

## Articles and Sermons :: The Path of Wisdom by Zac Poonen

**The Path of Wisdom by Zac Poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2013/11/16 20:06**

The church is not built by knowledge (doctrine) but by wisdom (Prov.24:3).

Wisdom will make a person submit to all the authorities whom God has placed over him - whether at home, in the church or in society.

Jesus submitted to imperfect foster-parents (Joseph and Mary) throughout the years He was in Nazareth - just because that was what His heavenly Father wanted Him to do. The question there was not whether Joseph and Mary were perfect, but rather what the Father had appointed for Jesus. Joseph and Mary were no doubt God-fearing people. But we must not forget that they were under the old covenant and so were not under grace and therefore could not possibly have had victory over sin. They must have had fights with each other in their home and also had tensions between them - just like all couples have even today who have not entered into the new covenant. Yet the perfect Son of God submitted to those two imperfect people. His first steps were steps of submission to imperfect authorities.

Now if we are to walk along the same way, we too must be willing to submit to any authority that God places over us - however imperfect they may be. That is why we teach children to submit to their parents. That is the first commandment for children; and God's promise to all who obey it is that "it will go well with them". God places so much importance on submission to authority. So if we want it to go well with our children in life, we must teach them obedience.

In the same way, if we want it to go well with us, we too must submit to the imperfect spiritual authorities whom God places over us in the church. The elders who are over us in the Lord are certainly not perfect. But if we are certain that we are in the right local church, then we must submit to the elders appointed by God there. If, however, you are not sure that the local church you are in at present is the right one, then you must seek God about leaving it.

But God will never approve of rebellion against authority.

We must not forget that the elders in several churches are battling to maintain a pure testimony for the Lord. That is certainly NOT an easy task. It is an easy task, however, for brothers and sisters in the church to see faults in their elders and to criticize them and rebel against them.

It is easy for those who have no children to find fault with the way others bring up their children! Those who are wise, however, will keep quiet, knowing how difficult it is to bring up children in godly ways.

It is also good for you to consider this first of all: Has God ever selected you to lead a church anywhere?

If God Himself has never considered you fit enough to exercise spiritual authority anywhere, why do you judge others to whom God has entrusted such spiritual responsibility? You are rebelling against God's appointment. Those elders may be imperfect in many ways. Yet God found them to be better than you! That is why He made them elders. They were the ones whom God selected first in that locality, long before you arrived on the scene. You may be just an immature rebel, full of bright ideas that have never been put into practice. If God has not given you grace to build even one local church for Him, then the wisest thing for you to do is to humble yourself under your elders and to be quiet.

There could, however, be serious problems with the elders in a church. In that case, you should speak about it with a mature older brother elsewhere who can help the situation, and not go around backbiting to others in the church. God can never bless those who sow discord or create confusion in a church. We must learn to remain under submission to the authorities appointed by God.