



**A
LETTER
FROM YOUR
PASTOR:
SEPTEMBER 2023**

by Lee Shipp

**NEW COVENANT KINGS – KINGDOM AUTHORITY –
PART 3**

Many believers are failing to exercise their authority in Christ due to a lack of faith in the grace of God. The Holy Spirit is the means of grace. It is through the abundance of grace that believers reign. *“For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ”* (Romans 5:17).

Some believers mistakenly suppose that it is their perfect obedience that grants them favor with God. They mistakenly suppose it is their obedience that affords them rights in God’s kingdom. However, the New Covenant assures us that God’s favor is extended to us by the perfect obedience of His Son Jesus. We cannot earn God’s favor, nor can we earn the right to reign. We reign as kings by the new birth and gift of the Holy Ghost.

I feel the need to explain that faith without works is dead. A living faith will obey. A living faith will receive God’s grace and will labor in that grace to access all that God has. Obedience to Jesus’ commands is evidence of love for Jesus; however, it is not the way we gain the favor of Jesus. It is only by Jesus’ favor (grace) can anyone hope to obey any of God’s commands.

Believers seeking to earn God’s favor do not live by grace. Furthermore, the restless effort of trying to earn God’s favor is futile because no one will ever give God perfect obedience while living in the corrupt flesh. Those believers who strive to earn God’s favor are aware of their failure to live a perfect life in the flesh. They lack the faith to believe that God has joined them to a New Covenant. A New Covenant which adopts them as God’s sons and daughters through the perfect obedience of Jesus, not the perfection of their flesh.

Because they place faith in their ability to get the flesh to behave, they fail to exercise their faith in the Holy Spirit to reign in them. They are discouraged and disappointed with themselves. Determined to perfect holiness by some practice of the flesh, they continue to fall short of their expectations, much less God’s, and

thereby continue to sink into a life of despair and restless determination to be like Jesus. Stuck between the law of the conscience and the freedom of Jesus’ gospel of grace, they lack the power and joy to rise above.

However, it is not our perfection that qualifies us to reign. Jesus has qualified us. Jesus has brought us into His victory. Jesus has made us kings and priests unto God. He has done this by His effectual atonement and by the gift of the Holy Ghost, given to believers. Through Christ, we have the victory ground. The Kingdom of God is in the Spirit, not in man’s flesh.

It is true Paul admitted that God counted him faithful and therefore put him into the ministry. Lest we falsely conclude that Paul qualified himself for ministry and authority, let us carefully understand Paul’s confession. He clearly testified that he was what he was by the grace of God. He was not a self-made Christian; he was grace-made. He dove into grace. He labored in grace: declaring that even all his labor was not himself, but the grace of God that was with him.

Paul rejoiced that Jesus qualified him and refused to worship God in his flesh. All his hope, authority, and worthiness in serving God was due to Jesus: *“For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.”* (1 Corinthians 1:26-31).

Our gifting and authority are not earned. The gifts of the Spirit are gifts of grace; they are not earned but received by grace through faith. Jesus qualified us. It is by faith in Jesus that we reign in life. Faith in His life, in His blood, and His New Covenant. Unless we walk in this grace by faith, we will never reign as kings in this life.

Jesus encouraged all to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Paul said this righteousness is in the Holy Ghost and not in laws and ordinances (Romans 14). Furthermore, it is the power of the Gospel that reveals this righteousness by faith (Romans 1:16-17). This is the grace of God.

Paul’s testimony in Philippians 3 was that he had no confidence in the flesh. He said believers do not worship God in the flesh but in the Spirit. Our qualification of intimacy with God is not in the circumcision of the flesh (the law of conscience). We do not worship God because we feel good about ourselves. We do not withhold our worship of God if we have fallen in sin. We worship God through Jesus and His blood. We have access to God because of Jesus’ work on the cross – the New Covenant, not on the merits

of our works. Paul disdained the pursuit of a righteousness his works could produce; instead, he sought the righteousness of God which is by faith.

IT IS YOUR GOOD SELF THAT IS KEEPING YOU DOWN

Those living by law think that it is their bad self that is keeping them from God. They think there is good in them. They are determined to perform some honorable task that will impress God. However, God is impressed with Jesus – period. God is impressed with you when there is a work of Jesus taking place in your life; we call this grace.

People pursuing a life in the flesh will gladly deny their bad self, their bad deeds, and their sinful lusts. However, what is most disgusting to God is the good self; the works of righteousness are filthy rags to God. *“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away”* (Isaiah 64:6).

Many living in legalistic practices are determined to be so good that they are blinded to the fact that they are enemies of God by nature. In the same way, the Jewish scribes and Pharisees despised the one good man who ever walked among them. So, we in our good flesh despise and are at war with the good God. There they stood, the Pharisees and Lawyers, full of their self-made righteousness, plotting a way to crucify the Good God. True goodness stood before them. True perfection was manifest before their eyes and they called Him a devil. The religious, exercising abusive authority in the church today, continue to do this to Christ. Abusing their authority, they devastate the work of grace among God's people. Abusing their authority, they destroy the life of Christ at work in those who are living by faith.

AUTHORITY IS IN THE SPIRIT NOT IN THE FLESH

So where does true authority come from? Authority comes from the Holy Spirit, not the holy flesh. Authority increases in a believer's life as their faith in God increases. When believers become more desperate for God and His grace, the demonstration of God's Spirit becomes more manifest in their lives. Relying on God and not works produces a splendid display of God's power through the believer's life.

How does the Holy Spirit minister His authority through us by grace? Well, the Holy Spirit must get us to abandon our flesh. A work of grace is the Holy Spirit coming into your life and “dis-gracing” your “SELF.” The highest holiness for the creature is to walk in self-renunciation and continual dependence upon the indwelling Holy Ghost. Nothing but a work of grace can take the man who once wanted to be like God, to now

renounce himself as a complete “disgrace” and believe that only God is good, and God is great, and greatly to be praised. The intent of Jesus on bearing our cross was that we would deny ourselves; that we would give up ourselves and stop striving in ourselves to be something.

Repentance is the miracle of grace. Nobody living under the law will be forgiven of their sins by repenting. Repentance is for grace. By the law, no man will be justified or forgiven. It is because of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed for our sins. *“But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, the just shall live by faith”* (Galatians 3:11).

For a man to own his sin, not pass the blame on to others, and agree with God about it is supernatural. This is a work of grace by which a believer can reign in this life. To get a man to agree with God about his wretched SELF is supernatural!

Read what you will - confess, repent, fight, discipline, strive, and be accountable to people but unless the Holy Spirit is the life, power, and sanctifier you will fail. You will never pray right, give right, forgive right, preach right, or overcome sin. Learn all the Bible you will, study and memorize and you will not be free. Freedom comes by grace through faith (Galatians 5). And only the free man can reign, all others are bound. Kingdom authority comes by grace through faith. For where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty - freedom!