

No Responsibility; No Authority

By B. D. Tate

Introduction:

This is a general truth: the more responsibility we have the more authority we have to go with it; ***if we give up responsibility we also lose authority.*** Just about everywhere we look this holds true from the military, to schools and society, to business, and to family life. **This is also true when it comes to our faith and authority in God's grace.**

From God we have been given responsibility for our soul and the freedom to have dominion (authority) in the world. The scriptures speak to this:

Gen. 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; **let them have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

De 30:19 "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, **that I have set before you life and death**, blessing and cursing; **therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live;**

Joh 10:10 "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come **that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.**

The word in the Greek for life is "**Zoe**" which means life as God has it. God's love cares and is responsible **to** others and uses authority for the benefit of all. God has commissioned us

to go in His name to exercise “**Zoe**” life through our faith in God’s grace and the authority given to us because we have dominion. If we understand the responsibility we have as sons and daughters of God to stand in what Christ has done for us **we’ll begin to exercise the same authority Jesus did.** We don’t do this without Him we do it the same way He did, through faith, through the Spirit, in God’s grace!

We Can Miss it!

If we don’t understand or accept, or believe we have the same Spirit to do the same things, for the same purpose, as Jesus then we are **NOT** embracing our full **ministry of reconciliation!** Unless we are willing to accept our responsibility, (our response to His ability within us), to act as He would in the same way He would, we are missing at least some of the authority we’ve been given in His name.

There are other **natural ways** of putting it: if we don’t take a chance; nothing ventured, nothing gained. If we play it safe; no risks no rewards. If I’m unwilling to take a shot I’ll never make one. If I shoot at nothing; I’ll hit it every time. If I’m too afraid to fail; I’ll never succeed. If I don’t try I’ll miss out on opportunity.

We’ve been given a great gift to have dominion in life. We are free to develop a life full of responsibility and **authority in this world; however, we are not free to live life without them.** Some would like to ignore this truth and act as if there is no accountability for our responsibility and authority. For some the burden of being responsible has taken its toll. When bad decisions lead to tragedy the guilt and condemnation are overbearing. In many situations people

would rather not be in charge (have responsibility or authority). There is **an extreme** to both sides (of responsibility and authority) where one tries to **abdicate all of it** to someone who wants **all of it** as in a dictator or world ruler. Love balances both in our life. We need to understand our part and the authority we've been given so that we do live an abundant life.

The Responsibility Issue

On the one side: Many people do not want responsibility because they don't want to be blamed for failure. The fear of failing, falling, missing it, blowing it, being at fault **goes very deep**. Even if I decide that I'm not responsible that doesn't take responsibility away. Even if I don't expose myself to danger, failure, or risks thinking I won't make anything bad happen...then the adage goes: ***"If good people do nothing evil prevails."*** We can't put our head in the sand and hope it all goes away. **We have inherited a serious situation that in life things are for keeps and we (as human beings) are responsible.** We are in this predicament together whether we like it or not.

In life at its core is this fundamental issue: ***who's responsible if things go badly? In many ways life is unfair and being responsible for things we can't control is just wrong—we are not God!*** Nevertheless, even though we can't control everything we instinctively know we are still responsible as the human race. For example, if a parent loses a child by accident, sickness, or some evil act, even if he/she couldn't have controlled everything, there is always the sense that maybe he/she could have controlled something to change

the loss (I'm speaking from a human point of view). **The burden is constant.** Some parents hover over their children, are over protective, over bearing, unwilling to let go and let them grow up because something could happen! Some people do not want to bring a child into this world because they know it is unfair and evil is prevailing.

The fear of being responsible for another's loss, death, or great suffering is oppressive. How many people live with the fact that their decision cost someone else? How many doctors have made mistakes and it cost lives? How many soldiers have killed innocent people? What about abortions the lies that are told to cover up the death of an innocent baby by its own mother! **We are responsible for what is taking place in this world!**

Here is an interesting contradiction: when we do something good and it merits praise we want that recognition. In fact, if we do something good and someone else gets the credit it bothers us. When we do something bad and it brings upon us rebuke, criticism, and/or condemnation we often look to blame something or someone else. At the same time, we almost loathe those who when they do badly they begin to make excuses, place the blame and responsibility on something else or someone else.

The Burden of Life!

The burden of life is this: we are responsible but we don't have the power to fulfill our responsibility—that in itself is unfair. Yet we all know deep inside we are responsible for our actions, decisions, and even our thoughts before a Holy God.

The two edged sword: We want to do what we want, that is having freedom to choose; however, when those choices go badly we don't want to be responsible for them.

Consider that this is exactly what Paul was addressing in Romans:

Romans 7:14 For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin.

15 For what I am doing, I do not understand. **For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do.**

16 If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that *it is good*.

17 But now, *it is* no longer I who do it, **but sin that dwells in me.**

18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; **for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.**

19 **For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice.**

20 Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, **but sin that dwells in me.**

21 I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good.

22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.

23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and **bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.**

24 O wretched man that I am! **Who will deliver me from this body of death?**

25 I thank God—**through Jesus Christ our Lord!**

Paul addresses that we are all responsible to do “*good*” but the power to do it is not present! When I sin and the results are bad I am the source of the problem. I have this burden then of being a lawbreaker wanting to do what is right in God's eyes

but I cannot. Even though I am without power to change my predicament **I am still responsible**. I see that I have dominion but I am in bondage and held captive to the law of sin which is in my members. Who will free me from this unfair dilemma? It is Christ who paid the debt and fulfilled the law's judgment against us and *then offers us new life where we are now free to operate as God originally intended.*

Applying This to Our Faith in God's Grace

I present this in order to address this truth: No responsibility; no authority. From the beginning God intended that we would exercise our dominion by the Spirit of God through words—just like He does (Pr. 18:21). In communion with God and abiding in His love we would have responsibility for the world, the animals, and all the creative resources in the earth. When Adam and Eve rebelled against God it cut off *this flow of power. It's like having a power tool but no electricity.* The job still needs to be done but it's going to be a lot harder—actually impossible. **When the fall occurred it didn't mean we lost our dominion or responsibility for it but it did mean we lost the chief source of power to get it done.** Instead of supernatural power backed up by God almighty we had to resource everything through natural means.

We still have responsibility but no power to get things done. This is not what God designed. We are burdened with guilt and condemned by having responsibility with no real power to change it. **He'd always planned for us to operate supernaturally in His Spirit. Thus the fall created an unjust situation where the burden of life became overwhelming.**

We've been given a world with great responsibility something we could all grow up in and never get bored with. ***With great risk there is great reward; however there is also great loss.*** For the most part our world has seen great loss.

It Has All Been Changed!

When we become children of God by being born of His Spirit all that was lost in the garden is restored. As far as authority and power each of us has been reconciled to God and has become His ambassador in the earth. I John 4:17 ends with this statement, ***“as He is so are we in this world.”*** The same spirit that raised Christ dwells in us (Rom. 8:11), we are made righteous in Christ Jesus, and we have His name, His peace, His power, and His authority to do the same works that Jesus did! We have been armed with all that Jesus is because He dwells in us (Col. 1:27).

With great authority comes great responsibility:

Luke 12:48 “...For everyone to **whom much is given, from him much will be required;** and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.”

If we have been given the name above all names and all power and authority has been delivered to that name (Luke 10:19)...then let us all realize to whom much is given from him much will be required! The electric power has been turned on now it is time to operate the power tool the way it was designed!

The name of this booklet is called: ***No responsibility; No authority.*** It puts responsibility before authority while Jesus gave us great authority to accomplish the great commission!

He told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem ***until they were anointed*** with power to be His witnesses (Act. 1:8). God doesn't want us trying to accomplish the great commission based solely on natural power—He wants us supernatural the way He intended from the beginning.

Eliminating Our Part?

I entitled this booklet with ***responsibility first*** because it is a strange but true that **many want to eliminate any decision on our part**. The goal is to take away any ***pressure*** on us to act in authority. There is great effort to discount any part of the power of God **falling upon mankind**. We simply have been told we have no power, no authority, and of course no responsibility. God is sovereign and we are not gods, we are merely human beings saved by grace and any sign, wonder, or miracle is God's domain. We can't know when, what, where, why, or how miracles happen—it is a mystery of the Spirit. Nothing could be further from the truth!

God has made us joint heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17), we are co-laborers in the fields of harvest, and we are His hands, His feet, and His mouth piece. As the temple of the Holy Spirit we are not robots but work together with the Lord. **God is actually waiting on us to operate in His name and authority** and He'll back us up according to His plan, His will, and His already decided promises. God gave us dominion and then through Christ restored our connection that empowers us by the Spirit of God to destroy the works of the devil (I John 3:8).

When we teach others that we are not responsible that it all rests on God's sovereign grace we are missing something

in a big way. God decided we'd have dominion and He decided to save us, give us His name and Spirit in order for us to do what Jesus did. All of this is God's idea **but in His sovereign will He decided that we'd have our part in all of it.** He has subjected His power to our agreement with His plan. He has restored all things in Christ Jesus who dwells in us and manifests through us *according to what we believe (Eph. 3:20)!*

Giving it Away!

When we remove our responsibility in this matter we are losing our authority to operate—we are abdicating it! We may be born again with all that God has done in Christ but because *we don't believe* or *want to believe* we've been given authority and power we miss it. We point to elaborate and rather confused teachings much of it based on human experiences *to trump what God's word promises.* We tell each other we are not responsible and in so doing ***cut out from underneath us the very basis of our authority.*** Our authority resides in the creation account that God gave dominion to mankind. He has never taken it back. With that dominion and the fall all manner of suffering, pain, death, and failure has resulted. Now, ***in the gospel of Jesus Christ God*** restored our connection to His supernatural power. Now we have the right to become the sons of God and manifest the same power that Jesus worked in (John 1:12).

We have this power because we are responsible for what goes on in the earth. It is utter foolishness to disarm Christians by telling them there is nothing they can do. We are saved by grace through faith! Faith is the victory that

overcomes the world (I John 5:4)! Faith is our response and ***our part in the equation God has set up***. We are not without Christ and the Holy Spirit has been given to anoint us with power to change the curse that is in the earth!

Conclusion

If we declare that we are not responsible we lose authority! If we declare that God's grace means I have no say in the matter we lose faith—we simply don't use it. If we do this in order to ***relieve ourselves*** of any pressure due to past failure and future failure expectations (in other words we put our head in the sand), we may remove the risk of failure in particular situations **but we have not remove the failure to act upon God's grace through His faith given to us!**

We do not remove the responsibility to go in His name to do what He's empowered us to do! What we end up doing is being stymied by the enemy in keeping us from acting upon the authority given to us in His name. If we do nothing fearing responsibility of failure or looking foolish, **we have already failed**. God ordained that man has dominion and responsibility just because we excuse ourselves doesn't remove this ordination! If evil prevails because good men do nothing it is also true that the curse prevails because God's people do nothing.

It isn't until we acknowledge our responsibility and come to the cross receiving the Holy Spirit that we are beginning to stand in our authority. God didn't send us without His Word, His grace, His name, and His Spirit! When our faith embraces our responsibility and God's promised power to overcome sin, the curse, and the evil ones, **we begin to change**

the natural course of events! We are standing in the power given and speaking to the issues as one authorized and backed up by the Spirit of God. When we do this then we are in a position to change circumstances, situations, **and bring about God's miraculous power into the situation.** God is waiting on us to take up the responsibility in His name! God has put all authority into our hands through His Word and Spirit and is waiting on the sons of God to act like they are and believe what He's promised and done. Jesus said, "Nothing is impossible to those who believe!"

2Pe 3:9 The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, **but is longsuffering toward us**, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

This spells it out saying that it is not the promise that God is holding back or that by some mysterious plan God is not answering...but God is **LONGSUFFERING** toward us, waiting on us to come to repentance in salvation, in redemption, in accepting the gospel that Jesus is in us! He is in us in all that Jesus is! We have His Spirit, His wisdom, His sanctification, His righteousness (I Cor. 1:30), His name, His peace, His faith...**there isn't anything left for Him to give us, do for us, or commission us to do (Matt. 28:18-20)!**