

# Human Power and God's Authority

Ecclesiastes 8:2-17

## I. **A HUMAN KING** (2-5a; Lk 20:25)—legitimate authority

### A. **His Authority is from God.** (Rom 13:1-5; Heb 13:17)

#### 1. **Respecting his authority enables him to do his job.**

a. To **protect** from foreign enemies (Jud 2:18; 1 Sam 8:19)

b. To **administer justice** for his subjects (2 Chron 19:6-7; Neh 9:13; 1 Jn 3:4; Prov 28:28)

c. To **promote prosperity** in his realm, (2 Chron 14:7; Prov 11:10; Jer 10:21)

#### 2. **Honoring his authority honors God.**

### B. **But he is not Jesus!** (Ps 78:72; Isa 42:8; 1 Chron 16:25 & 21:17; Rev 19:16; 1 Tim 6:15)

#### 1. His leadership is not **perfect**.

a. He is a **sinner**—*his character is flawed*— foolish, selfish, unjust

b. He **makes mistakes**—*he is not all-wise or all-knowing*.

2. He is not worthy of **worship**. (Isa 42:8; Dan 7:13-14; Act 5:29)—*mindless obedience is not righteous or appropriate*

## II. **THE WICKED FOOL**

A. **Hasty** (3; Pro 19:2; 1 Tim 5:22)—hot-headed, quick to join some ill-advised cause

B. **Bully** (9b; Ps 76:7, 12; Isa 57:11-12 )—not legitimate authority but human arrogance

C. **Hypocrite** (10; Jn 5:44 & 12:43)—uses religion to manipulate for his own gain

D. **Enslaved** (8b; Jn 8:34; Rom 6:16; Gen 4:7)—Given over to wickedness

### III. **THE WISE HEART**

- A. **Law-Abiding** (2, 5, 6; 1 Jn 3:4; 2 Thes 2:3)—not lawless
- B. **Patient** (3, 6-7; Ps 25:9)—not rash, hot-headed, proud or immediately defiant
  - 1. **Humble**—not easily offended, angered
  - 2. **Contemplative**—thinks before he acts
- C. **God-Fearing** (12)—gives us perspective we need to live wisely
- D. **Radiant** (1)—shining face
  - 1. **The knowledge that makes you cry** (1:18;)—the condition of the world
  - 2. **The wisdom that makes your face shine** (8:1; Ps 97:9-12; Prov 9:10; Hab 3:16-18)—knowledge of God produces an underlying peace and joy

### IV. **THE BEST ADVICE** (15-17)

- A. **Enjoy Life**—*God's gift*
  - 1. **Eat and drink with joy** (Ps 23:5)
  - 2. **Sleep like a Christian** (Ps 3:5, 24-26 & 4:8)—*don't lose sleep over things beyond your control.*
- B. **Trust God** (Dt 33:27)—He's the One with the plan, He will judge...
  - 1. **He understands.**
  - 2. **There is more than this life.** (Prov 14:32).
  - 3. **He is working.** (Rom 8:28; Rev 21:5)

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