

Spiritual Authority Operating in The Soul Versus Operating in The Spirit

Sam Soleyn
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We have been examining the question of the context for spiritual authority and we've looked at what it *is not*. Now we've been taking a rather detailed look at what it *is*. We've come to the point of talking about how when God made a choice to have heirs he chose human beings. Human beings were not the obvious choice from the standpoint of the unseen creation, the unseen creation being the angelic creation. Some of the angels revolted because they considered the choice of God to be plainly wrong. One of the reasons that they *did* is that (that is the ones that concluded that God's choice was wrong) was that they saw that they were bypassed... that they were overlooked... and that now, whoever was to be known as the children of God, the angels would have to serve them. They'd have to serve the heirs of God just as they had to serve God.

The interesting thing about this is that in the choice that God made of human beings—the choice was made specifically to demonstrate God's awesome love—that was the point of the choice. If you choose that which is inherently acceptable then how is the love of God to be shown? And what context is greater than the context of choosing your own children to show the love of God? See, it is one thing if God is choosing some new creation for some new tasks; that would be one thing. But when God, himself, when his character and his nature were meant to be replicated in another being with whom he would enjoy the same form of fellowship that a parent would with a child—that a father would with his children—that's a whole different level.

Now, God chose in such a way that the love of God would be the ultimate expression through this process. If God had chosen the angels, the angels were all ready, and would have been the likely choice, *and they would have been the likely choice simply because they were suitable*. They were already in the presence of God, they already had interaction with God, they somewhat knew and understood the mind of the Lord, and so on and so forth. So, if you were looking for just servants, the angels would be the perfect choice. God wasn't

looking for servant sons; God was looking for the objects of his love.

Now when God made the angels able to serve Him *they were not the objects of His love*, therefore they were, by creation, an unsuitable choice. God himself had to love these creatures and these creatures had to learn to love God. Otherwise we would have a very dysfunctional family, wouldn't we? We'd have a family in which the father didn't particularly love his children and the children didn't particularly love the father.

So the love of God, God created objects that tested God's capacity to love, and God, being the one who set the whole thing up put Himself to the test in this fashion. He tested Himself with the ultimate of what a father should be. You see, humans have fathers who love them when they're doing okay. The norm for human parents is to be proud of their kids when their kids make them proud, but also what's norm for human parents is to tend to reject their children when their children do things that do not make them proud. That's why the Scriptures say, **"... God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."** (Inserted – **Romans 5:8**) In other words, the choice that God made when He chose us was as much a test on God's own capacity to love as it was a test of our suitability, and the angels saw a lot of this. They didn't *understand* all of what they saw but certainly they saw enough of it to be able to conclude, "This really is a mistake."

It wouldn't be so much different from this particular scenario: Let us say, for example, some of us grew up in the 70's and during that time we didn't look as polished as perhaps we look now. You know, the 70's it was tie-dye everything and big hair, and plenty of it, and scraggly looks and so on and you cannot imagine how distressed some parents were when their children brought home these fuzzy creatures. Now, take us 30 years later, or more, and we're not these shaggy, fuzzy psychedelically dressed creatures of 30 years ago. We're responsible citizens now. When God chose His heirs, we didn't even look like the shaggy, hairy psychedelic creatures that we did in our youth. We were terrible, quite frankly, as a creation suitable to carry the name of God, to fellowship with God, to be His people, to be His children. We were just flat unsuitable, simply unsuitable... unimaginable to the angels that God would have chosen us.

So God, in a way, chose us as a test for Himself that He would love us, and also, and more importantly, God gave us the capacity to love God... not just to serve God as the angels were capable of doing, *but to love God*. You know I have not read anywhere in the Scriptures that angels are creatures that are capable of loving. Isn't that an amazing thought? So quite obviously, the angels that were, were *not* creatures that were made with the capability of

loving God and the fact that some of them revolted against God is the indication that they were not the suitable creatures for consideration as the children of God. The war, then, is that which resulted when the angels, who thought that they had been bypassed, agreed with their leader and revolted against God's sovereignty and against His position and decided then to show their disdain for God by attempting to overthrow Him and establish their own rule.

God persisted in his choice of human beings and here we are, caught, as it were, between God's decision to choose us as His heirs and the enemy's decision to oppose us as suitable to be the heirs of God. Spiritual authority, then, operates within this context. What is the need for spiritual authority? *First*, there is a need for authority because we have an enemy who is *vastly superior to us*. *Secondly*, we have *no inherent abilities to fight successfully against such an enemy*. Therefore, *someone* has to act *on our behalf* in relationship to our enemy and that someone has to be *strong enough* and *capable enough* to *guarantee* our well-being against such a vastly superior enemy *and that person is the Lord, Himself*. *Spiritual authority, then, is the gift of God's authority to us to enable us to function in the face of an enemy who is so vastly superior to us when you compare creature to creature*.

The unseen creatures are hugely superior to us and enjoy tremendous advantages over the seen creatures. For example, they are invisible and in their invisibility we who are limited by matters of space and time find that we are outmatched in every way. If, for example, an invisible person were to be our enemy to attack us, think of the advantages that they would have simply because they were invisible. But the advantages of the demonic over us are not just because they are invisible but they have a much longer life span than we do. Satan was in the Garden shortly after the creation of man and he's lived all throughout the centuries, so his advantage is that he is able to see the pattern of human lives from one eon to another, from one generation to another, from one millennium to another. And he is able to compile that information and to observe humans through that time in their consistencies and their inconsistencies and to plan ways of attack that would take full advantage of this knowledge. That's why the Bible says, "We do not wrestle against flesh and blood. We wrestle against these principalities, powers, and so on who operate against us in the manner of schemes." (Inserted – "**For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.**" – Ephesians 6:12)

This moves the matter forward in some very dramatic ways, doesn't it? This causes an understanding of things that goes well beyond spiritual authority

being “who gets to boss whom”, “who is bigger than whom”, “who is more important than whom”. Compared to the demons, every human being is an inferior creature. Compared to the demons, we can all be substantially taken advantage of, so spiritual authority has nothing to do with helping somebody... (break in tape)

The context of spiritual authority then, is one in which the enemy, by his schemes, is attempting to show that we were an unsuitable choice and is attacking us through these schemes which are his best ways, his greatest advantage, to prove to all, including God, that God’s choice of human beings was the wrong choice. God, on the other hand, intends to work with this lowly dust that He has made and to raise that up and to eventually show to these very ones who oppose Him, the majesty of His love and the awesome nature of His plan. Now God hid the matter of how He would do this in himself for long ages past. Then, when it was time for Jesus to be born, God brought the matter forward by bringing Jesus into the world. The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus demonstrated something that utterly shattered the enemy’s ability to contend with God and in the cross and in the life of Jesus and in all that He was and all that He did, *the argument of the devil was utterly put down and every scheme has been rendered useless.*

So the question is: how is God going to show what He accomplished, the full defeat of Satan, how is He going to show this to them through us, and why is there still a war? The answer has to do with the nature of the creature, itself... the nature of human beings. There is an opportunity, in all of who the human is, there is an opportunity for the enemy to employ schemes against us, the results of which, he believes, will show that the creature, itself... human beings... were too fatally flawed, too poor a choice to ever have been the right choice. Well, what is this... what is this flaw in the human that allows the enemy to gain such advantage, an advantage that ultimately overthrows God’s best intentions? What is this flaw? Well, let’s set up this flaw. *This flaw is the tendency of the human to want to act out of his soul rather than out of his spirit because God’s ability to relate to the human is spirit to spirit.*

What, then, is the soul and why did God make humans with a soul, why didn’t He just make us to have spirits? It’s undeniable that the human has a soul. **I Thessalonians, chapter 5** beginning at **verse 22**, Paul, the writer, says to the Thessalonians, “I pray that you will be sanctified through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be presented blameless at the coming of our Lord. And the one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful**

and he will do it.”- 1Thessalonians 5:23,24) Unmistakable reference in Scripture to the fact that the human has a spirit, a soul and a body.

Jesus, Himself, recognized exactly that- that division within the person- by claiming, Himself, to have a spirit, a soul and a body. The **14th chapter** of the Gospel of **Mark**, at **verse 32**, Jesus says, “My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death.” **Verse 34**, and following, he says, “But the spirit is willing and the flesh is weak.” (Inserted – actual verses—**“My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death,” he said to them. ‘Stay here and keep watch.’ Going a little farther, he fell to the ground and prayed that if possible the hour might pass from him. ‘Abba, Father,’ he said, ‘everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.’ Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. ‘Simon,’ he said to Peter, ‘are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.’”** (Inserted – **Mark 14: 34-38)**)

Now there are those who argue that the human only has a physical and a spiritual part and that the spiritual part is only used interchangeably to recognize his soul or his spirit. They are only partially correct. It is true that the human has a physical appearance; he has a non-physical appearance. And it is true that the non-physical appearance might be referred to in it’s entirety as a spiritual being, but his spiritual being has two very distinct aspects to it. One is his spirit, to be distinguished from the fact that he’s non-physical... a spirit... and then he has a soul. His soul is his ability to act in a manner independent of God and there is a reason for the soul.

You see, God couldn’t simply make a being who would respond according to the design parameters. In other words, God couldn’t simply make a being who would do exactly what God *made* him to do. So then, if God made you to be a son and you had no independence from God what would you be? You would be *a son*, wouldn’t you? If God made you to be an angel to serve, you could choose to serve or not serve but that was your design parameter. Angels seem very task oriented and they do not seem to be vastly complicated and complex beings. They seem to see things pretty dramatically, *this way* or *that way*. For example, when the Israelites were coming up out of Egypt the Lord instructed Moses and Joshua not to resist the angel of the Lord because he said, “He will slay you.”

The complexity of the human being is not in his spirit; the complexity of the human being is in his soul. The soul is where the human “thinks” in a manner that can be independent of God. The soul is where he feels and experiences

these things that are uniquely human. Now, there is a mind to the spirit as there is a mind to the soul and the foundations of thought relative to the spirit are reasonable, like they are with the soul. The *difference* is what forms the *basis of reality* when you're operating in the spirit as opposed to when you're operating in the soul. When you're operating in the soul, what's *real* to you is what you can experience *through the five senses and what is the extent of human experience*, in other words, has it happened this way before and is it likely to happen this way again. That's the norm for the soul.

When you think *with* the spirit it's by revelation... God shows you what's right, you believe what's right and you act on it. So, by contrast, *the spirit is very uncomplicated*. The soul, however, is what has all the layers of feelings and emotions. So you are capable of experiencing your highest joy when you operate in the spirit because there is nothing that detracts from it. When you worship God, for example, *you worship in spirit* because it is the opportunity to experience the highest joy. When your *soul* magnifies the Lord your soul may be clouded with all forms of doubt and uncertainty such as, "Are you really sure that you love God?"... "Are you really clear that you can do the things of God?"... "Are you sincere and honest about this worship or are you just going through the motions?" and so on. You don't see that when you are worshipping God.

When you are worshipping God, you do so in your spirit, when you are praising God you typically do so in your soul and when you're worshipping, your spirit-man is in the presence of God and there is nothing complex about that, it's pure light... it's pure joy... it's the ultimate expression of truth and reality. When the soul is involved it takes on all of these multiple layers of conflict and sub-interests and confusion. So the human being has a spirit, a soul and a body. *Why did God make the human being with a spirit? The answer is so that God could fellowship with the human being spirit to spirit.*

Why did God make the human with a soul? So that the human could choose. Why did He make him with a body? So that the human could be physically located in time and space. The body of human beings and their location in time and space is described in Scripture as, "...a little lower than the angels." (Inserted –actual verse- **“What is man, that thou are mindful of him? And the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou has made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.”- Psalm 8:4,5**) Now what is meant by this is the fact that humans, in the terms of the *quality of their creation* are inferior beings and in terms of their location in the *order of being*, they are on the lowest plane.

There are three heavens... Paul said this, by the way, in the book of **II Corinthians, chapter 12**, he said, "I was caught up into the third heavens."

(Inserted – actual verse—**“I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven. Whether it was in the body or out of the body I do not know—God knows.” –II Corinthians 12:2**) It’s the same place to which John was invited in the book of **Revelation, chapter 4, verse 1** which says, “I saw a door standing open before me in heaven and I heard a voice say, ‘Come up hither and sit with me and I will show you what is to come.’” (Inserted –actual verse—**“After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.” – Revelation 4:1**) So there are three realms.

The highest of the heavens, what Paul described, as we said earlier, what Paul described in the **12th chapter of II Corinthians** as the third heavens is the heavens of God, the dwelling place of the Most High. The second heavens is what you’ve been reading about and what we’ve been studying, as we’ve talked about spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. The second of these two heavens is the location of the demonic. And the first heavens, the lowest of the heavens, is the location of human beings. When the angels who sinned were thrown out they were put into the second heavens. They will ultimately be expelled from the second heavens and will come to be in our heavens, the first heavens. The heavens surrounding the earth are considered the lowest of the heavens and, among other reasons, it is because they are located in time and space.

When God comes into the realm of mankind and when the demons and angels come into the realm of mankind, they come from different realms into the lowest of the realms. The human being is located then, by his body, in time and space and this is the indication that the children have been made a little lower than the angels. Now it pleased the Lord to put us in this lowest of realms while the enemy enjoys the *substantial advantage* over us, a *huge advantage* over us. Now, it is so obvious that we are disadvantaged by being here that *if God did not act on our behalf we would have no way of being preserved*. We would be destroyed in an instant if God did not preserve us. The *context* of spiritual authority, then, begins to be identified increasingly with this fact: that *it is the authority of Christ, working for us, acting on our behalf, that preserves us from the enemy, therefore our responsibility is to come under the authority of Christ in our conflict with the enemy*. In fact, all of what is referred to as the armor of God has to do with how we submit the various parts of our souls to the sovereign rule of Christ, which then results in our being fully protected, and our abilities, then, to wage this war successfully against the enemy. So, we’ve looked, then, at the *context of the war*, and

we've looked at the *nature of the opposition*. The next time we'll begin to look at how spiritual authority actually functions among human beings and how the enemy operates in his schemes as he attacks us. The enemy will attack us by schemes, God will respond through us by the release of his authority and His power. The ultimate purpose is to demonstrate that God's choice was the right choice and that demonstration is to those who oppose God in the heavenly realms. We'll continue. I'm Sam Soleyn and I'll see you next time.

Scripture References:

Romans 5:8

Ephesians 6:12

I Thessalonians 5:23,24

Mark 14:34-38

Psalm 8:4,5

II Corinthians 12:2

Revelation 4:1