



Session Three: loving the **Power and Authority**

In this session we will learn about the power and authority that lies in the Word of God and the importance of keeping it supreme in our lives.

Throughout Bible history, God has chosen His word to be a source of supreme authority. Look at the following examples and how God demonstrates his authority:

- Adam and Eve - Genesis 2:16&17
- Mosaic covenant - Exodus 20 (maybe focus on v1-6, and 19)
- Leading the people - Joshua 3:14-16; 6:6&7 (the ark contained the stone tablets of the covenant)
- Jesus' commands throughout the NT - e.g. Mark 1:23-27
- The vision of the power of God's word - Revelation 19:11-16

God has chosen to rule His creation and His people by His word. This means that God's word has supreme authority over *everything* else.

What other sources of authority are we tempted to submit to?

- Reason?
- Experience?
- The 'inner voice'?

Sometimes we have trouble submitting to the authority of the Scriptures. Consider the following examples...

Old Testament

The fall happened when Satan deceived Adam and Eve into rejecting God's rule over them by His word. Since then, God's people have rejected His rule over them by His word over and over again.

- Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:1-6) - Satan first questions what God has said (v 1), then blatantly contradicts what God has said (v 4) and then appeals to a greater experience (v 5).
- The Israelite community (Exodus 19:3-6, 32:7-8) - only 3 months after God had rescued from Egypt in a great display of power, the people totally disregard the commands that God has audibly (!) spoken to them and make a golden calf to worship.
- In the years leading up to the Exile (e.g. Ezekiel 2:1-7) - God sent one prophet after another to tell the people to turn back to Him and submit to His rule but they refused.

New Testament

- Acts 7:51-53 - **they are stiff-necked; they have hard hearts and closed ears; they resist they Spirit**
- Hebrews 3:7&8a - we need to pray this

Can you think of some examples in a University context where we resist the authority of the Bible? E.g. dating a non-Christian even though the Bible says we shouldn't? What about some more subtle ways?

Hebrews 4:12-13 speaks of the power of the Word of God. Ephesians 6:17 speaks of it as a sword that equips us to fight against the schemes of Satan - powerful stuff! This is good news for us!

But read Hebrews 4:12-13 again... *What implications does this have for people who reject the Word of God?* The Bible is so clear about the consequences of rejecting God: it's not something we can afford to ignore.

Application

In small groups...

1. Ask God to forgive you for times when you have resisted the authority of the Bible and have gone against God's commandments. Pray that God would teach you how important it is to make the Word supreme in your life, and to let the God's Word lead you in any decision you make.
2. Praise God for the power of His Word that equips us for spiritual warfare. Pray that He will teach us how important it is to make the most of the resources He's given us, and to daily pick up our sword of the Spirit by soaking ourselves in the Bible.
3. Spend some time praying for friends you know who are rejecting God's supreme authority and therefore are subject to his wrath. Pray that you would have a renewed understanding of the power of God's Word that drives you to speak out and be honest about the Bible's verdict on sin.

For later...

Commit to praying faithfully for one person in particular. Ask God to give you the opportunity to open up the Bible with them so they can be exposed its power and authority.

Make sure you leave time to pray about what you've learnt to the God who has graciously revealed Himself

