Jesus-shaped authority

1 Corinthians 4:8-21

“Authority is a good but dangerous gift…

Good, godly authority “authors” life… It is the teacher teaching, the coach coaching, the mother mothering. It is the rules for a game, the lines on a road, the covenant for lovers. … Good authority loves, good authority gives…

Bad authority discourages, cripples, wilts, sucks dry, dehumanises, snuffs out, annihilates. It uses, but doesn’t give. It is political imperialism, economic exploitation, environmental degradation, business monopolisation, social oppression, child abuse.”

Jonathan Leeman - Authority

A case study in Jesus-shaped authority

How Paul understands his authority as an apostle

- lessons for healthy church leadership and the authority of the church membership together
    - insight into the nature of Jesus's authority

A case study in Jesus-shaped authority

v14-17: The Core Idea

v8-13: worked out in practice

v18-21: worked out in practice

v14-17: The Core Idea:

Paul relates to them like a loving father

- Motivated by love (v14-15)
- Leading by example (v16-17)

v8-13: Setting an example by sharing Jesus' suffering

Worldly desires:

high status, comfort, licence to do whatever they want

Theological justification:

"“We've received our whole inheritance already”

“We are fools for Christ, but you are so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honoured, we are dishonoured!”

1 Corinthians 4:10

“So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power…”

1 Corinthians 15:42-23

v8-13: Setting an example by sharing Jesus' suffering

Sharing Christ's sufferings now,
then sharing his glory later.

v18-21: Correcting them with Christ's resurrection power

The message of the risen Jesus
cannot be ignored.

What can we learn about authority in the church today?

Motivated by love, leading by example

Cross: self-sacrificing not self-serving

Resurrection: the right & the power to correct

“… whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Mark 10:43-45

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