

WEAVER STUDY GUIDES

Authority

Study Guide

Civil Government

John Weaver

Weaver Bible College

A lesson-by-lesson companion for reading, discussion, and written responses.

Downloadable classroom edition | 8.5 x 11 inches

Name / group

Date

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Using this guide

Read the corresponding chapter, then work through the themes, arguments, and Scripture references.

Write your responses before discussing the questions with others. Use the application pages to identify a practical next step.

The study material is retained from the existing lecture study guides. Added writing prompts provide space for your own response.

Print at Actual Size / 100% on US Letter paper. Single-sided and double-sided printing are both suitable. Lessons begin on the next available page; no blank pages are inserted.

Reading assignments refer to the September 30, 2026 edition of the companion book. Online lecture links and QR codes are collected at the end.

LESSON 1

Pastor John Weaver - Authority

Part One of Two

August 24, 2020

Read Chapter 1 in the companion book, pages 5-25.

Major Themes

Lawful vs. Unlawful Authority

Weaver distinguishes between authority ordained by God (lawful, delegated, limited) and authority that is usurped, self-arrogated, or based on force (unlawful).

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'there is a lawful, legitimate authority, and that lawful, legitimate authority is authority that has been ordained by God. But on the other hand, there is also an unlawful and an illegitimate authority, and that authority is usually derived by power, force, wickedness, and ignorance.'

Sphere Authority

All lawful authority is limited to specific spheres (family, church, civil government) and does not extend beyond those boundaries.

Lecture support: Weaver explains: 'When I leave my sphere of authority, I do not carry my authority with me. My authority is a sphere of authority. It is located in my particular sphere.'

Constitutional Supremacy and Void Laws

The U.S. Constitution is the supreme law, and any law violating it is void from inception; citizens are not bound to obey unconstitutional statutes.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes American Jurisprudence: 'an unconstitutional statute... is in reality no law, but is wholly void and ineffective for any purpose... it is void ab initio, which is Latin for "from the beginning."'

Executive Orders Are Not Law

Executive orders apply only to those under the executive's authority and cannot bind private citizens; only legislatures can make laws.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Jake McAulay: 'They are not law and they do not have the force of law. Only legislatures have lawmaking power...'

Resistance to Tyranny as Obedience to God

Resisting unlawful authority is not rebellion but righteous resistance; rebellion only applies to lawful authority.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'If you refuse to obey unlawful authority, it is not rebellion, it is resistance. Rebellion can only be to lawful authority.'

Government's Biblical Role

Civil government is ordained by God solely to punish the wicked and protect the righteous; any expansion beyond this is illegitimate.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'civil government or the civil magistrate is charged with two basic functions: number one, the punishment of the wicked, and number two, the protection of the righteous.'

Key Arguments

No Authority to Violate God's Law

No human authority, regardless of position, has been given the right to command actions that violate God's law.

Lecture support: Weaver asserts: 'No man has ever been given authority to violate God's law. I don't care who he is.'

Rights Come from God, Not Government

Government cannot grant rights; it can only secure the rights given by God. Any government action that infringes on God-given rights is illegitimate.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'we receive our rights from God and not from government. Government cannot give rights. It may grant privileges, but it cannot give rights.'

Unconstitutional Laws Are Void Ab Initio

Laws that violate the Constitution are null and void from the moment of enactment, not from a court ruling; citizens need not wait for judicial declaration to disregard them.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes AmJur: 'since unconstitutionality dates from the time of its enactment, and not merely from the date of the decision so branding it, an unconstitutional law, in legal contemplation, is as inoperative as if it had never been passed...'

Executive Orders Cannot Bind Citizens

Executive orders are internal directives for the executive branch and have no legal force on private individuals; enforcing them as law is unconstitutional.

Lecture support: Weaver cites McAulay: 'They are directives or public instructions addressed to and binding upon persons who are already under the authority of the executive, but they have no binding effect on anyone else.'

Oaths Bind Officials to the Constitution

Elected and appointed officials swear to uphold the Constitution, not to obey party or personal power; violating this oath makes them tyrants.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'Their primary allegiance is to the constitution of their state and the Constitution of the United States. Their allegiance is not to their party, not to their power, not to their platform.'

Power vs. Authority

There is a critical difference between authority (rightful, delegated) and power (coercive force); government often resorts to power when it lacks authority.

Lecture support: Weaver illustrates: 'I may not have authority, but if I have power over her, I can make her do what I want to do... where government does not have authority, it always exerts power.'

Scripture References

Luke 7:1-10

Weaver reads the passage about the centurion's servant as the text for the sermon series on authority.

Revelation 13:2

Weaver cites this verse to show that satanic authority is real but illegitimate, using the Greek word *exousia*.

Matthew 21:23

Weaver references the chief priests questioning Jesus' authority to illustrate the importance of knowing the source of authority.

Titus 2:15

Weaver cites this verse to show that pastoral authority is delegated and limited to speaking, exhorting, and rebuking according to God's Word.

2 Timothy 4:2

Weaver uses this verse to emphasize that pastoral authority must be exercised with patience and doctrine, not personal preference.

Romans 13:1-4

Weaver references this passage to define the biblical role of civil government: punishing the wicked and protecting the righteous.

Ecclesiastes 10:7

Weaver quotes this verse to illustrate the inversion of proper order, where servants (government) ride horses while princes (citizens) walk.

Psalm 115:3

Weaver cites this verse to affirm that only God is sovereign and can do whatever He pleases; government is not God.

1 Peter 2:13-14

Weaver mentions this passage in the context of God never ordaining tyrannical government.

Study notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Discussion Questions

1. How does the concept of 'sphere authority' change the way you view the limits of governmental, pastoral, and parental authority?

Consider: Weaver explains that authority is limited to specific spheres and does not transfer.

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2. In what ways have we seen government exceed its biblical mandate to punish the wicked and protect the righteous?

Consider: Weaver defines the two functions of civil government from Romans 13.

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3. What is the difference between a right and a privilege, and why is it dangerous to confuse them?

Consider: Weaver states that rights come from God and cannot be suspended, while privileges can be granted or revoked.

4. How should Christians respond when laws or executive orders conflict with the Constitution or biblical principles?

Consider: Weaver argues that unconstitutional laws are void and should be ignored.

5. What does it mean to 'question authority' in a biblical and constitutional manner?

Consider: Weaver introduces the sermon with the phrase 'Question Authority' and explains its importance.

6. How can we discern when resistance to government is obedience to God rather than sinful rebellion?

Consider: Weaver distinguishes between rebellion against lawful authority and resistance to unlawful authority.

Applications

Study the Constitution and State Constitutions

Weaver urges believers to read and understand the U.S. Constitution and their state constitution to recognize when government oversteps its bounds.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'most Americans have never, ever read the United States Constitution, and they've never, ever read their state constitution. They have no idea what is put there.'

Question and Verify Claims of Authority

When told to do something by authorities, ask for the source and justification; do not blindly submit.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'We need to learn when someone says, "Well, you must do this." Really? Why must I do that? Where is the authority derived? Who said it? Show it to me.'

Obey God Rather Than Men When Commands Conflict

If a government command violates God's law or the Constitution, it has no binding authority and should be resisted.

Lecture support: Weaver concludes: 'If it's not biblical, if it's not constitutional, I ignore it, because it has no binding influence upon me whatsoever.'

Recognize the Limits of Pastoral Authority

Pastors must teach and rebuke only according to Scripture, not personal preferences, and church members should hold them to that standard.

Lecture support: Weaver explains: 'I don't have any authority to rebuke and reprove and exhort outside of the Bible.'

Hold Civil Officials Accountable to Their Oaths

Citizens should remind law enforcement and elected officials of their oath to uphold the Constitution, not to enforce unconstitutional edicts.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes McAulay: 'Your fidelity to your oath and to the rule of law requires that you abstain from enforcing any edict or order from a governor or any executive which lacks constitutional authority.'

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

LESSON 2

Pastor John Weaver - Authority

Part Two of Two

August 24, 2020

Read Chapter 2 in the companion book, pages 27-46.

Major Themes

Lawful vs. Unlawful Authority

Weaver contrasts legitimate, delegated, limited authority with usurped, unlimited power that demands unconditional submission.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'Lawful, legitimate authority is delegated authority, and it is limited... So unlawful authority just simply demands that you submit.'

Biblical Humility in Authority

True authority produces humility because it recognizes that all authority is a gift from God, not earned.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Real biblical authority humbles you... because when someone recognizes the true source of authority, he recognizes the only way that he can have any authority is in the providence of God that God gave it to him.'

Submission to Christ's Word

Believers must submit to Christ's sovereign word without demanding emotional experiences, as the centurion did.

Lecture support: Weaver explains, 'The centurion said, "Lord, speak the word. I don't need lightning. I don't need to hear thunder roll... Your word is sufficient."'

Interposition and Limited Government

States have the right and duty to interpose between a tyrannical federal government and the people, based on constitutional principles.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'The states themselves were to interpose themselves between a corrupt and unconstitutional federal government and the people that resided in those states.'

Authority Recognizes Authority

Legitimate authority acknowledges other spheres of authority (family, church, state) and does not usurp them.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'When someone has lawful, legitimate authority, it always recognizes others who hold authority... you're not going to try to disparage or to castigate off that authority they have.'

Key Arguments

Unlimited submission belongs to God alone

No human authority can demand unconditional obedience; that is reserved for God.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Pastor Samuel West: 'Unlimited submission and obedience is due to none but God alone.'

The federal government has only delegated, limited powers

The Constitution is an express and limited powers document; states created the federal government and retain reserved powers.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'The only authority then that the federal government has is that which the states gave them, and when they go beyond that, they are intruders and may be lawfully expelled.'

Lawful authority is compassionate and serves others

Biblical authority does not run roughshod over people; it ministers to them, as seen in the centurion's care for his slave.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'Biblical and lawful authority does not run roughshod over people. It is not something that is cold, uncaring, unconcerned, unethical, and uncompassionate.'

God will not use you in authority unless you submit to authority

One must learn to be rebuked and reproved before being used by God to lead others.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'God will never use you in a position of authority unless you're willing to be in submission to authority yourself.'

Christ's word is sufficient for faith and obedience

The centurion's faith rested solely on Christ's spoken word, without need for signs or emotions.

Lecture support: Weaver explains, 'The centurion recognized in Jesus Christ his power and his authority that he received from God. And he understood that since Christ was sovereign, that all he needed to do was speak.'

Scripture References

Luke 7:1-10

The main passage expounded, showing the centurion's faith and understanding of authority.

Proverbs 29:2

Used to show that authority and ruling are synonymous; when the righteous rule, people rejoice.

Mark 10:42

Jesus equates ruling with exercising authority.

Matthew 7:29

Jesus taught as one having authority, not as the scribes.

Mark 1:22, 27

Jesus' authority was evident in his teaching and command over unclean spirits.

Luke 4:36

Jesus commands unclean spirits with authority.

Mark 13:34

A man gives authority to his servants, illustrating delegation of authority.

Luke 9:1

Jesus gave his disciples power and authority over devils and diseases.

1 Timothy 2:11-15

Paul forbids women to teach or usurp authority over men, giving creation order and the fall as reasons.

1 Corinthians 11:3

God's ordained order of authority: God, Christ, man, woman.

Titus 2:15

Paul tells Titus to rebuke with all authority and let no man despise him.

Proverbs 14:9; 19:29

Fools mock at sin and stripes are prepared for fools, showing the fool's rejection of reproof.

1 Kings 12:1-15

Rehoboam's harsh rule and rejection of servant leadership led to the kingdom's division.

Luke 17:10

We are unprofitable servants when we have only done our duty.

Psalms 75:5-7

Promotion comes from God; he puts down one and sets up another.

Deuteronomy 17:18-20

The king was to read the law daily so his heart would not be lifted above his brethren.

2 Kings 5:1-14

Naaman's rage at Elisha's simple word contrasts with the centurion's faith in Christ's word.

Matthew 28:18

All power is given to Christ in heaven and earth.

1 Samuel 2:27-30

God honors those who honor him; Eli's house was rejected for despising God.

Matthew 11:28-30

Jesus invites the weary to take his yoke, which is easy and light, signifying submission to his authority.

Study notes

Discussion Questions

1. How does the centurion's understanding of authority challenge our modern view of leadership and submission?

Consider: Weaver highlights the centurion's recognition of being under authority and his humility.

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2. In what ways do we, like Naaman, seek emotional experiences rather than simply trusting and obeying God's Word?

Consider: Weaver contrasts Naaman's rage with the centurion's faith in Christ's spoken word.

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3. What does it mean for the church to interpose itself between a tyrannical government and the people, and is this biblical?

Consider: Weaver discusses the doctrine of interposition and states' rights.

4. How can we cultivate a heart that is not 'lifted up above our brethren' when we are in positions of authority?

Consider: Weaver references Deuteronomy 17:18-20 and the danger of pride in leadership.

5. Why is it difficult to submit to authority that reproves and rebukes us, and how can we grow in receiving correction?

Consider: Weaver shares his personal experience of being rebuked by his pastor and the necessity of submission.

Applications

Submit to Christ's Word without demanding signs

Believers should trust and obey Christ's commands in Scripture without waiting for emotional experiences or supernatural signs.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'You do not need lightning flashing and thunder rolling. You don't need great emotions and great upheavals. All you need is his word.'

Learn to receive rebuke and reproof

To be used by God in authority, one must first learn to submit to authority and accept correction humbly.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'If we don't learn to submit to authority... God's never going to use us in authority.'

Recognize and respect God-ordained spheres of authority

Understand the distinct roles of family, church, and state, and do not allow one to usurp the authority of another.

Lecture support: Weaver explains, 'God created only three institutions... each one is an aspect of God's kingdom, and each one has authority in God's kingdom.'

Exercise authority with compassion and humility

Those in leadership should serve others and not use their position to run roughshod over people.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Biblical and lawful authority does not run roughshod over people. It is not something that is cold, uncaring, unconcerned.'

Question unlawful authority

Believers have a right and duty to question authority that contravenes God's Word and constitutional liberties.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'We certainly have a right to question authority, especially when it contravenes biblical authority and the Word of God.'

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

Online Lecture Resources

Scan a code or select the lecture link in the PDF. The original lecture identifiers and destinations are preserved.

Lesson 1: Pastor John Weaver - Authority - Part One of Two

Lecture JW01584

[Open the formatted lecture online](#)



https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW01584&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted

Lesson 2: Pastor John Weaver - Authority - Part Two of Two

Lecture JW01585

[Open the formatted lecture online](#)



https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW01585&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted

Source information

Study material: existing Major Themes, Key Arguments, Scripture References, Discussion Questions, and Applications from the corresponding Weaver Bible College lecture records. Original lecture titles and provenance are retained in those source records.

Layout upgraded September 30, 2026. Original manuscripts, study-guide data, and previous PDFs have not been changed.