

All Authority in Heaven and Earth

By Scott Moller

“Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.’” (Matthew 28:18 NIV)

In chapter 19 of the Gospel of John there is an amazing exchange between Jesus and Pilate about authority. Pilate is questioning Jesus but it says, “*Jesus gave him no answer*” (19:9b). This had to be a great surprise to Pilate since he was probably expecting Jesus to beg him for His life. In exasperation Pilate asks, “*Do you refuse to speak to me?...Don’t you realize I have the **power** either to free you or crucify you?*” (19:10) Jesus answered, “*You would have no **power** over me if it were not given to you from above*” (19:11a). This response by Jesus made Pilate want to release Him all the more.

By earthly standards it appeared that Jesus was on trial and that Pilate had all of the authority and power. In truth, Pilate was on trial and Jesus had all of the authority and power. Jesus makes it very clear in John 10:17-18 that “*the reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father.*” It may have appeared that Pilate had power over Jesus’ life but only to the extent that God, the Father, had allowed for His purposes. Jesus never lost sight of who was really in control of His life.

Jesus sets this perfect example for us to follow. He was never overwhelmed by His circumstances because He always knew who was on the throne in heaven. We too are called to live above the concerns of this world because God is still ruling from heaven.

We may be tempted to excuse ourselves because, after all, we are not Jesus, but the Bible is full of examples of ordinary people just like us who overcame overwhelming odds by trusting in the authority and power of God. King David is one of these examples. When he was confronting Goliath he declared, “*You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty*” (I Samuel 17:45). The rest of Israel saw a giant and trembled in fear. David saw the Lord Almighty and slew the giant.

We too need to take our eyes off the giants in our lives. We must turn our eyes to Jesus, who has authority over everything, including all of our challenges. We will not have victory in this life until we put all of our faith and trust in Jesus.

“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith...” (Hebrews 12:2a)