



# KINGDOM AUTHORITY

LIVING UNDER GOD'S RULE

TONY EVANS

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# Contents

About the Author . . . . .	5
How to Get the Most from This Study . .	6
Tips for Leading a Small Group . . . . .	7

## WEEK 1

The Concept of Kingdom Authority . . .	11
--	----

## WEEK 2

The Opponent to Kingdom Authority . .	27
---------------------------------------	----

## WEEK 3

The Basis of Kingdom Authority . . . . .	43
--	----

## WEEK 4

The Key to Kingdom Authority . . . . .	59
--	----

## WEEK 5

Prayer & Kingdom Authority . . . . .	75
--------------------------------------	----

## WEEK 6

Scripture & Kingdom Authority . . . . .	91
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## About the Author

Dr. Tony Evans is the founder and senior pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas, founder and president of The Urban Alternative, former chaplain of the NBA's Dallas Mavericks, and author of over 100 books, booklets, and Bible studies. The first African American to earn a doctorate of theology from Dallas Theological Seminary, he has been named one of the twelve most effective preachers in the English-speaking world by Baylor University. Dr. Evans holds the honor of writing and publishing the first full-Bible commentary and study Bible by an African American.

His radio broadcast, *The Alternative with Dr. Tony Evans*, can be heard on more than fourteen thousand US outlets daily and in more than 130 countries.

Dr. Evans launched the Tony Evans Training Center in 2017, an online learning platform providing quality seminary-style courses for a fraction of the cost to any person in any place. The goal is to increase Bible literacy not only in lay people but also in those Christian leaders who cannot afford nor find the time for formal ongoing education.

Dr. Tony Evans was married to his late wife, Lois, for nearly fifty years. They are the proud parents of four, grandparents of thirteen and great-grandparents of four.

*For more information, visit [TonyEvans.org](http://TonyEvans.org).*

# HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM THIS STUDY

This Bible study book includes six weeks of content for group and personal study.

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## GROUP SESSIONS

Regardless of what day of the week your group meets, each week of content begins with the group session. Each group session uses the following format to facilitate meaningful interaction among group members, with God’s Word, and with the teaching of Dr. Evans.

**START.** This page includes questions to get the conversation started and to introduce the video teaching.

**WATCH.** This page includes key points from Dr. Evans’s teaching, along with blanks for taking notes as participants watch the video.

**DISCUSS.** This page includes questions and statements that guide the group to respond to Dr. Evans’s video teaching and to relevant Bible passages.

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## PERSONAL STUDY

Each week provides three days of Bible study and learning activities for individual engagement between group sessions: “Hit the Streets” and two Bible studies.

**HIT THE STREETS.** This section highlights practical steps for taking the week’s teaching and putting it into practice.

**BIBLE STUDIES.** These personal studies revisit stories, Scriptures, and themes introduced in the videos in order to understand and apply them on a personal level.

# TIPS FOR LEADING A SMALL GROUP

Follow these guidelines to prepare for each group session.

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## PRAYERFULLY PREPARE

**REVIEW.** Review the weekly material and group questions ahead of time.

**PRAY.** Be intentional about praying for each person in the group.

Ask the Holy Spirit to work through you and the group discussion as you point to Jesus each week through God's Word.

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## MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS

Create a comfortable environment. If group members are uncomfortable, they'll be distracted and therefore not engaged in the group experience. Plan ahead by considering details like seating, temperature, lighting, food and drink, surrounding noise, and general cleanliness.

At best, thoughtfulness and hospitality show guests and group members they're welcome and valued in whatever environment you choose to gather. At worst, people may never notice your effort, but they're also not distracted. Do everything in your ability to help people focus on what's most important: connecting with God, with the Bible, and with one another.

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## INCLUDE OTHERS

Your goal is to foster a community in which people are welcome just as they are but encouraged to grow spiritually. Always be aware of opportunities to include any people who visit the group and to invite new people to join your group.

An inexpensive way to make first-time guests feel welcome or to invite someone to get involved is to give them their own copies of this Bible study book.

## ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION

A good small group experience has the following characteristics.

**EVERYONE PARTICIPATES.** Encourage everyone to ask questions, share responses, or read aloud.

**NO ONE DOMINATES—NOT EVEN THE LEADER.** Be sure that your time speaking as a leader takes up less than half of your time together as a group. Politely guide discussion if anyone dominates.

**NOBODY IS RUSHED THROUGH QUESTIONS.** Don't feel that a moment of silence is a bad thing. People often need time to think about their responses to questions they've just heard or to gain courage to share what God is stirring in their hearts.

**INPUT IS AFFIRMED AND FOLLOWED UP.** Make sure you point out something true or helpful in a response. Don't just move on. Build community with follow-up questions, asking how other people have experienced similar things or how a truth has shaped their understanding of God and the Scripture you're studying. People are less likely to speak up if they fear that you don't actually want to hear their answers or that you're looking for only a certain answer.

**GOD AND HIS WORD ARE CENTRAL.** Opinions and experiences can be helpful, but God has given us the truth. Trust God's Word to be the authority and God's Spirit to work in people's lives. You can't change anyone, but God can. Continually point people to the Word and to active steps of faith.



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## **KEEP CONNECTING**

Think of ways to connect with group members during the week.

Participation during the group session is always improved when members spend time connecting with one another outside the group sessions. The more people are comfortable with and involved in one another's lives, the more they'll look forward to being together. When people move beyond being friendly to truly being friends who form a community, they come to each session eager to engage instead of merely attending.

Encourage group members with thoughts, commitments, or questions from the session by connecting through emails, texts and social media.

When possible, build deeper friendships by planning or spontaneously inviting group members to join you outside your regularly scheduled group time for meals, fun activities, or projects around your home, church, or community.



WEEK 1

**THE CONCEPT  
OF KINGDOM  
AUTHORITY**

# Start

## Welcome to group session 1.

Imagine trying to view your life through glasses that have never been cleaned. After years of wear and tear, you would have scratches, grime, and dust all over them. Imagine trying to drive with them on. Or even having a conversation with them on. Or watching a movie.

The videos for this study were filmed in Ireland, where everywhere you look is a more brilliant shade of green. The expansiveness of the scenery testified to God's great power and creative prowess. But if dirty glasses were obscuring your vision, you wouldn't be able to take it all in! The beauty would still be there, but you'd be incapable of fully appreciating it.

**Why is it important to be able to see clearly  
as you navigate your physical life?**

**Why is it important to be able to see clearly  
as you navigate your spiritual life?**

When we are unable to see clearly, it is difficult to know what steps to take or to recognize dangers ahead of us. Moving through life unimpeded often requires keen physical eyesight. But did you know that our spiritual eyesight is just as critical? In fact, spiritual eyesight is even more critical. Without a right spiritual perspective, we will not be able to see the truth and will miss out on recognizing how to access the kingdom authority which is ours to have. That's why Paul prayed in Ephesians 1:18 that our spiritual eyes (the eyes of our hearts) would be opened and enlightened.

As we start our study through the subject of kingdom authority, we must start with the eyes of our hearts. It's only when we see God for who He truly is that we can know how to align ourselves underneath His righteous rule and tap into the spiritual power we need to live a life of kingdom authority.

Ask someone to pray then watch group session 1.

## Watch

Use this space to take notes on video session 1.

## Discuss

Use the following questions to discuss the video teaching.

One of the primary things Paul wanted believers in Ephesus to see once the eyes of their hearts were opened was where they were standing—where they were located, spiritually. Paul tells us this in Ephesians 2:4-6:

*But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our wrongdoings, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*

EPHESIANS 2:4-6

It's easy to forget where you are when you cannot see. Have you ever had to open your eyes during a dream in order to figure out if you were in the dream or the safety of your own bed? That's okay when you are dreaming but it's not okay when you are trying to live your life with kingdom authority.

**Share about a time when you got lost.  
What did you learn through that experience?**

**What are some reasons it's important for believers to know  
where they stand in relationship to God and His kingdom?**

In the video, Dr. Evans talks to us from a very high place called the Cliffs of Moher in Ireland and it is one of the most scenic locations on the planet. These cliffs rise to just over seven hundred feet at their highest point. Paul wants us to realize where we are, sharpen our spiritual perspective, and to help us see that we are seated with Christ in the heavenly realm.

**Jesus is on the seat of authority—the throne from which He  
reigns. Why does it matter that we are seated there with Him?**

**How does it change your perspective to realize you're  
seated with Christ on high in the heavenly places?**

## The Concept of Kingdom Authority

Dr. Evans set the stage for our study on kingdom authority by letting us know where the battles in life really take place. He taught that everything visible and physical is first preceded by something invisible and spiritual. So, if you want to address the visible, physical realm, you must understand, identify, and address the invisible, spiritual cause. Because if you miss the invisible, spiritual cause, you will not understand how to address the visible, physical realities. There is a spiritual realm of authority, and there is a battle that takes place in that realm.

**Share a time you witnessed the invisible, spiritual realm impacting your physical reality.**

Dr. Evans defined kingdom authority as *the divinely delegated right and responsibility for believers to act on God's behalf in ruling His creation underneath the Lordship of Jesus Christ.*

**Why do believers need to grab hold of and exercise this God-given authority? What happens if we don't?**

**What are some practical steps we can take to engage with God and develop our spiritual eyesight?**

Let's end our Bible study time in prayer.

### *Prayer*

Lord, in times that it becomes easy to see only that which is right before our eyes, help us to see from Your vantage point instead. Remind us that we are seated on high with You and need to view all of life through a spiritual lens. In Jesus's name, amen.

HIT THE STREETS

# Seeing the Spiritual

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Have you ever noticed when you are in an airplane how small and orderly everything looks down below? That's because you are looking at it from way up. But when you land on the ground, chaos ensues as you enter traffic and try and find which way to go because you can't see the big picture.

Until you learn to exchange human wisdom for the big picture—divine wisdom—you'll stay stuck in the chaos, mess, and traffic jams of life. Whether it be personal traffic, familial traffic, circumstantial traffic, or any other, if you don't learn to view the routes and pathways of life from the vantage point of heaven, you won't be able to access the kingdom authority that rightfully belongs to you.

You start from where you're seated. Therefore, you must learn to view all of life from an authoritative kingdom perspective. When you learn to operate and make your decisions from where you are truly seated with Christ, you will access the authority you need to live out the fullness of God's plans.

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**Below are three key passages that describe the spiritual realm and how to access it. Read them slowly, then use the space provide to summarize them in your own words.**

*While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*

2 CORINTHIANS 4:18

**Personal Summary:**



## The Concept of Kingdom Authority

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*Set your mind on the things that are above,  
not on the things that are on earth.*

COLOSSIANS 3:2

**Personal Summary:**

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*“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,”  
declares the LORD. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are  
My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.”*

ISAIAH 55:8-9

**Personal Summary:**

**What is your primary takeaway from meditating on these truths?**

BIBLE STUDY 1

# The War for Authority

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If you were to travel to Northern Ireland from one of the locations we visited to film this Bible study, you would literally be traveling to another country. In fact, you would even need to exchange your euros for pounds if you wanted to gas up your car or go to a restaurant or buy some souvenirs.

Even though they occupy the same island and the land may appear to be the same land to the average viewer other than the flags flying above them, the governments of Ireland and Northern Ireland are distinct. Ireland is an independent nation and Northern Ireland is a part of the United Kingdom and governed by the British. As a result, euros are not accepted currency in Northern Ireland, just as the British pound is not an accepted currency in the remaining parts of the island not governed by the Brits.

The currency reflects a much deeper matter, though, and that is the matter of ownership. It involves the matter of governance. It includes the matter of ultimate allegiance by the citizens and rule by the authorities. While the cows, sheep, and the pastures may not differ from one side of the border to the other, the governments of these nations differ significantly. Where authority lies and how that authority can be applied matters.

Visiting Ireland brought this insight to my mind. While a battle for authority can often pop up between nations, states, or regions in our world, a larger conflict looms higher up. That is the conflict in the spiritual realm itself. It is a conflict for spiritual authority and the right to rule. A battle is being waged between God and the enemy, Satan. As believers we know God has ultimate authority, but that doesn't stop Satan from waging war. We see this war playing out in the Scriptures and in our lives.

*To review, kingdom authority is the divinely delegated right and responsibility for believers to act on God's behalf in ruling His creation underneath the Lordship of Jesus Christ. What changes when we begin to take hold of our kingdom authority?*

## The Concept of Kingdom Authority

Have you ever embraced your kingdom authority? If so, how has that benefited your spiritual life? If not, why not?

Name some strategies Satan uses to limit or reduce the use of spiritual authority in believers.

Let's turn our attention to a biblical example that demonstrates the kind of spiritual battle that's always being waged in the spiritual realm. Did you know that Satan can interfere with our prayer life?

Read Daniel 10:10-14 and answer the following questions:

*Then behold, a hand touched me and shook me on my hands and knees. And he said to me, "Daniel, you who are treasured, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand at your place, for I have now been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia. Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days still future."*

DANIEL 10:10-14

In this passage, we enter into the middle of Daniel's prayer life. He was in his eighties and God gave him a glimpse of a future conflict. The "prince of the kingdom of Persia" was not a human ruler in Persia, but a demonic spirit seeking to influence the political affairs of the earth. The battle was real but God had the upper hand.

## Kingdom Authority

How did Satan interfere with Daniel receiving the answer to his prayer? How long did this interference last?

Does this length of time surprise or concern you in any way? How might this relate to the prayers we offer that haven't been answered?

Unless you and I are aware that Satan actively schemes to disarm us of spiritual authority, we might naively assume that our prayers are just hitting the ceiling because God doesn't care. God does care. God heard and answered Daniel's prayers. But the answer to those prayers wasn't immediate, it was delayed for several weeks. But delayed doesn't always mean denied.

What comfort did God's angel Michael provide Daniel in this passage? What comfort should that provide for us?

Notice the touch and comfort from God in this passage. Daniel was reassured and affirmed in his struggle. Daniel was called "you who are treasured." This passage illustrates that though our prayers may be momentarily thwarted, our kingdom authority is never threatened. If all Daniel saw was the delay, he would have missed God's dedication and deliverance. Spiritual warfare takes place continually. To the degree that you understand how that conflict works itself out you will also know how to effectively navigate it. Satan loves to try and trick followers of Christ out of accessing their full spiritual authority. Satan seeks to interrupt our spiritual lives in a number of ways beyond our prayer lives.

## The Concept of Kingdom Authority

What kind of strategies have you seen or experienced Satan use to confuse or limit kingdom authority?

What would be a good way to remind yourself or others that issues you encounter may actually be rooted in Satan's schemes to disarm you of spiritual authority?

Satan gets us to squander our spiritual authority by leading us to fight the wrong battles. Satan loves to get us caught up in fighting other people such as our family members, spouse, or different demographics or groups of people based on identity politics. But when we fall for his schemes, we wind up fighting the wrong war and the wrong opponent. Understanding who the enemy is helps you to be equipped to defeat the enemy. If we're fighting the wrong battle, we won't win the war.

### *Closing*

As we come to a close on today's personal reflection, take a moment to pray. Spend some time in prayer asking God to align your heart and spirit with Him so that you can access the spiritual authority He has for you. You might also want to pray for the eyes of your heart to be opened to identify the spiritual warfare being waged around you and request discernment on how to respond.

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BIBLE STUDY 2

# When Normalcy Shouldn't Be the Norm

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Have you ever ordered something online only to have it get held up somewhere in the process? You expected to get it the next day, or even in a few days. With the onset of global supply chain issues, our shipping expectations have had to adjust. Things don't arrive as quickly as they used to.

But as time moves on and days turn to weeks, while still the item hasn't arrived, it could cause you to think that something else is going on above and beyond supply chain issues. You probably look at the tracking information to try and locate your item. If nothing shows up, and if enough days have passed, you may stop looking at the tracking information as frequently as you did at first. Especially if the delay lasts several weeks.

I can only imagine what Daniel must have felt when he had prayed to God but did not hear any real response for twenty-one days. That's three full weeks, on a pretty significant prayer need. Did Daniel feel abandoned? Did he feel forgotten? Did he think there might be a glitch in the system? I'm curious if Daniel even began to doubt God's interest in him. Or His willingness to help out.

The good thing about Scripture is that we don't have to guess. Daniel chapter 10 gives us insight into how Daniel felt during that time of waiting.

**Read Daniel 10:2-3 and answer the following questions:**

*In those days, I, Daniel, had been mourning for three entire weeks. I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all until the entire three weeks were completed.*

DANIEL 10:2-3

**What was Daniel's overall demeanor during the three weeks he waited on God's answer?**

## The Concept of Kingdom Authority

Have you ever had to wait on an unanswered prayer, which caused you personal distress? Describe the thoughts you had toward God and toward the situation during that time.

How did Daniel's concern and grief show up in his habits?

Daniel entered a season of mourning to wait on God. The word for *mourning* refers to how one would respond to the death of a family member. Daniel fasted which was normal, but went even further by refusing to clean himself (this is what is meant by ointment). Daniel agonized as he waited.

What does Daniel's grief tell you about the importance of the prayer request?

When have you been in a season like Daniel was in? What changes occurred? How did these changes affect your relationship with God?

When you or I desperately desire an answer to a prayer need, it will often affect what we eat, when we eat, or even how well we sleep. Rather than spend that time worrying, we ought to use these behavioral changes as a reminder to fast and pray. They ought to remind us to go before the Lord more frequently in prayer, asking for His response. What's more, they ought to motivate us to examine our lives and

## Kingdom Authority

alignment under God. Are we trusting God and embracing His kingdom authority and our ability to wield it? It can be a time for introspection as we seek God and His answer to our prayer need.

**How does prayer and making our requests known to  
God connect us to God and His Kingdom plans?**

The delay in God's reply pushed Daniel into a period of mourning and persistent seeking of the Lord. The interesting thing to remember, though, is that God did reply when Daniel prayed initially. It was only that His response got intercepted by demonic forces, causing the agonizing delay Daniel found himself in (see Daniel 10:13). Yet because Daniel responded with intentional pursuit rather than apathetic dismissal of his situation, he willingly tapped into the kingdom authority available to him.

I am sure that you and I have prayer requests hanging out there in the heavenly places that are stuck there not because God has been slow to answer but because His answers are caught up in a spiritual battle being waged in the heavenlies. Yet in the delay we are not disarmed. We can fervently seek God's face like Daniel. Spiritual authority is ours because Jesus won it for us at the cross. Seeking God unites us with God's power.

As we unite with God's power we grow in our faith. Spiritual maturity prepares us to press into God and into His ways in the heat of the battle. It forges our bond with Him and helps us trust Him more. Consider this example from James.

*A prayer of a righteous person, when it is brought about, can accomplish much. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.*

JAMES 5:16-18



## The Concept of Kingdom Authority

**Do you think a person's spiritual maturity and intentions impact the way God supplies answers to prayers? How so?**

If you want to reclaim what the enemy has stolen from you or holds hostage from you, pursue God as a kingdom disciple—a verbal, visible follower of Jesus Christ. Kingdom disciples embrace kingdom authority and pursue God in grief or in great triumph because they trust the ruler of the kingdom and His goals.

**When have circumstances in your life led you to lock onto God and press into Him? What did you learn about Him and His rule in that time?**

Obedience to God and alignment underneath His kingdom rule opens the doors in the heavenly realm that can't be opened without God's help. It frees up angelic help to come to our aid, oftentimes with answers to our prayers. That's what spiritual, kingdom authority entails. It entails the wisdom and discernment needed to tap into God's authority and embrace His rule.

### *Closing*

Pray right now and ask God to reveal to you what areas of your life could use some spiritual growth and development so that you are in alignment under Him. Also ask God for a greater fervency when it comes to continuing to seek Him for the answers to your prayers that have gone unanswered. Praise Him for the times He has shown up in your life in amazing ways.