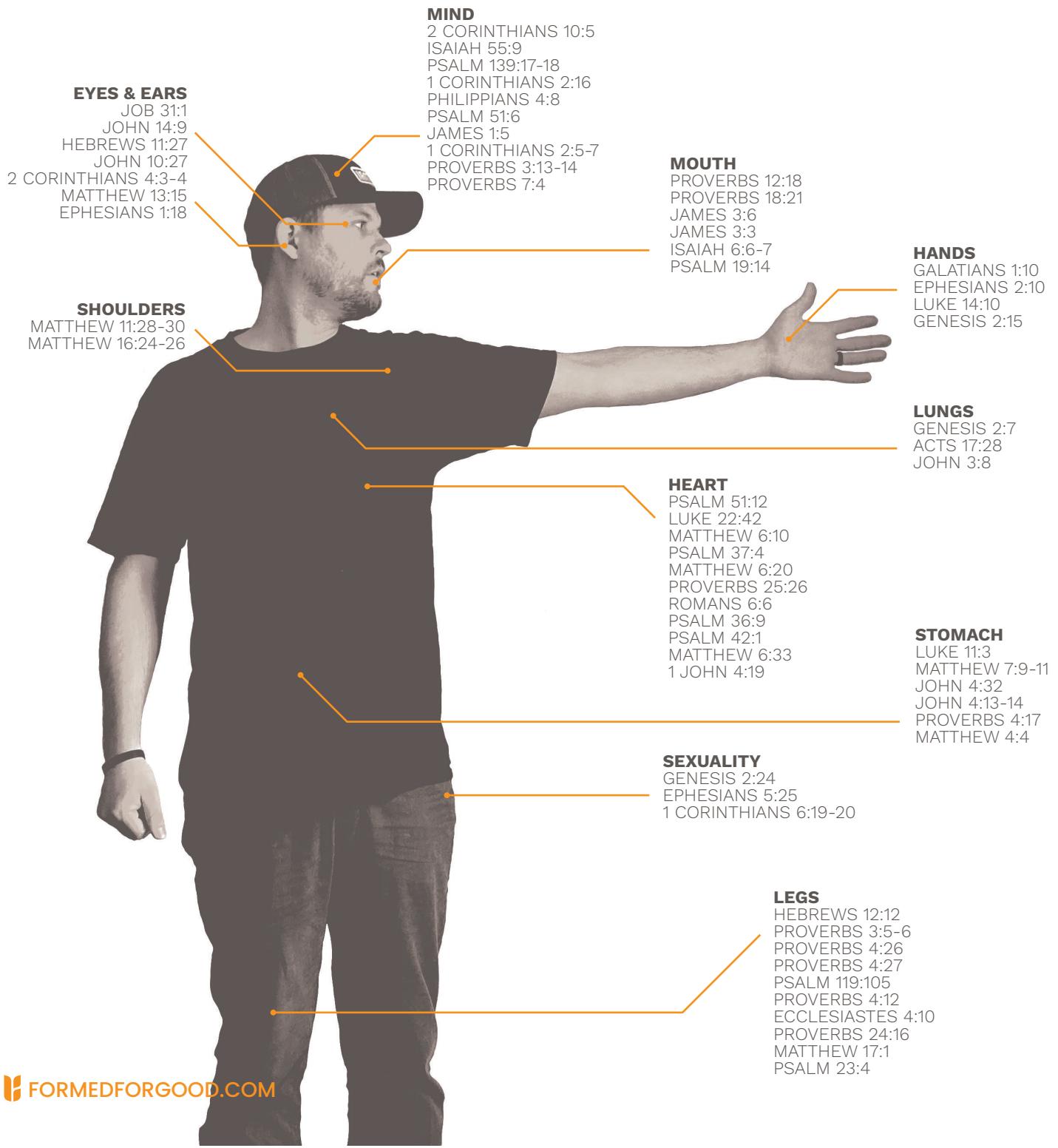


A MAN UNDER AUTHORITY

MATTHEW 8:9

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A MAN UNDER AUTHORITY

WITH SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

God my Father, I've been adopted by your love and invited into your house. You've chosen to make me a son (Ephesians 1:5, 1 John 3:1). Your words form my core identity and are the foundation of my life (Matthew 7:24). But you are not only my Father, you are also the ruler over everything (Psalm 103:19). And You put everything under Jesus Christ who chose the cross and walked first in the resurrection. You've made Jesus the King of all kings and have given him authority over everything, including my life (1 Corinthians 15:27, Ephesians 1:20-21, 1 Timothy 6:15). Therefore I am both a son and a man under authority (Matthew 8:9).

I confess I used to buck authority and thought I could handle things on my own. I wanted to be the writer, director and producer of my own story. I acted like the drafter, foreman and one-man crew of my own projects. I operated in my wisdom and did things my way. My will dominated and I refused to give up my invalid claim lead. I trusted in my own muscle and it did not go well (Psalm 20:7-8). In moments of sinking I mostly defaulted to self-saving rather than asking for help (Matthew 14:30). I mismanaged my life which brought harm to myself and those in my circle. I tried to mend my life on my own but it doesn't work. On his own, no man can be good enough (Romans 3:23).

Though the old man has died, there are days he haunts me and begs for resurrection (Romans 6:6-12). So again I put to death my former ways (Ephesians 4:22). I choose today to stand under the shelter and shield of your authority (Psalm 91:4). I yield my strength and hand over everything I have. I choose humility and come as a child utterly dependent on his parents for survival (James 4:10, Matthew 18:3). You've given me full access to the Spirit of Truth who is my helper and I confess I need your help (John 15:26-27).

MIND

God my Father, Jesus my King, and Holy Spirit my Help, I give you unlimited access to my mind. Help me to arrest every thought and submit it to your judgement (2 Corinthians 10:5). I hold every emotion up to the piercing light of your truth. Your ways are above my ways (Isaiah 55:9). Your thoughts out number all the sediment and sand on the earth (Psalm 139:17-18). I ask for the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16). I want to think your thoughts today. Flood my mind with truth, honor, justice, purity, love and everything that is commendable, excellent and worthy of worship (Philippians 4:8). Infuse my ideas with your creativity. Grant me the generous outpouring of your wisdom (Psalm 51:6, James 1:5). I gladly trade the wisdom of man for the wisdom of heaven (1 Corinthians 2:5-7). The wisdom by which you built the earth and divided the water yields a higher return than silver (Proverbs 3:13-14). I choose to love wisdom like a sister or brother (Proverbs 7:4).

EYES & EARS

God my Father, Jesus my King, and Holy Spirit my Help, I give you my eyes and ears for they are open windows to my soul. Place a lens over my eyes and a filter in my ears. Block the data that is damaging to my inner life. I choose to make a covenant with my eyes and want to be selective about the sounds I let in (Job 31:1). Intensify your light and improve my signal-to-noise ratio so I may see and hear clearly in the chaos. Give me eyes to see the invisible reality and give me ears to hear your voice (John 14:9, Hebrews 11:27, John 10:27). Expose my blindspots and remove the veil that used to bury me in darkness (2 Corinthians 4:3-4). Let me learn to perceive with the eyes and ears of my heart so I may be healed (Matthew 13:15, Ephesians 1:18).

MOUTH

God my Father, Jesus my King, and Holy Spirit my Help, I pray the empty words of this man could be backfilled with your Spirit. Let my speech bring revival instead of death (Proverbs 12:18, Proverbs 18:21); let my voice rebuild rather than tear down; let my tongue refresh those around me rather than setting things on fire (James 3:6). I submit myself to your full censorship. Place a bit in my mouth and set your burning coal to my lips (James 3:3, Isaiah 6:6-7). I want to honor you with the things I say (Psalm 19:14).

SHOULDERS

God my Father, Jesus my King and Holy Spirit my Help, I give you the weight I've shouldered most of my life. My soul is screaming for rest and so I choose to drop the exhausting yoke of self-rule (Matthew 11:28-30). Along with these burdens I set down the sum total of my life. Please give it back to me only after it is fully reformed. I've learned there is no profit in gaining the world so I gladly pick up the cross you've assigned me and welcome the resurrection that comes with it (Matthew 16:24-26).

HEART

God my Father, Jesus my King and Holy Spirit my Help, I surrender my heart to you. Give me the will to give up my will (Psalm 51:12). I relinquish the control I've tried to hold over my life. In the places my will conflicts with yours, let mine drop dead (Luke 22:42). Make my way obsolete. You know what needs to happen so help me get out of the way. I want to be a funnel for your kingdom to come here and now (Matthew 6:10).

I also give you my heart's desires. I hold loosely the good desires you conceived in me. I realize some of these dreams will be fulfilled in this life but many are being stockpiled for the life to come (Psalm 37:4, Matthew 6:20). I look forward to that day with hope and I'm done demanding fast outcomes. In addition, I repent of the wrong desires in my heart, both those I'm aware of and those I'm ignorant to. Help me turn away from the muddy wells where I used to drink (Proverbs 25:26). I ask you to uproot and cut off any attachments I've made with lesser and destructive things (Romans 6:6). Let my primary and fullest desire be for you God, the giver all life (Psalm 36:9). May I pursue you as a thirsty man hunts for water (Psalm 42:1). I choose to chase after your kingdom first, knowing every good gift will follow (Matthew 6:33). And let your love fill any void in my heart so I have enough reserves to love others (1 John 4:19).

LUNGS

God my Father, Jesus my King and Holy Spirit my Help, I trust you for the very breath in my lungs. I am alive because you breathed into the nostrils of man from the beginning (Genesis 2:7). And even today it is the force of your life that keeps me breathing and moving forward (Acts 17:28). Let the wind of your breath move me wherever you please that I may be a man born of your Spirit (John 3:8).

HANDS

God my Father, Jesus my King, and Holy Spirit my Help, I offer my hands for your use. For much of my life I used my hands to grasp for security and to work for the favor of men (Galatians 1:10). I avoided picking up any tool I didn't know how to use for fear of failure. I repent of all that so I can put my hand to the plow and carry out the Holy and good work you've given me to do (Ephesians 2:10). Whether it is for me to carry a shovel at the back of the parade or draft a letter to the king, may I do it in a way that honors you and advances your kingdom (Luke 14:10). Whether planting or protecting, may I work with you rather than alone and for the good others rather than for myself (Genesis 2:15).

STOMACH

God my Father, Jesus my King, and Holy Spirit my Help, I come to your table hungry and parched. Help me find today's bread and water (Luke 11:3). Thank you for the good things you give your sons and daughters (Matthew 7:9-11). I also want to learn about that hidden food you spoke of and about the inner well that never dries up (John 4:32 and 4:13-14). I reject the food of wickedness and the wine of violence offered on every corner (Proverbs 4:17). Show me how to live off the words that come from your mouth (Matthew 4:4).

SEXUALITY

God my Father, Jesus my King, and Holy Spirit my Help, I consecrate my sexuality to you. Pass me through the filter of your pure love. Thank you for the mysterious gift of this union that fulfills and generates life (Genesis 2:24). Empower me to protect, dignify and cherish my wife (or my future wife) and teach me the way of self-sacrifice rather than the way of consumption (Ephesians 5:25). These bodies you gave us are temples made to house your spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). Help me stay in the reality of this sacred truth so I can honor not only my own body, but every person I meet.

LEGS

God my Father, Jesus my King and Holy Spirit my Help, teach me to strengthen my weak knees and level the paths before me (Hebrews 12:12, Proverbs 3:5-6, Proverbs 4:26). Keep me from getting sidetracked (Proverbs 4:27). Cast your light on the trail ahead (Psalm 119:105). Steer me away from the pits and landmines set in front of me by hateful men and spirits. Teach me to run without tripping (Proverbs 4:12). Thank you for my family and my friends who are willing to extend their hands when I fall (Ecclesiastes 4:10). And if I do fall, may I never cease to get back up (Proverbs 24:16). Take me with you up the mountain but also give me faith to trust your presence when I traverse the valley of death (Matthew 17:1, Psalm 23:4).

God my Father, Jesus my King and Holy Spirit my Help, having placed everything I have and all that I am under your authority, I now choose to exercise and operate in that authority. You said I am seated with you at the right hand of your throne and I can draw strength from the same source that empowered your resurrection (Ephesians 1:19-20 and 2:6). In the knowledge of that truth, I bring the Kingdom of your light over everything I have and all that I am. And I bring the kingdom of your Son against the kingdom of darkness (Colossians 1:13). I draw near to you Father, Jesus, Holy Spirit and from there I resist the accuser of the brothers (James 4:7-8, Revelation 12:10). I reject the ancient lie of self-promotion (Genesis 3:4-5) and I take back the birthright promised to your sons before you made the world (Ephesians 1:4-14). I lift high the shield you gave me to block every burning arrow (Ephesians 6:16). Grant me courage to move forward where I should advance and the restraint to stand still when I must hold the ground already taken (Ephesians 6:13).

God my Father, Jesus my King and Holy Spirit my Help, I come as your son, your servant and your friend (John 1:12, Romans 1:1, John 15:15). I am a man under your authority (Matthew 8:9). I yield again today to that authority that I may be covered by it and carry it wherever I go and in whatever I do this day (Psalm 8:5-6).

In the good and powerful name of Jesus, Amen.