

Elaborating on Letter #1 - Is the bride of Christ ready for His return? Written 10-8-25. Part of being the bride is walking by faith and understanding authority. I want to look at that in scripture and talk more about why we're having these meetings and how God has called me.

Matthew 8:5-13. The centurion **understood being in authority and under authority, but Jesus said he had great faith.** His servant was healed "as he believed". If we don't understand authority, we cannot fully walk in faith and submit to the lordship of Jesus. The centurion knew Jesus was Lord and stepped out boldly in that.

These Friday night meetings have come from the lordship of Jesus and being submitted to His body, the church. In 2025, Frank and I started the monthly meetings from a conviction from the Lord to press in more with people I was walking with here. I submitted that to my elders at Fellowship Bible Church for counsel and had their blessing. Slowly through the year, we saw God really start to open hearts to His word. As I was praying about how or if we should continue in 2026, in November and December, God brought me things from various places that confirmed what we should do. Primarily God spoke to my heart the simple instructions to meet every week and not in my home. I've submitted that for counsel to elders I walk with at my church here in Conway and the church in Houston. Again, with their blessing, and in obedience, January 2, we started to meet every week. Lord willing we'll have a location soon that's not in my home.

To walk in obedience, we must surrender to the lordship of Jesus and the authority God has established in the body of Christ, His church. To walk in faith, we must recognize the authority we've been given so we can function in the body. Because that, I can honestly say that I have no agenda with these meetings. I'm not trying to start anything. I thank God that I just need to do what I'm told!

In a culture with much Christianity, there is a great temptation to participate in a lot of Christian activities without being submitted to any authority in the body of Christ. One could attend various events, churches and meetings (just like this one) and not understand the faith of the centurion, which was greater than what was found in all of Israel. You could attend church and not know or be submitted to its leaders.

Be planted and under the authority of the local church body. **Whatever church body God has called you to, be there and be submitted to its leadership.** Be planted and committed. And you can still come here on Fridays if you're truly submitted to those men. If you have no local church body to submit yourself to, then you're welcome to be here with us and see what God does. But above all, know what God wants and be where God has called you to be. **Are you submitted to authority or are you trying to serve God with your own agenda?**

For 12 years, from high school through college and to the end of my time serving in Honduras, I can see now that **my foundational desire was to have a ministry of my own and to be noticed by men** (see Matthew 6:1). God took a lot of time (another 12 years after coming back from Honduras) to break me of that. But thankfully He did. That is the only reason I can do what I'm doing now and honestly say this is not my ministry. **I am not trying to build anything. God can build it up or tear it down, because all I want to do is be obedient to what He's asked me to do.** I must not run ahead of what God wants and I dare not lag behind, but I must be in Christ.

In high school and college I had no plans for a career, I only wanted to be in ministry and serve God. That zeal was good, but I was not very disciplined. As I went on in zeal, **at multiple turning points in my life, I did not give God the maturity and obedience he desired in my faith**, and I turned in my heart to the desire for ministry instead of a desire for Jesus. For just Him. I had a foundational desire in my heart that was something other than Christ.

Desiring only Jesus means submitting to His lordship and to His body, the church. That means you do what He says and you will live! That means you die and He lives in you. Matthew 16:25 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it." **But in the flesh-we don't like to die! And we especially don't like authority.** Submission to authority requires too much. It's like dying. Jesus died and rose again in resurrection life so that we could do the same.

I have no ministry other than what God has told me to do. I know nothing but Christ, and Him crucified (I Corinthians 2). Because we're doing these weekly meetings, people keep asking me if I'm trying to start a church. That would be the worst mistake: me seeking out ministry. God could birth a church here or He could do something completely different. I don't know what He will do. All I'm doing is what I've been told by God. Now, go and do the same!

For more about authority in the body of Christ see Romans 12; 1 Timothy; Titus.