

Hey everybody,

We are on a roll with this series! God is touching our families. I pray that your family will also be strong so you can stand and build up the "wall."

MYESE!

Pastor Heard

Part 8: Elevate Your Life!

Text:

Ephesians 2:6-7 (NIV) - *"And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,* in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus."

Luke 9:1-2 (NIV) - "When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick."

"The Twelve Dimensions of Spiritual Authority"

A. This is the year to "Elevate your life!"

1. Supernatural elevation is coming to your life this year!
2. As pointed out, to experience elevation, you must exercise spiritual authority over your own future rather than allowing the enemy to accomplish his plans for you.

B. In this series, we have discussed the first two dimensions of spiritual authority, which are the foundation for all twelve: "Authority Over Self" and "Authority Within a Family Structure."

1. Last week, we gave you ten reasons why the family is so important to God. Today, let's continue with this very important subject, "Authority Within a Family Structure."
2. **Nehemiah 4:13-18 (NKJV)** - "Therefore I positioned men behind the lower parts of the wall, at the openings; and I set the people according to their families, with their swords, their spears, and their bows. And I looked, and arose and said to the nobles, to the leaders, and to the rest of the people, "Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses." And it happened, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and that God had brought their plot to nothing, that all of us returned to the wall, everyone to his work. So it was, from that time on, that half of my servants worked at construction, while the other half held the spears, the shields, the bows, and wore armor; and the leaders were behind all the house of Judah. Those who built on the wall, and those who carried burdens, loaded themselves so that with one hand they worked at construction, and with the other held a weapon. Every one of the builders had his sword girded at his side as he built. And the one who sounded the trumpet was beside me.
3. Whether we recognize or even use it, God has given believers incredible authority within the family and the home. We can determine what comes in or stays out of our homes!
4. As did the workers who rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem (which is a type of the church), we must work with one hand and hold a sword in the other.
 - a. Scripture teaches that the sword represents the Word of God.

b. **Ephesians 6:17 (NIV)** - "Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

5. Notice that each family was assigned to build a certain section of the wall. When all these sections were joined together, it became the wall of Jerusalem (the church).

a. If there's no wall to protect the family...there's no wall to protect Jerusalem (the church). This reveals just how important the family is to the church—and to God.

6. However, understanding the authority within the family structure does not guarantee a life without struggle or difficulty. Expect to have disagreements. Some mothers-in-law will always believe their daughters could have done much better in choosing a mate.

7. **Joke:** Did you hear about the two mothers who appeared before King Solomon? "This young man agreed to marry my daughter," said one mother. "No! He agreed to marry MY daughter," said the other mother. And so the arguing continued until the king demanded silence.

"Bring my largest sword," said Solomon, "and I shall slice the young man in half. Each of you shall receive a part."

"Sounds good to me," said the first woman.

But the other insisted, "Oh no, Sire, do not spill innocent blood. Let the other woman's daughter marry him."

The wise king did not hesitate a moment. "The man shall marry the first woman's daughter," he proclaimed.

"But she was willing to have him cut in two!" exclaimed the members of the court.

"Indeed," said wise King Solomon. "That shows she is the TRUE mother-in-law."

C. The importance of spiritual authority in the home is further emphasized by the seven levels of judgment established in scripture.

1. Although the Bible does not specifically name these judgments, a close study clearly reveals seven levels.
2. In this amazing collection of 66 books, the Bible contains 1,189 chapters, 31,173 verses, and 807,361 words. In its beginning stages, the Bible is more like a gigantic jigsaw puzzle of 807,361 pieces, all lying in a huge heap on the floor.
 - a. It may be years before God's Word really begins to come together for you. Until then, you'll be diligently searching for the corner and side pieces of the puzzle hidden somewhere among a large collection of stories and events.
 - b. Ever so slowly, the beauty of the puzzle begins to emerge, until one day you discover that it's not about the stories—or the many rules that seem to have cramped your lifestyle!
 - c. Gradually, the stories of the Bible become filled with life-changing principles, all connected to specific laws. Finally, it dawns on you that the Kingdom keys contained in God's laws are meant to transform your life and fulfill your destiny!
 - d. The amazing part is that these keys were hidden among the pages of the Bible all along, but you had never seen them. That's when scripture becomes a living, powerful Word!

D. Let's examine God's seven levels of judgment.

1. In every family, problems and conflicts are sure to arise. God's plan is for each issue to be addressed and resolved at the lowest possible level of judgment. Why is this? In the lower levels, His penalties for failing to comply are much less severe than the higher ones. Here are the seven levels:

2. **Judgment of Self**

- a. **1 Corinthians 11:31 (NKJV)** - "For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged."
- b. Issues that are resolved within ourselves have minimal penalties compared to those incurred when others judge us.
- c. For example, if a person struggling with the desire to self-medicate deals with this problem themselves, there is much less chance of a DUI, a court appearance, or an excessive fine for a civil penalty.
- d. However, if a person refuses to address his or her own issues, the day will come when the offense will be elevated to a higher level.

3. **Judgment within the Family**

- a. To this day, many cultures, especially in the Mid-East, resort to family meetings to resolve a crisis incurred by one of their own.
- b. Other than self-judgment, the family is the most forgiving and nurturing of all the seven levels of judgment.
- c. If you can't fix your own problem, this is the next best resource. But should the family be unsuccessful in resolving their loved one's predicament, the next step is to appeal to friends or a peer group.

4. **Judgment by Peers or Social Group**

- a. **Matthew 18: 15-16 (NIV)** - "If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses."
- b. While more forgiving than the next level, you will still face a greater degree of censure and cost for wrongdoing at this level than from the family—or had you resolved it yourself.
- c. If friends, family and self fail to change a situation, the next ones to involve are leaders of the church.

5. Judgment by the Church

- a. **Matthew 18:17 (NIV)** - "If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector."
- b. Hopefully, problems discussed at both the family and peer levels will never be publicly discussed.
- c. If a problem is addressed and resolved by church leadership, it should never be publicly announced. However, if it cannot be resolved, eventually it will spread to the community.
- d. A person who refuses to seek help from church leaders should understand that sooner or later it will come to the attention of civil authorities.
- e. For example, a person who is addicted to drugs may be forgiven by family and friends for stealing. But if it continues, after a while someone will have them arrested.

6. Civil Judgment

- a. **Matthew 5:25-26 (NIV)** - "Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny."
- b. While judgment at lower levels is less severe, it can become much more costly and embarrassing at each successive level.
- c. Consider the problems in David's household. Though he was a man after God's own heart, he was a terrible father. His son Amnon decided to rape his own sister, Tamar. And David did nothing about it. Another son, Absalom, became so angry, he decided to take matters into his own hands and killed his brother Amnon. Still,

David failed to administer justice. Some believe he may have been compensating for his own difficult childhood as an illegitimate child.

- d. Because King David failed to take action as a father, Absalom's judgment advanced to civil laws. When David begged for his son's life to be spared, Joab, the captain of the host, refused to comply and killed Absalom. By the time Joab faced the rebellious, renegade son of Israel's leader, the problem had already escalated from family, to church, and finally to civil judgment.
- e. David's next mistake was mourning for Absalom. As a father, it would have been acceptable to weep for his son; but as king, he represented civil judgment and was not allowed to show emotion.
- f. Neither Absalom's friends (level three) nor the priests who supported him (level four) attempted to correct this wicked son's behavior. Therefore, the problem advanced to level five—civil authority. Because David was not allowed to mourn, the people were confused when their civil leader appeared to care more for his criminal son than his own loyal followers!
- g. Had David dealt with his problem sons earlier as family members, he could have mourned. But as the king and head of civil government, he was supposed to rejoice because judgment had prevailed. Absalom's death should have been viewed as a triumph of justice rather than a loss. Because David failed to understand the levels of judgment, he almost lost his position as king of Israel.
- h. Joab sternly corrected David and forced him to greet and thank the people who had fought to defend his kingdom. At times, people manage to override civil judgment without correctly addressing an issue, but that doesn't mean they are "off the hook."
- i. The sixth level of judgment is one we would never want to face!

7. Judgment of Angels

- a. Angels, who are called "watchers," often administer judgment when a situation has become so serious, no other form of judgment can correct the problem.
- b. **Daniel 4:17 (NKJV)** - "This decision is by the decree of the watchers, And the sentence by the word of the holy ones, In order that the living may know That the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, Gives it to whomever He will, And sets over it the lowest of men."
- c. To correct the evil in Sodom and Gomorrah, God sent two angels to assess and judge their actions (Genesis 19).
- d. An angel was dispatched to stand in the path of Balaam, a disobedient prophet.
- e. **Numbers 22:32-33 (NIV)** - "The angel of the Lord asked him, "Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? I have come here to oppose you because your path is a reckless one before me. The donkey saw me and turned away from me these three times. If it had not turned away, I would certainly have killed you by now, but I would have spared it."
- f. **Ecclesiastes 7:17 (NIV)** - "Do not be overwicked, and do not be a fool—why die before your time?"

8. Great White Throne of Judgment

- a. **Revelation 20:11-12 (NIV)** - "Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books."

- b. Whatever the problem, at this level it can no longer be corrected. This judgment is final!
- c. **Revelation 22:11 (NKJV)** - "He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still."

E. God has positioned the family to hold its members accountable and to love them by administering correction and encouraging spiritual growth.

- 1. By failing to exercise authority within a family, a parent or elder is actually choosing to submit family members to a more severe judgment.
- 2. Parental authority in the home is a greater authority than that of friends—or even the church. This is why people who are doing wrong often abandon their families. They do NOT want to be accountable!
 - a. How often do we see addicted sons or daughters leave home when the family tries to persuade them to change? They are actually running from those who can ask the most important questions.
 - b. A family loves their own. Even if they disagree or fight among themselves, don't get involved—or they will turn against **you!**
 - c. You can never remove yourself from the family. Not even in death! Friends come and go, but family members are there to stay!

F. Within the home, you have authority like no one else!

- 1. Exercise that authority by telling the enemy, "I cancel every assignment you have plotted against me and my family. No weapon formed against **any** of us will prosper!"
- 2. Further, declare that every word God has ever spoken over you will come to pass and that His plans for your life will be fulfilled!