be, faults and quirks included to a point. It is also inappropriate to have a double standard. This is seen especially in politics.

- *INAPPROPRIATE CRITICISM ATTACKS PEOPLE RATHER THAN IDEOLOGY, IT SEEKS TO BELITTLE OTHERS RATHER THAN ENGAGE IN SERIOUS INTERCHANGE OF IDEAS ON IDEOLOGICAL POSITIONS*
- *Failure to lead and exercise authority has caused the loss of time and money wasted on hiring, training and HR functions. It has created a break down in work place relationships. It has resulted in financial losses due to work place injuries, negligence and theft.*
- *I have been working on the concept of leading from the middle. (See William Robinson or Tammy Stone). This is struggle for me because I tend to think that I am right or I know how to do it better. First, this is usually not the case. Second, those in authority usually make good decisions and it is a mistake to take small issues and judge authorities by them. When there is a time to speak up, I need to speak up. This actually builds trust when it doesn't come as an attack. I may have new information or a strong opinion that I need to voice. Regardless, when I have said my piece, I still must trust the authority to make the decision. It is inappropriate when I assume that I know best, or undermine the authority of the person. This is usually done to others. It's more like building a resistance movement that way.*

6. At what point do you think someone under your authority has a right to criticize you? How can that be done appropriately? What does inappropriate criticism of your authority look like?

- *I think those under my authority have the right to criticize me if they speak truthfully, in the interest of what is just and right, and from an attitude of humility and selflessness. Inappropriate criticism, I suppose, is that which stems from wrong motives or which is given in a spirit of haughtiness, rebellion, disrespect, and disregard for the interest others.*
- *When I make a bad decision that is more than just an opinion. It should be done with respect and by simply talking to me about it. Disrespectful and nit-picky is inappropriate. It goes back to the double standard. I do not want to be criticized for every little thing and for matters of opinion where either person/side might be right. If I have the authority, it is my decision. I normally welcome input but once the decision is made, it is done. As I have thought about all this, I realized and became convicted that I have erred and thereby sinned in some of my criticisms and in some of the ways I have criticized some in authority over me. Ouch.*
- *I make mistakes and those under my authority can and should point that out. It's one of the ways I grow. Simple example. When I have something misspelled on a Powerpoint, that is a problem, especially because spelling counts on a grade. The student that tells me after class has done so appropriately. I will thank him and correct the mistake. The student that has done so in front of the class can do a lot of damage. It may cause me to look foolish, but more importantly, distracts from the material I am trying to teach. Obviously this can be extrapolated to things like practices that can damage relationships or false doctrine. You may have noticed a trend here. It is inappropriate when my criticism blinds me to the bigger issue of all the good that is being done.*

7. As **a leader in your field**, how has the success or failure of other people in authority that you have to deal with affected your job?

- *You learn by observing other's mistakes as well as your own. This is perhaps more a management dictum than that of authority. I try to stay clear of taking credit for our*

successes at city hall. It drives me crazy when I see and hear people in authority take credit for something they could not do, and did not do on their own. At meetings, I make every effort to acknowledge the contributions of others. I learned this by working for several people who would not do this.

- Typically, I want my supervisor to succeed; and when my supervisor succeeds, generally our organization is better off, and so am I.
- Because of both bad business decisions (some of which could and should have been made better, some just 20/20 hindsight) and bad moral decision of those in authority over me, I have seen a business not go where it might have gone. On the flip side, because of other, good business decisions (in other ventures) I even have a job.
- THIS IS DIFFERENT IN A BIBLE COLLEGE WHERE I SERVE, FOR THE STUDENTS ARE RESPECTFUL IN MY CLASSES. THE SITUATIONS ARE OFTEN A CONTRAST TO WHAT I HEAR TAKES PLACE AT ALL LEVELS OF PUBLIC EDUCATION. SUCH THINGS AS DISRESPECT, DEFIANCE, AND DISOBEDIENCE ARE PRESENT. IT IS MY CONVICTION THAT THESE PROBLEMS BEGAN IN THE HOMES, FOR RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY WAS NOT TAUGHT, ENFORCED, OR MODELED. INSTEAD, DISRESPECT FOR AUTHORITY WAS ENCOURAGED
- I have the privilege of working with great leaders and colleagues. Very few failures. Sometimes I end up trying to “put out emotional fires” when there is failure. It sometimes means I expend my time in ways I’d rather not.
- It’s a pain to clean up when people don’t exercise authority properly.
- When those above me make mistakes, it makes my job harder. Most of us have felt the strain of added regulations or responsibilities making it harder to do our jobs. Sometimes it is more of a morale issue, both positive and negative.

8. Who in your opinion has more authority than anyone else in the world?

- God, but I think you mean human authority. I think the church has the most authority in the world.
- Perhaps the President of the U.S.
- I don’t know, perhaps our world is complicated enough that there is not just one dominant authority
- Jesus is my personal savior and has authority over everyone else is negotiable.
- God, if He is included. Otherwise, heads of nations, I suppose. (Now that I think of it, I suppose angels and demons – and of course Satan - also have authority within the spiritual realm.)
- In absolute authority that one has over other people, some cult leader someplace or some mullah in the Middle East has authority over life and death of each person in their cult/village. Political authority would probably be the president of China. There are more people there and the Chinese president has more control (is that the same as authority?) over them than the US president has over us. The Pope has to enter into the answer somewhere. He is the heirarchical leader of the biggest Christian sect in the world. President Obama, while not having the most people or the most control, probably has the most influence. Bill Gates, not as an individual but as an archetype for the mega rich cannot be ignored. Money has influence and authority. Lots of it.
- The poorest and least educated person can be the most serene and contented if he or she is right with God and themselves. That to me is the best authority to have, authority to KNOW God and the authority to be happy and feel an inner peace within themselves. I know rich folks, folks in command, highly educated people and people who are quite proud of themselves who really have no authority--over themselves or others because we know--we can see it and feel it.
- 10 years ago If we’re talking about men then I would have said the U.S. President, but now I’d say the President of the People Republic of China.

- Republic of China controls the largest population in the world, the fastest growing economy, feeding the consumerism of the U.S. and holds more US debt than any other nation (other than the US Federal Reserve)
- Presidents, police, military, etc. Real *authority, mothers/fathers who have build good relationships. Leaders who serve others and earn respect.*
- *Moms*

9. What are the indicators that he/she has more authority than anyone else?

- *He who has been given responsibility to lead others, has authority. So he who leads the most people has the most authority – not the most power necessarily, but the most “positional authority.” However, having said that, I’m not really sure I agree with it. [Does an army general have more authority than a sergeant? Yes. Why??? Does a father of six children have more authority than a father of three? No, I don’t think so. So I’m not sure how to answer this question.]*
- *The most effective means of gaining authority in the Court room is to treat all people with respect and dignity. I try to treat all people like I would like to be treated if I were in Court. All of my mentors who are Judges always treated people in Court that way. I respect the position of Judge and hope I instill that in others.*
- **AUTHORITY THAT SERVES OTHERS TO HELP MEET THEIR NEEDS AND HELP THEM TO BE SUCCESSFUL; AUTHORITY THAT HUMBLY DOES NOT FOCUS UPON POSITION, STATUS, WEALTH, OR BEAUTY BUT RATHER LIFTS OTHERS UP.**
- *Standard response: look behind you—is anybody there? If not, you’re not a leader. People who are “authoritative” earn respect through character and behavior—shown in humility.*
- *I once heard a person say that the employee who has the most keys has the most authority in the organization. That may be true.*
- *Kids, (of all ages) listen.*

10. What, in your opinion, is the most respected type of authority held?

- money available to spend
- people at command
- level of education
- personal successes/goals attained
- Other _____

- *Other: People who prove themselves worthy of respect by their behavior, their humility, their character, and other aspects of their life*
- *It seems in today’s society “money” holds power and control*
- *unfortunately A. Money*
- **personal successes/goals attained**
- *Humility. There is in my opinion, nothing wrong with personal wealth. I would dare say this is a virtue as it conveys (hopefully) hard work. What we do with our wealth is far more important.*
- *character authority...having the character and attitudes of Christ*
- *Money makes it happen. It moves people and priorities. It catapults people to more authority. No matter how good a statesman a person might be, without money, they will never be a politician. People - This is an ego thing. Look at how many people work for me. Look at how many people I have authority over. I am important. Level of education - This is normally only important to those with education. Personal successes/goals attained. Nobody cares about this unless it has led to either a or b above. Other: Passion. I think this is the most respected type of authority. It is bolstered/supported/augmented with a-d above. Steve Jobs was rich and a CEO but he was revered for his passion (that led to success). A subcategory of passion would be integrity. A person who consistently*

displays integrity does so because it is a constant decision to do so. In that sense, they must be passionate about having integrity. I think that this is the most respectable form of authority. The authority/influence that comes from being a person that does the right thing.

- *BECOMING A PERSON OF CONVICTION, A PERSON OF VALUES, INTEGRITY, HONESTY, IN EVERYTHING THAT YOU DO WITH PURE MOTIVES AND A DESIRE TO HELP OTHERS SUCCEED.*
- *It depends on the group of people you're asking. In the U.S., the media controls information and most are inclined to promote progressive social policies and therefore respect politicians with the right pedigree and billionaires with the correct world view. So sometimes if you have money or education or command people you are respected and promoted by the media. On the other hand if your beliefs are traditional, judeo-christian, pro personal freedom you are denigrated.*
- *personal integrity/character. Service to others.*
- *I find authority to be best submitted to when people believe you care for them and are listening to them.*
- *Involvement in life (relationship). The students that know me outside of class WILL do what I ask.*

11. As **a leader in your field**, what is the most effective means of gaining more authority in your field of responsibility?

- choosing a position to have and working hard to attain it.
 - setting a course in education and sticking with it to completion.
 - winning a competition through practice, campaigning and/or talent.
 - choosing specific people of authority to be around and working for an appointment.
 - being at the right place at the right time. (luck or providence)
 - a combination of _____ from the above options
 - A,B,D and E
 - Other _____
- *being a servant and having moral authority*
 - *setting a course in education and sticking with it to completion. (an educator)*
 - *A & D*
 - *Education and experience usually get more authority for doctors*
 - *Working hard and being a servant leader*
 - *As an employee, the means to gaining authority is to have business success and developing a relationship with those in authority over me. Probably the most important is the latter but both are necessary. As a lay church leader and for the type of greater authority I would desire and believe to be biblically appropriate, to have more influence, others must see more of Christ in me. They must see that I love as Christ loves and that I pray to and obey Christ.*
 - *ANY TYPE OF DISHONESTY, MORAL OR LEGAL FAILURE, COUPLED WITH PERSONAL ATTITUDES OF SUPERIORITY*
 - *Striving for integrity and seeking others that have integrity and empowering them to work toward a mutually beneficial goal.*
 - *I don't look for more authority, so I'm not sure I've given this any thought.*
 - *Setting a course in education and sticking with it to completion. (helpful in the classroom)*

12. As **a leader in your field**, what would be the most effective process of losing authority you have attained?

- *Moral compromise*
- *An inappropriate relationship*

- *By over using the authority I have, and violations of rules of conduct*
- *Commit blatant crimes and lose my medical license*
- *Making poor decisions*
- *The first sign of a leader going to lose their job and hence authority loss occurs when you start managing defensively. When the leader and perhaps the community in general, sense you are managing in order to not make mistakes, you become like a wounded animal and your prey starts sharpening their fangs. When you begin abdicating your authority by not taking charge and making difficult decisions, your predators sense it.*
- *Create a rift between me and those in authority over me.*
- *As a Judge the quickest way to lose authority is to lose your temper.*
- *Moral failure. Arrogance.*
- *Making other people responsible for outcomes in areas they care about.*
- *Fastest would be moral failure. Sloppiness would lead that direction.*

13. In your opinion, what Bible character other than God or Jesus Christ held the position of “more authority” than any other? How did he/she get that authority?

- *Maybe Joseph or Daniel. It was given by God and earned by the individual.*
- *Moses - God gave him the authority to lead the Israelites out of Egypt and to establish the OT Law*
- *Moses/appointed by God*
- *Paul which was divinely appointed*
- *Peter or Paul, because of their submission to God.*
- *Moses. He led his people out of Egypt into the Promised Land.*
- *Moses: Because he was so humble and led so many*
- *David, because he knew how to submit to his own authority (ie, Saul)*
- *Paul, because as an apostle who followed Jesus, he had such incredible influence over so many, and had attitudes that so reflected Christ’s attitudes*
- *Moses held much authority. He was a leader who listened to his God.*
- *DANIEL, BY BEING PRINCIPLED, BY CONDUCTING HIS LIFE IN AN ATTITUDE OF SURRENDER TO GOD AND HIS TEACHINGS.*
- *Paul. Submission to God's authority and will.*
- *Moses/David—they were respected for their character.*
- *Peter was given authority by Jesus and others saw and resented it.*
- *Paul or David. People obviously listened to Paul or he wouldn't have written them so many letters telling them what to do. I think he earned that by 1. Sound reasoning, 2. Spending time with people. David could not assume authority. He had to work his way to the throne. He won the hearts of friends and killed his enemies.*

14. What Bible character, in your opinion, handled authority the best? Why do you site him/her?

- *Daniel—no dirt on Daniel*
- *The obvious answer is Jesus. He existed in the very form of God, but emptied himself to the point of being a servant and dying on a cross. He had all authority and used it for the ultimate purpose of saving humanity. However, assuming you want an answer other than Jesus, I would likely go with John the Baptist. Jesus said no greater man than John had ever lived and he was almost like a modern rock star in his popularity. Yet this highly respected figure, to whom myriads of people were coming for baptisms and to listen to his preaching, gave up his own authority to point to Jesus. My favorite Bible verse is John 3:30, where John says, "He [Jesus] must increase, but I [John] must decrease." That's a proper use of authority!*

- *I love the clarity of Daniel. He shines like a star in the night. He supremely honored God first and foremost. When push came to shove he did not allow anything or anyone to move him off center.*
- *Although Moses comes to mind, he didn't make it to the promised land because of his temper. David did many bad things, so I guess it would fall to Joshua, as I don't recall anything he did that he was not authorized to do.*
- *centurion in Matt. 8. had a lot of power and responsibility, yet was full of faith and humility*
- *I will say Barnabas. He was Paul's mentor and one of the major forces within the newly forming Church but he seemed to be happy to simply encourage and support.*
- *Paul. He knew his weaknesses and failures and found strength in God. He empowered others (even women, unthinkable at the time) to lead and move his work forward*
- *Joseph—maintained character; acted humbly.*
- *Joseph, son of Jacob, was very good with his authority.*
- *Moses. He changed when corrected and delegated. He was more humble than others Num 12:3, but remembered as the great leader and the symbol of the One to come.*

15. What Bible character, in your opinion, handled authority the worst? Why do you site him/her?

- *King Saul—caved in.*
- *Judas. He had the authoritative position of being one of Jesus' disciples and of even being the treasurer for the group. Yet, he abused this position and ultimately betrayed the very one who gave him this authority*
- *Ahab, because he not honor God and he led people to do wicked things*
- *Ahab and Jezebel? Could have been great for God but instead were entrenched in pure evil and selfishness*
- *Pontius Pilot. He knew Jesus was innocent and his wife told him of her dream setting forth that innocence. Instead, he gave into the crowd ; Matthew 27:19-24. This speaks in ringing tones to what we face when confronted with difficult decisions. We as humans make decisions and misuse our authority often on political expediency or societal whims. Instead of doing what is right and taking a difficult stand, we worry what the community or our church may think.*
- *King Saul. He got egotistical.*
- *SAUL...USED HIS POSITION AND POWER FOR PERSONAL AND POLITICAL GAIN;*
- *Solomon. He lacked integrity and placed his desires above all*
- *Demetrius—sought to control the church*
- *Obviously Herod the Great, who feared losing his authority and thus exercised it with terror.*
- *Absalom: He had everything going for him: looks, money, hearts of the people and he was heir to the throne, but he was corrupted by power.*

16. What in your opinion is a good example in American history of appropriate “civil disobedience?”

- *Martin Luther King Jr.*
- *Although relatively unknown today, Theodore Dwight Weld was one of the most important Christian leaders of the 19th century fight against slavery. I like Weld because he acted upon his Christian convictions and he argued vehemently in opposition to human bondage. However, he never broke laws or caused riots or harmed other people or their property. He always made his position clear and acted from deep-seated convictions rather than from the fanciful whims of the day.*
- *The civil war*
- *Dietrich Bonhoeffer is the non-biblical example for me when it comes to the proper place of civil disobedience. The only place for civil disobedience, in my mind, is when a*

government compels a citizen to disobey/sin against what God has revealed and required.

- *James Zwerg in the 1960's who was a Freedom Rider*
- *Civil rights movement—aka—Rosa Parks*
- *The Civil Rights Movement. If we as a nation had waited on southerners (some of my family) to make the requisite changes to afford equal rights to African Americans, it would never had happened.*
- *Civil rights movement of the 60s. Even though it was not as successful, the Pro-life movement of the 80s.*
- *the civil rights marches of the 60's*
- *The non-violent civil rights movement of the 60's. The modern tea-party movement.*
- *This is really tough. I have to balance incidents that look like Acts 4 with Rom 13 and 1 Pet 2. After that, I would say MLK. He did more to change hearts.*

17. What in your opinion is a good example in American history of inappropriate “civil disobedience?”

- *OK. City Bombers*
- *When people bomb facilities such as abortion clinics other institutions because they disagree with principles or moral issues.*
- *Eric Rudolph is often referred to as the Olympic Park Bomber for setting off a bomb during the 1996 Olympic games in Atlanta. He claimed the action as an act of civil disobedience in opposition to homosexuality and legalized abortion. As additional acts of civil disobedience, Rudolph bombed a number of abortion clinics and gay bars, killing some people and injuring many others. While I may be sympathetic to Rudolph's objections to legalized abortion and homosexuality, his acts of civil disobedience totally crossed the line of propriety.*
- *Those who don't pay their taxes to those who use violence in their protests*
- *The Tea Party. Largely these are in my opinion, people who do not understand how the government works, and do not want to know how it works. I had a professor in college who called this aggressive ignorance.*
- *Most labor disputes of the past 40 years.*
- *9-11.*
- *The recent "occupy" movement, infringing on the property rights of others, destruction of property, etc.*
- *The recent takeovers of the parks around the country*
- *Bombing abortion clinics or killing abortion doctors.*
- *Protests and petitions, almost all of them, regardless of cause. They tend to take the attitude of, "We will tell you what to do." That is a poor understanding of a Biblical view of authority.*

INTERESTING QUOTES/RESOURCES:

- *George Will once remarked, "Think where Christianity would be today if the apostles had said 'we believe in consensus'".*
- *George Washington wrote to his niece Harriott the following lines "To be under but little or no control may be pleasing to a mind which does not reflect, but this pleasure cannot be of a very long duration".*
- *Read the prologue to Theodore White's "Making of the President 1964". An excellent lesson for leaders and their use of authority*
- *Spiderman, who said "with great power comes great responsibility?"*
- *Individual in imprisoned for civil disobedience: "It was one of the "Holiest" moments and events of my life. As I prepared spiritually I became more resolved, more willing to accept whatever*

consequences there were, more compassionate and more loving. Anger dissipated as God blessed me by allowing me to see more clearly through His eyes.”

- *In general, conservatives recognize authority or a standard and try to conform to that ideal. Liberals try to change the ideal to fit their desires. This is true politically, conservatives want to follow the constitution, liberals want to re-interpret the document. It is also true in the Church. Conservatives recognize where they miss the mark of the bible and try to change their life to meet the standards of the bible. Liberals change the bible to reflect their life.*
- *I think it would be wrong of me to simply say all instances of civil disobedience that I agree with are OK and all that I disagree with are wrong. Believe it or not, as I have matured and aged, I have changed my mind on some issues and would like to think that I will continue to change to the right when I am wrong.*
- *The most effective means of gaining authority is to treat all people with respect and dignity.*
- *When I had someone report to me and I asked them to do something, I tried to always let them do it the way they thought it needed to be done. Even if it was not exactly how I would do it so long as it was reasonable, I let them do it that way.*
- *A WAL-MART STORE EMPLOYED AN OLDER GENTLEMAN AS A GREETER, AND HE WAS ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE PERSONS EVER. HE MET CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE, THANKED THE ONES WHO WERE LEAVING, AND WAS DEFINITELY IN CHARGE WHEN CONFRONTING SHOP LIFTERS. HE HAD JUST ONE PROBLEM: HE WAS ALWAYS LATE TO WORK, AND THIS DID NOT SET WELL WITH THE PEOPLE WHOSE PLACE HE WAS TO TAKE. FINALLY, THE MANAGER CALLED HIM IN TO COMMEND HIM FOR THE QUALITY OF HIS WORK, AND ALSO TO CHALLENGE HIM FOR BEING LATE TIME AFTER TIME. THE QUESTION WAS ASKED, "IN YOUR PREVIOUS PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT, WHAT WAS SAID TO YOU IF YOU ARRIVED LATE?" THE MAN THOUGHT FOR A MOMENT, AND GAVE THIS REPLY: "I WOULD BE GREETED WITH THESE WORDS: 'GOOD MORNING, GENERAL! WOULD YOU LIKE COFFEE OR TEA THIS MORNING?'"*