

Under God
Matthew 8:5-13

- I. As a military man, the centurion understood authority.
- A. He knew that he was under the authority of Rome.
 - 1. Rome had delegated authority to him.
 - (a) A centurion was in charge of 100 soldiers.
 - (b) If they failed to obey, he had authority to put to death.
 - 2. His authority over men came from the authority over him.
 - B. The Roman world could be quite brutal.
 - 1. For example, they practiced “exposure” of unwanted children.
 - 2. The Roman legions were brutal in war.
 - C. But the centurion had a compassionate heart (Matthew 8:5-6).
 - 1. A servant who is paralyzed can’t do his job.
 - (a) He could be considered a burden rather than an asset.
 - (b) Roman society would say it is okay to throw the servant out.
 - (a) But the centurion had compassion.
 - (b) He is probably a “God fearer,” a Gentile who acknowledged God.
 - (c) He calls Jesus, “Lord.”
 - (d) Jesus affirms his great faith, then speaks of Gentiles in the Kingdom (Matthew 8 :11-12).
 - 3. So, he is looking to an authority above Rome, to God.
 - (a) That’s risky. Caesar was considered the “Son of God.”
 - D. Sometimes we are under a secular authority that is brutal.
 - 1. It could be government authority, or corporate authority.
 - (a) Amazon business model.
 - (b) What do we do? Remember a higher authority.
 - 2. As you exercise authority, remember Jesus as authority and model.
 - (a) We are to treat others as the King has treated us.
 - (b) We have experienced the compassion of God.
 - (c) He has been merciful, kind, gracious, generous, even when we have sinned.
 - (d) How do we treat people when they have sinned?
 - (e) We follow the example of Jesus.
- II. Our greatest good is always found by staying under God.
- A. The safest place to be is under the authority of God.
 - 1. “Because you are my help, I sing in the shadow of your wings.”
 - (a) “help”: a covenantal partner who rescues.
 - (b) Why sing? Because there is safety, security, peace.
 - B. If you have trusted Christ, you are in covenant with God/people.
 - 1. When we do communion, we renew sacred oaths.
 - (a) You might say, “I never took an oath. I just believed.”
 - 2. To come to know God is to enter into covenant.

- (a) God didn’t ask Adam, Abraham, Noah, if they wanted to be in covenant.
 - (b) To be in relationship with God means a covenantal relationship.
 - (c) No covenant, no salvation.
 - C. God promises love, loyalty, and faithfulness to covenant partners.
 - 1. He also requires love, loyalty, and faithfulness.
 - (a) This requires trust.
 - 2. Why do we sin? Because we think it will be good for us.
 - (a) We think it will be fulfilling (life).
 - (b) We think it will bring meaning.
 - (c) We think it will make our situation better.
 - (d) Put any sin in that question and the answer is the same.
 - 3. When we evaluate it that way, we’re already in trouble.
 - (a) We are being tempted.
 - 4. The real question is not what sin will do for me, it’s God’s character. Is God good, trustworthy, truthful?
 - (a) Has he come through for me (or his people) in the past?
 - (b) Can I step out in trust and do life his way?
 - D. To break covenant with people is to break covenant with God.
- III. There is a contrast between the two Adams (Adam and Jesus, the 2nd Ad.)
- A. The first Adam believed the lie.
 - 1. Implied: God is just controlling you, taking away your freedom.
 - (a) Aren’t we tempted to see God’s boundaries like that?
 - (b) So, Adam took control and did life his way.
 - (c) Did he gain freedom? No, he was taken captive.
 - (d) Sin always takes away freedom.
 - 2. Adam stepped out from under God.
 - (a) Death was the result. Sin always results in death.
 - (b) It’s fruit is brokenness, chaos, and pain.
 - B. In creation, God brought order out of chaos. It was good!
 - 1. Inciting rebellion, Satan brought chaos out of order.
 - (a) Broken relationships and trust (vertical and horizontal).
 - (b) Adam’s son murdered his other son (fruit of death).
 - C. In contrast, Jesus kept trusting in the Father’s character.
 - 1. How did he fight the lies and temptations?
 - (a) He quoted God’s Word. He was taking a stand of trust.
 - (b) He spoke truth to lies. He was counterpunching, parrying.
 - 2. Jesus was able to withstand great pressure because he saw the Father accurately.
 - 3. To strengthen your trust, memorize and meditate on appropriate Scriptures.
 - 4. Remind your heart that there is no better place to be than under God!