Why do we need to understand authority, especially in the church?

**Rom 13:1-2**

As we saw before, our worship, faith and love for God are connected to His authority

The need to understand what God means by authority – break it down into it’s elements

What does God mean by “authority”? – very different than the concept in the world

For our purposes: The right or ability to control or direct the actions of others, given by one who has the right and the power to enforce it, for a purpose, which benefits others. ***Slide 1***

Basic elements: it is because we confuse these that we have trouble understanding authority ***Slide 2***

Source - one who has the authority and grants it

Receiver - one to whom the right is given

Beneficiary - one for whose benefit it is given

Purpose - always has to be a purpose

This is the key to understanding authority

It is simply a tool for carrying out the purpose

It is never given for its sake

The purpose defines the limits of the authority - 2Cor 13:10

Understanding this principle will help us understand God’s use for authority in our lives

Example – **Matt 20:20-28**

Her desire and focus was on the position and honor that she perceived came with those position

This is often the understanding of authority we have – a badge of honor and power

It is selfish in its nature –

MY sons

Reflection on her – contrast how Jesus’ mother must have been

His answer was that she did not understand what she asked

She did not understand the principle behind authority

He refocuses her away from the position and authority to the purpose

Cup = His responsibility

Why He was here

Matt 26:29 – if possible let this cup pass from me – the cross –

His purpose – serve us by taking our sin on Himself that we might be free

**2 Cor 5:21**

They did not fully appreciate His purpose – “we are able:”

They could easily see the position and its honor and authority

Could not see so easily the purpose for which it was given to Him

Where we often are

We desire to be in positions of authority without understanding the purpose

God will not give us His authority until we fully embrace the purpose for which it is given

Otherwise we are dangerous – e.g. a child with a gun

**Matt 28:18-20** He delegates His authority for us to continue His purpose

He understands that authority is not His to give – only the Father

Because the purpose did not come from Him

He understands the limits of His authority

Although He could not give what they asked, He used it for an opportunity to teach about kingdom authority

In God’s kingdom, it is given to serve others or carry out someone else’s purpose

Tells us what we are to desire – serve others then the authority will be given

Application to our lives?

What authorities am I under?

Can I recognize their purpose for being given their authority?

What authority have I been given over others?

For what purpose have I been given that authority?