

RADICAL DISCIPLESHIP (LESSON 31)

THE AUTHORITY PRINCIPLE (CONTINUED). Delegated authority is a God-ordained rule for discipleship. It is essential in building character and instilling spiritual motivation for serving the Lord. It is God's way of establishing accountability. It assures that discipleship is a habit of the heart, not the head. Any delegated authority must understand the source and conditions of his own authority. Watchman Nee summarizes the principal requirements for delegated authority: "Since authority is not ours we should not be subjective in our attitude. And since authority comes from God we must live in communion with Him. If communion is cut off, authority also ceases." Authority is recognizable, but one must know what to look for. The teacher should watch for any tendencies in his disciple to resist or ignore authority. The disciple also should be able to see a spirit of submissiveness in his mentor. Nee gives five ways to judge if a person is obedient to authority: (1) A person who has known authority will naturally try to find authority wherever he goes... (2) A person who has met God's authority is soft and tender... (3) A person who has met authority never likes to be in authority. (4) A person who has contacted authority keeps his mouth closed. He is under restraint... (5) A person who has touched authority is sensitive to each act of lawlessness and rebellion around him. Nee is referring to an attitude of humility. A humble person is one who has allowed his own attitude toward authority to be shaped by obedience to another. People too eager to be in authority have not yet learned to be under authority. Watchman Nee instructs, "we must learn on the one hand to submit and on the other hand how to represent God." That is the challenge facing every disciple, and it is the mandate for radical discipleship.