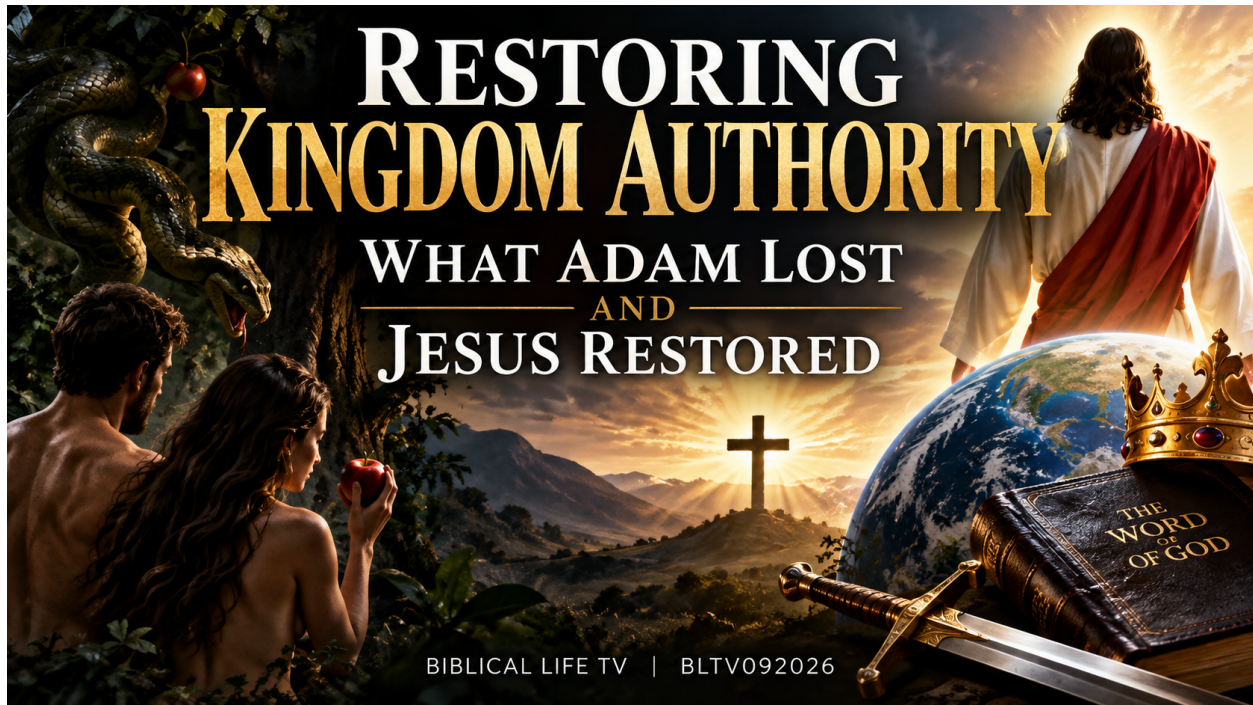




I. Lucifer's Tactic to Neutralize Kingdom Authority

Genesis 3:1 (ESV)

1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?”

In previous studies, we discovered that God commissioned Adam and Eve by speaking words of authority and dominion over the Earth. We discovered the Kingdom secrets of God's instruction to replenish the Earth: the first couple was consecrated as a priesthood and equipped as an army. Genesis Chapter Two doubles down on the authority given to Adam and Eve by commissioning them to “dress and keep” the garden.

With this level of authority given to humanity at the beginning, how does a cunning enemy gain a foothold? A direct attack would have

been obvious and would have been met with opposition. The dragon was craftier in the art of war. How can you get an adversary to lay down their arms willingly? You get them to question what gave them the authority in the first place!

Adam and Eve were moving in delegated authority. They had authority because the Creator gave it to them. This is the way of the spirit realm. In my studies of angels, authority lines are very important. While the enemy has convinced us that everything is in shades of grey, for angels, everything is black and white. Therefore, all angels move in delegated authority, unless you are a deceiver who attempts to move in stolen authority.

a. A Subtle Attack on God's Word

“Has God really said?” This is one of the enemy's primary stratagems to derail our authority, and even our faith. All legitimate authority is delegated authority. If you are tempted to question the true nature of God's Word or His motivations (i.e., less than honorable intent), then your ability to know right from wrong and to move in Kingdom authority has been successfully neutralized.

(1). Attacks on the Council of Nicaea

The Liberal left and the LGBTQ community use skepticism regarding the Nicaean Council to alter the definitions of sin and claim that Christianity was created as an artificial religion. Here are their arguments:

- The Bible is considered the most important book ever written, but skeptics claim that the Council of Nicaea in the 4th century decided Christianity's central beliefs and the books of the Bible, including the divinity of Jesus, by a political council.

- The Council of Nicaea is often accused of being the birthplace of the collection of books that make up the Bible, where the books of scripture were supposedly decided by a vote, and the divinity of Jesus was invented.
- The claim that the Bible has been edited, manipulated, and rewritten, with the Council of Nicaea curating the book and deciding what made the cut and what didn't, is a popular notion among skeptics.
- Emperor Constantine is said to have declared Jesus the Son of God in 325 AD, which is often cited as the time when Jesus' divinity was established.

The Council of Nicaea took place nearly 1,700 years ago, and the event remains a source of conspiracy, controversy, and confusion.

Reality

The Canon of Scripture (i.e., the New Testament) had already been established by the Early Church. The Old Testament was well established by the end of the first century AD (only books that were to be part of the writings were still debated in Jesus's time). The books that make up the New Testament had already been read as part of worship services in the community of faith for centuries. The Nicaean Council simply confirmed what the community of faith had already established.

- Because of the erroneous teachings Arius' that Jesus was a created being and only semi-divine, the council needed to address his heresy. The council treated Scripture as already binding and authoritative before their gathering, and the result was the

Nicene Creed. The Nicene Creed formally condemned Arius' teachings as false and reiterated the faithful beliefs drawn from Scripture; the Bible was established and viewed as authoritative long before the council met, with early church fathers like Ignatius already speaking about the divinity of Jesus.

- The divinity of Jesus was not decided at the Council of Nicaea, but rather, it was already an established belief among early Christians, with leaders like Ignatius writing about Jesus as God in the 1st and early 2nd centuries, and the council's purpose was to affirm and clarify this belief in response to Arius' teachings.
- The Council of Nicaea was a significant event in Christian history, resulting in the creation of a benchmark for what it means to be a Christian, and the Nicene Creed remains an essential statement of faith for many Christians today, affirming the core beliefs of the Christian faith, including the nature of Jesus and the Trinity.

(2). Truth Lost in Translation

We have more translations of the Bible than you can shake a stick at. Never use a paraphrased version as your primary study bible. Stick with translations closest to the original languages: KJV, NKJV, NASB, ESV, etc. I have long warned about the Passion Bible, and its problems have been revealed in the past year. It seems that the LGBTQ has followed the lead of the Jehovah's Witnesses with their New World Translation by creating a carefully edited version of the Bible called the "Queen James Bible," which edits out God's instructions regarding sexuality and sexual sins.

b. Attack on God's Motives

(1). God is Always Perfect in All His Ways

Deuteronomy 32:4–5 (ESV)

4 “The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he. **5** They have dealt corruptly with him; they are no longer his children because they are blemished; they are a crooked and twisted generation.

The problems are never with God, but with sinful humanity. A twisted generation will question God, while it is their hearts and motives that are in question!

(2). God is Always Righteous in His Ways

Psalms 145:17 (ESV)

17 The LORD is righteous in all his ways and kind in all his works.

By saying God is righteous, we describe one of His attributes. By saying God is righteous, we state that God is just, fair, and always acts in accordance with His moral standards.

II. Biblical Authority Was Restored in Christ

When we fully analyze the Word of God, we can list what Adam lost in the Garden and what Christ restored.

- Right Relationship with God
- Righteousness
- Life Instead of Death

- Access to the Presence of God
- Access to the Tree of Life
- Humanity's Vocation as God's Image-Bearers
- **Kingdom Authority and Stewardship**
- **Authority Over the Serpent**
- **Authority Over the Kingdom of Darkness**
- **The Priestly Vocation of Humanity**
- The Indwelling Presence of God
- Holiness and Obedience
- Sonship
- Creation Itself

THE ADAM–CHRIST RESTORATION PATTERN

The entire biblical pattern can therefore be summarized this way:

- Adam lost fellowship → Christ brings reconciliation.
- Adam brought condemnation → Christ brings justification.
- Adam brought death → Christ brings resurrection life.
- Adam lost Eden → Christ opens access to God's presence.
- Adam lost the Tree of Life → Christ restores access to the Tree of Life.
- Adam corrupted God's image → Christ restores humanity to God's image.
- Adam failed in obedience → Christ becomes the obedient Son.
- Adam surrendered ground to the serpent → Christ crushes the serpent.
- Adam failed to guard sacred space → Christ defeats the powers of darkness.
- Adam's dominion became corrupted → Christ receives all authority.

- Humanity lost its royal-priestly vocation → Christ creates a kingdom of priests.
- The ground became cursed → Christ ultimately removes the curse.
- Creation entered corruption → Christ brings New Creation.
- Humanity was expelled from God's presence → God ultimately dwells permanently with redeemed humanity.

III. Authority Through Christ

a. Authority in the Great Commission

Matthew 28:18–20 (ESV)

18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

The Greek word translated “authority” is *exousia*. According to **A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (BDAG)**, this word means “freedom of choice, right, capability, mighty, power, authority, absolute power, warrant, ruling power, official power, authorities, government; domain; a means of exercising power.” ¹

¹ William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 352–353.

There are several things of note in the application of this definition to the contextual setting:

1. The power of choice is restored to humanity through Christ. We are no longer slaves to sin, but now free in Christ to choose righteousness!
2. In the Great Commission, Jesus is delegating His re-established authority to His disciples to carry out their assignments. While moving in Kingdom Authority is a reality, the believer must choose to move in it! That choice is called obedience.

Adam chose not to move in his authority, which resulted in sin being established in the core nature of all humanity. Jesus reversed what Adam did through His obedience. Obedience is not a feeling, but a decision.

b. Authority Through the Written Word of God

Matthew 4:1–11 (ESV)

1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. **2** And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. **3** And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” **4** But he answered, “**It is written**, “ ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’ ” **5** Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple **6** and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, “ ‘He will command his angels concerning you,’ and “ ‘On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ” **7**

Jesus said to him, “**Again it is written**, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’ ” **8** Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. **9** And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” **10** Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! **For it is written**, “ ‘You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.’ ” **11** Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

God’s Word gives humanity delegated authority. In Christ's wilderness experience, He shows us the basics of exercising spiritual authority: applying God’s Word properly.

This is why the Word of God is under such attack today. Remove the Word or delegitimize the Word, and authority is lost.

We do not move in authority because we feel powerful in the moment; in fact, we may be at our weakest, like Jesus was before the temptations ever started!

Isaiah 40:29–31 (ESV)

29 He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. **30** Even youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall fall exhausted; **31** but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 41:10 (ESV)

10 fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Physical strength is not needed in spiritual warfare. Obedience to God's Word and enforcing the Kingdom because of delegated authority bring spiritual authority and power.

c. Obedience and Maturing Bring Greater Levels of Authority

Luke 10:17–20 (ESV)

17 The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!" **18** And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. **19** Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. **20** Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

Jesus had commissioned the 72 disciples to preach the Gospel, heal the sick, and cast out demons. They obeyed His instruction and returned amazed at the results. Their faithfulness provided a platform to move in greater levels of authority. The two words I want to examine are authority and power.

- **Authority:** Is *exousia* in the original Greek. We have already discussed its definition from BDAG.

- **Power:** *Dynamis* is the original Greek word. *Dynamis* means “power, might, strength, force, capability, deed of power, miracles, and wonders.” ² **Logos Bible Sense** includes “often understood as manifesting influence over reality in a supernatural way.” ³

The enemy will try to creep us out with supernatural manifestations over reality, hoping we haven't learned we have the authority to shut it down! This is why the 70 were given greater authority: they had learned both the power of obedience and the truth of God's faithfulness.

d. Two Types of Binding and Loosing

The phrase “bind and loose” appears twice in Jesus’ teachings, both times in Matthew. Context is essential for understanding the kind of binding and loosing Jesus established.

(1). Binding and Loosing in the Community of Faith

Matthew 18:15–20 (ESV)

15 “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. **16** But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. **17** If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. **18** Truly,

² Ibid. 262.

³ Logos Bible Software. FaithLife, Spokane, WA.

I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. **19** Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. **20** For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”

In the Second Temple Period, the community of faith would decide what would not be permitted (to bind) and what would be permitted (to loose) in their communities. In this example, discipline is measured against someone who is sinning and refuses to repent, even after confrontation with the individual, elders, and finally the whole community of faith. Church discipline is a religious function of the ecclesia, not of secular government. This is proper biblical leadership functioning the way that God designed it (and it is Torah-compliant).

(2). Binding and Loosing in Spiritual Warfare

Matthew 16:13–20 (ESV)

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” **14** And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” **15** He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” **16** Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” **17** And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. **18** And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. **19** I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall

be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” **20** Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

In context, Jesus has taken His disciples to ground zero of the Genesis 6 conflict: Mount Hermon. This location is where the rebellious angels fell and began their genetic manipulation of humanity that resulted in the Nephilim. Thus, Mount Hermon is also the wellspring from which every demon flowed, since demons are the disembodied spirits of the Nephilim. A grotto to Pan was at this location, as well as a cave that was believed to be the entrance to Hades. In ancient times, the Fortress of Nimrod also stood atop this mountain. The area itself reeked of occult paganism. The context is that the binding and loosing taught currently is one of spiritual warfare. To state that this teaching does not involve spiritual warfare is to lift it completely out of its biblical context. The Gates of Hell (the full council of the kingdom of darkness) would come against the truth of the Gospel and the reality that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

This teaching expands on what Jesus did in Luke 10:19. The expanded authority is now being transferred to the Church as a whole. Binding and loosing express authority, not power. Here is an example:

The power lines running into this building originate at a dynamic source of power, whether from gas or nuclear generation. The power can be so acute with high-power transmission lines that it could easily vaporize an individual. Yet, a ten-dollar breaker switch can immediately shut down that power. Authority is the switch, and Jesus placed our hands on it and told us to trip it whenever we needed to, for the sake of the Gospel.

Now, do electric switches only work based upon how you are feeling at that moment, or is what governs the mechanics of the switch the only thing that determines how it works?

The nature of authority works because of the one who delegated the authority, not based on the operator's emotional state.