

## Session 6 – Leadership Authority

What images come to your mind when you hear the word 'authority'?



Click the picture to watch the video (if the link doesn't work go to <https://youtu.be/a08AHMMKlvU> )

Authority means:

*'the power or right to give orders, make decisions, and enforce obedience.'*

### Authority is God-given

- If God calls you to lead, He gives you the authority you need for the role.
- 1 Thessalonians 4:2

*For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.*

### Leaders Need to Submit to Authority

- Before you can exercise leadership authority, you need to submit to those who have authority over you.
- Hebrews 13:17 says this:  
*Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.*
- Leaders need to be examples of how to submit to authority.

### Using Authority

- The authority you have been given by God is to serve and build up the people, the ministry or the organization you are leading. The authority we are given is not to make us look better or enhance our personal power and impact. It's about making Him known.
- Whilst using authority, we need to be aware that although we have authority to make decisions and lead, that doesn't mean we know everything or don't have to listen to those we are leading.

### Abuse of Authority

- Most abuses of authority occur when someone uses their role for their own purposes, and not that of the people they are leading or to reveal the Kingdom of God.
- When authority is abused, it is a symptom of a deeper character weakness in a leader.
- Once authority has been abused and trust has been broken, it's hard to get it back and often people are damaged.

## Follow-Up Questions

1. Why do you think people are suspicious of authority?
2. How do you think Christian leaders should exercise authority?
3. How should we submit to those in authority over us?
4. How do you feel about having authority?
5. How have you seen authority being abused? What were the causes?
6. If you were given authority, what things could you do to stop yourself unintentionally abusing it?