



Christ Has All Authority
Over Nature

A Teaching Outline

Compiled By Dr. Harold Bollinger

Christ has all authority over nature.

Psalm 89:11

The heavens are yours, the earth also is yours; the world and all it contains, and you have founded them.

God created the heavens and the earth. Jesus was with God in the beginning. Christ has all power over nature.

God ordained all the host.

Isaiah 45:12

"It is I who made the earth, and created man upon it I stretched out the heavens with my hands and I ordained all their host.

God is ruler over light and darkness, over good times and bad times. Our lives are sprinkled with both types of experiences, and both are needed for us to grow spiritually. When good times come, thank God and use your prosperity for him. When bad times come, don't resent them, but ask what you can learn from this refining experience to make you a better servant of God.

I will give my power to one who is pleasing in my sight.

Jeremiah 27:5

"I have made the earth, the men and the beasts which are on the face of the earth by my great power and by my outstretched arm, and I will give it to the one who is pleasing in my sight.

God punished the people of Judah in an unusual way, by appointing a foreign ruler to be his "servant." Nebuchadnezzar was not appointed to proclaim God's message, but to fulfill God's promise of judgment on sin. Because God is in control of all events, he uses whomever he wants. God may use unlikely people or circumstances to correct you. Be ready to accept God's guidance, even if it comes from unexpected sources.

The nature of adoption

John 1:12-13

But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name,

All who welcome Jesus Christ as Lord of their lives are reborn spiritually, receiving new life from God. Through faith in Christ, this new birth changes us from the inside out—rearranging our attitudes, desires, and motives. Being born makes you physically alive and places you in your parents' family (1:13).

Being born of God makes you spiritually alive and puts you in God's family (1:12). Have you asked Christ to make you a new person? This fresh start in life is available to all who believe in Christ.

The nature of God's anger

Who can stand before His indignation? Who can endure the burning of His anger? His wrath is poured out like fire and the rocks are broken up by Him.

No person on earth can safely defy God, the Almighty, and the Creator of all the universe. God, who controls the sun, the galaxies, and the vast stretches beyond, also controls the rise and fall of nations. How could a small temporal kingdom like Assyria, no matter how powerful, challenge God's awesome power?

If only Assyria could have looked ahead to see the desolate mound of rubble that it would become—yet God would still be alive and well! Don't defy God; he will be here forever with greater power than that of all armies and nations combined.

The nature of God's assurance.

Psalm 13:5

But I have trusted in your lovingkindness; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

David was faithful to God and trusted wholeheartedly in him, but he felt the pressure of his problems as much as anyone. Instead of giving up or giving in, however, David held on to his faith. In times of despair, it is much harder to hold on than to give up. But if you give up on God, you give in to a life of despair.

The Nature of God's beauty.

Job 38:31

"Can you bind the chains of the Pleiades, or loose the cords of Orion?"

These are star constellations, and they are all under God's control.

The temporal nature of beauty.

1 Peter 1:24

For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away:

Quoting Isaiah 40:6-8, Peter reminds believers that everything in this life—possessions, accomplishments, people—will eventually fade away and disappear. Only God's will, word, and work are permanent. We must stop grasping the temporary and begin focusing our time, money, and energy on the permanent: the Word of God and our eternal life in Christ.

Christ's authority over nature.

Matthew 8:23-27

When He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him.

The boat used here was probably the kind familiar to many of Jesus' disciples who were fishermen. Josephus, an ancient historian, wrote that there were usually more than 300 fishing boats on the Sea of Galilee at one time. This boat was large enough to hold Jesus and his 12 disciples and was powered both by oars and sails. During a storm, however, the sails were taken down to keep them from ripping and to make the boat easier to control.

The nature of Christ

John 1:14

And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

"The Word became human." By doing so, Christ became (1) *the perfect teacher*— in Jesus' life we see how God thinks and therefore how we should think (Philippians 2:5-11); (2) *the perfect example*—as a model of what we are to become, he shows us how to live and gives us the power to live that way (1 Peter 2:21);

(3) *The perfect sacrifice*— Jesus came as a sacrifice for all sins, and his death satisfied God's requirements for the removal of sin (Colossians 1:15-23).

The nature of confusion

1 Corinthians 14:33

For God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

The way the Corinthians were speaking in tongues was helping no one because believers did not understand what was being said, and unbelievers thought that the people speaking in tongues were crazy. Speaking in tongues was supposed to be a *sign* to unbelievers (as it was in Acts 2). After speaking in tongues, believers were supposed to explain what was said and give the credit to God. The unsaved people would then be convinced of a spiritual reality and motivated to look further into the Christian faith. While this is one way to reach unbelievers, Paul says that clear preaching is usually better (14:5).

The nature of conversion

Deuteronomy 4:30-31

"When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days you will return to the LORD your God and listen to His voice.

God promised the Israelites that they would find him when they searched with all their hearts and souls. God is knowable and wants to be known—but we have to want to know him. Acts of service and worship must be accompanied by sincere devotion of the heart.

As Hebrews 11:6 says, "Anyone who wants to come to him must believe that God exists and that he rewards those who sincerely seek him." God will reward those who pursue a relationship with him.

The nature of Covetousness

Proverbs 21:26

All day long he is craving, while the righteous gives and does not hold back.

God does not want our sacrifices of time, energy, and money alone; he wants our heart—our complete love and devotion. We may be able to bribe people (21:14), but we cannot bribe God.

Creation shows God's nature.

Job 12:7-10

"But now ask the beasts, and let them teach you; and the birds of the heavens, and let them tell you.

Job continued to maintain that his friends had completely misunderstood the reason for his suffering. Job did not know it either, but he was certain that his friends' reasons were both narrow-minded and incorrect.

Deception in the fallen human nature

Jeremiah 17:9

"The heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?

God makes it clear why we sin—it's a matter of the heart. Our heart is inclined toward sin from the time we are born. It is easy to fall into the routine of forgetting and forsaking God. But we can still choose whether or not to continue in sin. We can yield to a specific temptation, or we can ask God to help us resist temptation when it comes.

The nature of demons

Luke 10:17-18

The seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name."

The disciples had seen tremendous results as they ministered in Jesus' name and with his authority. They were elated by the victories they had witnessed, and Jesus shared their enthusiasm. He helped them get their priorities right, however, by reminding them of their most important victory—that their names were registered in heaven. This honor was more important than any of their accomplishments. As we see God's wonders at work in and through us, we should not lose sight of the greatest wonder of all—our heavenly citizenship.

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The nature of discernment

Folly is joy to him who lacks sense, but a man of understanding walks straight.

People with one way of thinking—are likely to miss the right road because they have closed their minds to any new options. We need the help of those who can enlarge our vision and broaden our perspective. Seek out the advice of those who know you and have a wealth of experience. Build a network of advisers. Then be open to new ideas, and be willing to weigh their suggestions carefully.

The nature of discipleship

John 6:45

It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

We are taught by God through the Bible, our experiences, the thoughts the Holy Spirit brings, and relationships with other Christians. Are you open to God's teaching?

Divine power over nature

Matthew 14:20

And they all ate and were satisfied. They picked up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve full baskets.

Jesus multiplied five loaves and two fish to feed over 5,000 people. What he was originally given seemed insufficient, but in his hands it became more than enough. We often feel that our contribution to Jesus is meager, but he can use and multiply whatever we give him, whether it is talent, time, or treasure. It is when we give them to Jesus that our resources are multiplied.

The nature of eternal life

John 17:3

"This is eternal life that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

How do we get eternal life? Jesus tells us clearly here—by knowing God the Father himself through his Son, Jesus Christ. Eternal life requires entering into a personal relationship with God in Jesus Christ.

When we admit our sin and turn away from it, Christ's love lives in us by the Holy Spirit.

The nature of eternity

Psalm 90:4

For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday when it passes by, Or as a watch in the night.

Moses reminds us that a thousand years are like a day to the Lord. God is not limited by time. It's easy to get discouraged when years pass and the world doesn't get better. We sometimes wonder if God is able to see the future. But don't assume that God has our limitations. God is completely unrestricted by time. Because he is eternal, we can depend on him.

The nature of evangelism

Isaiah 52:7

How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace and brings good news of happiness, who announces salvation, and says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

God says that the feet of those who bring good news are "beautiful." It is a wonderful privilege to be able to share God's Good News with others, his news of redemption, salvation, and peace. To whom do you need to give the Good News?

The nature of exhortation

Hebrews 3:13

But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

Our hearts turn away from the living God when we stubbornly refuse to believe him. If we persist in our unbelief, God will eventually leave us alone in our sin. But God can give us new hearts, new desires, and new spirits (Ezekiel 36:22-27). To prevent having an unbelieving heart, stay in fellowship with other believers, talk daily about your mutual faith, be aware of the deceitfulness of sin (it attracts but also destroys), and encourage each other with love and concern.

The nature of faith

Hebrews 11:6

And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

Believing that God exists is only the beginning; even the demons believe that much (James 2:19, 20). God will not settle for mere acknowledgment of his existence. He wants your faith that leads to a personal, dynamic relationship.

The nature of false doctrine

Jude 1:3-4

Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints.

Jude emphasizes the important relationship between correct doctrine and true faith. The truth of the Bible must not be compromised because it gives us the real facts about Jesus and salvation. The Bible is inspired by God and should never be twisted or manipulated; when it is, we can become confused over right and wrong and lose sight of the only path that leads to eternal life. Before writing about salvation, then, Jude felt he had to set his readers back on the right track, calling them back to the basics of their faith. Then the way to salvation would be clearer. "His holy people" refers to all believers.

(1) We can defend the faith by knowing the truth. We do that by studying the Bible. Don't ever imagine that pastors and seminary professors hold a monopoly on this task. Without study, you cannot know what to defend. You must understand the basic doctrines of the faith so that you can recognize false doctrines and prevent wrong teaching from undermining your faith and hurting others.

(2) We can defend the faith as we grow personally with Christ. While knowledge is important, your personal relationship with Christ is essential. Through that relationship, God has given you the Holy Spirit as a teacher. Unattached to God, you may know everything, but understand nothing. Attached to Christ, you are given spiritual understanding as well as experiences with Christ that underscore your faith.

(3) We can defend the faith by remaining unified on the essentials. While Christians can certainly disagree on many nonessentials (music in worship, methods of worship, methods of outreach), we must always defend the truth of the basics of our faith as found in God's Word.

Even some of our churches today have false ("ungodly") teachers who have "wormed" their way in and are twisting the Bible's teachings to justify their own opinions, lifestyle, or wrong behavior. In doing this, they may gain temporary freedom to do as they wish, but they will discover that in distorting Scripture they are playing with fire. God will judge them for excusing, tolerating, and promoting sin.

The nature of false miracles

2 Thessalonians 2:9

That is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders,

This evil man will use "counterfeit power and signs and miracles" to deceive and draw a following. Miracles from God can help strengthen our faith and lead people to Christ, but all miracles are not necessarily from God. Christ's miracles were significant, not just because of their power, but because of their purpose—to help, to heal, and to point us to God. The man of lawlessness will have power to do amazing things, but his power will be from Satan. He will use this power to destroy and to lead people away from God and toward himself. If any so-called religious personality draws attention only to himself or herself, his or her work is not from God.

The nature of families

Psalm 128:3

Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine within your house, your children like olive plants around your table.

A good family life is a reward for following God. The values outlined in God's Word include love, service, honesty, integrity, and prayer. These help all relationships, and they are especially vital to home life. Is your home life heavenly or hectic? Reading and obeying God's Word is a good place to start to make your family all that it should be.

The nature of fasting

Ezra 10:6

Then Ezra rose from before the house of God and went into the chamber of Jehohanan the son of Eliashib although he went there, he did not eat bread nor drink water, for he was mourning over the unfaithfulness of the exiles.

Following Ezra's earnest prayer, the people confessed their sin to God. Then they asked for direction in restoring their relationship with God. True repentance does not end with words of confession—that would be mere lip service. It must lead to changed attitudes and behavior. When you sin and are truly sorry, confess this to God, ask his forgiveness, and accept his grace and mercy.

Then, as an act of thankfulness for your forgiveness, make the needed corrections.

The sinful nature of the flesh

Galatians 5:24

Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

In order to accept Christ as Savior, we need to turn from our sins and willingly nail our sinful nature to the cross. This doesn't mean, however, that we will never see traces of its evil desires again. As Christians we still have the capacity to sin, but we have been set free from sin's power over us and no longer have to give in to it. We must daily commit our sinful tendencies to God's control, daily crucify them, and moment by moment draw on the Spirit's power to overcome them.

The nature of God's glory

Psalm 19:1

The heavens are telling of the glory of God; and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.

As God reveals himself through Scripture (19:7-11), we learn about his holiness and our sinfulness. As God reveals himself through daily experiences (19:12-14), we learn about his gracious forgiveness that frees us from guilt.

The nature of God

John 4:24

"God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

The woman brought up a popular theological issue—the correct place to worship. But her question was a smoke screen to keep Jesus away from her deepest need. Jesus directed the conversation to a much more important point: The *location* of worship is not nearly as important as the *attitude* of the worshipers.

The nature of hope

1 Corinthians 9:10

Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops.

Jesus said that workers deserve their wages (Luke 10:7). Paul echoes this thought and urges the church to be sure to pay their Christian workers.

We have the responsibility to care for our pastors, teachers, and other spiritual leaders. It is our duty to see that those who serve us in the ministry are fairly and adequately compensated. When the annual budget of your church comes up for review, support a proper salary for your ministers and staff.

The nature of human authority.

Romans 13:1

Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities for there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

Are there times when we should not obey the government? We should never allow government to force us to disobey God. Jesus and his apostles never disobeyed the government for personal reasons; when they disobeyed, it was in order to follow God's moral standards.

Their disobedience was not cheap: They were threatened, beaten, thrown into jail, tortured, or executed for their convictions. Like them, if we are compelled to disobey, we must be ready to accept the consequences.

Human nature

Matthew 15:19

"For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.

We work hard to keep our outward appearance attractive, but what is deep down in our heart (where others can't see) is more important to God. What are you like inside? When people become Christians, God makes them different on the inside. He will continue the process of change inside them if they only ask. God wants us to have healthy thoughts and motives, not just healthy bodies.

An invitation is given to open your heart's door to Jesus

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References:

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Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print

