

Collab Review:

A collab is two or more people partnering together as a team to accomplish an agenda greater than their own and a goal greater than their own.

Collab #4: Power, Authority and Leadership



DISCUSSION:

1. What comes to mind when you think of bad expressions of authority? Good expressions of authority?
2. When you think of authority, do you feel trusting, angry, something else?

Our understanding of authority is shaped by how those with authority treat us. It is also shaped by culture. Currently our culture is shifting perceived authority away from institutions, organizations, and tradition towards personal intuition and experience.

In other words, the expression of someone/something else's authority has become **suspect by nature**. When someone or something has authority, we automatically question it. Some of this shift is because some institutions have not acted honorably:

Ex: Occupy Wall Street.

Me Too.

Church Too.

But there is also a tendency to say "My experience of the world is more authoritative than your experience or what any institution says."

Ex: Question/Deconstruct everything!

Okay, Boomer.

Conspiracy Theory Movements.

Where does authority comes from?

We need to reorient our understanding of authority from God, not just our experience and the culture. Authority comes from the Trinity, our 3-in-1 God. That's not just that our 3-in-1 God has authority over us as humans, but there is authority structure even in the collaboration of the Trinity.

Our 3-in-1 God has an authority structure within himself. So we must ask the question, do different members of the Trinity have different levels of importance?

No! In the Trinity, authority addresses "function", not equality of Person. God "orders" himself for the purpose of doing His will in all things, including salvation, according to an authority structure:



The Father sends the Son to save – John 3:16

The Son submits to the will of the Father – Hebrews 10:5-7

The Father & Son send the Spirit to apply salvation – John 16:5-15

"An equal willingly submitting to an equal is glorious. Christ didn't consider it robbery to humble Himself and submit to an equal, and neither should we."

-Rebekah Merkle



So how do we think about human authority in light of God's authority?

1. God's authority is expressed through *servant leadership* that reflects His character. God's use of authority in every act—saving, redeeming, disciplining, correcting, judging and condemning- are all acts of sacrificial love and therefore also all work for the good of angels, creation, and all humankind. Mark 10:45, Matthew 11:28-29

2. God's authority is *generative*, meaning he gives authority away to others. Genesis 1:28, Luke 10:2-6, 16, Matthew 16:17-20, Acts 1:8, Revelation 2:26-29

3. God's authority is expressed in every sphere of human relationship through *structures* that fulfill God-given function. Most things in life fall under these authority structures. In each of these relationships there is an equality of "personhood", but an order of submission around the fulfillment of purpose. The authority of each person, in every sphere is meant to be motivated by love, humility and service.

(split into smaller groups and look these up)

- The Family: Ephesians 5:22-6:4
- The State: Romans 13:1ff
- The Market: Colossians 3:22-4:1
- The Church: Hebrews 13:17, Ephesians 4:7-13

This all sounds great! But sin messes this up! Authority and leadership becomes dysfunctional, either becoming aggressive and domineering, or on the other end of the spectrum neglecting the responsibility to lead.



Let's explore two caricatures of leadership and how sin and weakness messes up the use of authority:

1. CEO Leader Emphasis on leader, de-emphasis on servant.

This person leads from the top. Good at directing others to accomplish a purpose. Often has charisma and knows how to motivate people. They are active, enthusiastic and good at moving things towards a vision.

Areas for Growth:

- Desire to be in control and hesitant to give authority away.
- Insecure about team's ability to get it done right.
- Keeps people moving towards a goal, but may not have given enough relational care.

2. Consensus Leader - Emphasis on servant, de-emphasis on leader.

This person leads from the bottom. They are thoughtful and love to keep unity and peace. They listen and care for people, but tend to lack a bigger direction. The direction can be set by the average of where the group wants to go.

Areas for Growth:

- Weak in vision and decision-making confidence. Needs to work on direction and decisiveness.
- Fear of conflict. The irony is that the leader is conflict avoidant, which can create conflict because there is not enough direction.



Discussion: *Which better describes you? The CEO or Consensus Leader?*

Jesus was a servant leader, and we want to be servant leaders. How does a servant leader lead others?

Leads out of a burden to know God – who is God and what does he want us to do?

Leads others with affirmation – Because the leader is aware of God, He knows the Holy Spirit has given each person a gift to use. This gives a freedom to truly affirm each person in the face of their weaknesses and even sins. This is the basic affirmation from God that He is for the believer. We are in fact, simply aligning ourselves with reality. We are actually upholding the primacy of the Holy Spirit. This makes the ministry primarily one of encouragement; not correcting. I Cor 1:1-10.

Leads by Modeling - Especially modeling repentance, faith and the freedom to pursue obedience. Compare Paul in Romans 6-8; John in I John 1; David in Psalm 51; Jeremiah – Lamentations 3

We do not want to simply accept the silliness and foolishness of others, but we also recognize that the weakest person on the team might be weak because of our own sin nature.

Leads with Gentle Confrontation - This is the normal (though not exclusive) mode of confrontation. Most times Christ did not use an accusing tone with his disciples, but he often raised questions. His comments to “come and learn from me for I am gentle and humble in heart” (Matthew 11:28-30), plus the prophecy of Isaiah 42:1-4 give us perspective on his frame of mind. Mark 10:35-45; Matthew 16:6-12 cf. even Saul’s conversion Acts 9:1-6.

This gentleness flows from the reality that God is in control and will fulfill his purposes. So Paul tells Timothy (2 Timothy 2:24-26) that gentleness is even a part of the equation when someone’s life is at stake. However, gentleness does not mean we are not to be specific. It is amazing how specific you can be if people know you love them.

Leads with Constant Communication – The CEO often works inwardly in his head, then bursts forth with vision and enthusiasm. But there has not been enough communication. The leader needs to give lead-time in communication instead of just the finished product.

God constantly communicates with his people, and Christ constantly communicated with his disciples – Matthew 16:21, 20:17-19, 26:2. Sometimes people don’t hear, Luke 24:9-11, because their hearts are not ready to hear- but we still need to be sure we are communicating.

Leads with Stability - The team leader knows the vision and makes the team hold to it. He/she does not want to become unpredictable or swayed by every concern by every person everywhere. You can be full of surprises, and God loves to surprise us with new things we did not see. But there must be a fundamentally high level of integrity from the leader in their commitments to the task.

Most importantly, do what you say. Keep your word. Especially in reference to members of the team. Sometimes you can’t. If change is coming, give warning before it happens if at all possible. If you fail, ask for forgiveness freely and openly. Compare Paul in 2 Corinthians 2:15-17



Which one of these servant leadership qualities do you long for you in your life?

So, how do you grow as a Biblical leader?

Learn to pray and cry out to God for help

The bottom line problem in becoming this type of leader is a heart problem in relationship with God. People often don't change because we don't know how to pray. When the going gets rough in collabs, you must learn both how to humble yourself before the Lord as well as being confident of God's blessing for your life and the ministry.

Heb. 4:14-16, 5:7-10

Become a Worship Leader for the Team

Return to God as the center of everything. Lift God up as the center. Repentance does that. Build on, center on the Word of God and the Promises of God and the glory of God.

Psalms, 2 Corinthians 1:3, Galatians 1:5, Ephesians 1:3, I Peter 1:3

Keep learning to live out of the power of the Gospel

In the process, you will lose your self-consciousness and grow in God-consciousness- his love, his kingdom, his purposes. Too much self-consciousness does not bring confidence to the team. But when you are taught by God deeply about his glory and love and purposes, and share that with the team, they will let God lead them through you.

What's your take-away from tonight?

Where/how are you going to apply that in your life?

Schedule:

Feb 15 - Collabs, Power & Submission

Feb 22 - Collabs and Conflict

