

Call to Obedience #409  
PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA  
[www.schultze.org](http://www.schultze.org)

## Credentials Matter

by Reimar Schultze

In many segments of Christianity there has been a considerable assault on credentials. A common accusation is that credentials do not matter; all that matters is relationship.

Let me quickly respond to this by saying: "In the Christian world, you must never separate your credentials from your relationship with Christ." If you abide in Christ, He abides in you. Consequently, the credentials that are in Him will be in you. The scriptures say, *...because as he is, so are we in this world* (1 John 4:17). And my friend, if you do not see credentials in a man, then you do not see Christ in that man. Christianity without credentials is Christianity without a face and it is of the devil.

At the core of this powerful truth is this scripture: *And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities* (Luke 19:17). Notice in this passage that Jesus lays down the foundation for all spiritual authority and influence: faithfulness in that which is *very little*. And the Greek word employed here for *very little* is *elachistos*, which correctly translated by Luther means *that which is least*. It is possible for you to reduce *very little* to something smaller: like that which is *very, very little* and so on. But you cannot reduce that which is least to anything smaller without it losing its character. Are you getting the picture? And this principle of attention to the least being the pathway to spiritual authority is found throughout many books of the Bible.

Now, if you take this seriously as you ought to, this will take all the sloppiness out of your life: all the lateness to church, all the skipping of daily prayers and prayer meetings, all the neglect in witnessing, all the irregularities in obedience, all the indifference to how you dress, how you speak, how you conduct yourselves and how you handle your church giving. Of course, somebody will immediately cry: "Legalism!" My friend, if this is not what the scriptures mean, then what do they mean? Does it not also say that we must give an account of every idle word we have spoken (Matt. 12:36)? Legalism! Shall we attach such a label to our Master, the King of kings? Shall the clay

contend with the potter? No, let God be true and every man a liar. Let us not judge the word of God, but let it judge us. As our God watches over the orbits of the planets, so He sees to it that the mosquitoes have their daily supply. Nothing escapes His loving care.

*Because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.*

I really want you to get this into your heart today because the main reason why the church has been and is so unfruitful, so lacking in authority, power and glory, is because its members keep saying: "little things do not matter, relationship matters." Beloved, the things that are least are the gateways to greatness. It is the Lord Jesus Christ who said that little things matter to Him. As God pays attention to the smallest of things, so do His true children. Again, this is where you get your spiritual authority: your spiritual influence in your family, at work, in your community and in your church. Do not come against Christ in this matter, do not become an antichrist on this issue.

If not from faithfulness, my friend, then from where else do we get our spiritual authority? We expect attention to detail in earthly things: in little things from the doctor, from the auto mechanic, from the computer repair man to the airline pilot. We have our standards and rules in industry, scientific investigation, college education and sports. But when it comes to the things of God, we may become grossly negligent, indifferent and indolent. We prove that we are people of a double standard. This is not the face of God.

Of course there are circumstances beyond our control. For example, we cannot be on time at work or at church one hundred percent of the time. But what I am talking about here are the things that we do have control over. The Lord may have assigned you to pray for one or two hours, or for a half hour most mornings. But if circumstances prevent you from putting in the whole amount in the morning, and if you want to be faithful, you will make it up later that same day. Is this not the case at your workplace where at times you have to work overtime due to circumstances? Jesus prayed all night at times and He arose to pray real early in the morning at other times. There were times when He made up for lost prayer during the day and the Apostle Paul often did likewise, sometimes praying all night. It costs you everything to be used of God. If you want spiritual authority and credentials, you will be faithful in prayer.

There are things which need to be done in daily prayer. Daily, we need to get a spiritual tune-up, to put on our armor, to praise the Lord and drive the

devil off, to get perspective on where we are and where we need to be going, to intercede for certain persons who may fail if we do not pray for them, and to know what to say and how to say it (John 12:49). You cannot skip this; this is your responsibility; this is your ministry; you cannot allow circumstances to take control. You cannot do today's praying tomorrow. It is like a dairy farmer who has to milk the cows twice a day. There is no getting out of it. Or consider an accountant who needs to give each worker a check on payday no matter what. As you need to be faithful in prayer, in like manner you need to be faithful and have a kind, gracious attitude towards your husband or your wife, no matter how you feel. You cannot skip this. Are you getting the point? Do you want God to trust you with anything: a village, a city or ten cities?

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People are often wondering why God does not use them. One reason is because they are sloppy. They are in and out of things. They are unfaithful in that which is least. In one parable, Jesus cast such a man into outer darkness (Matt. 25:30). Be careful. Stewardship is serious business. Watch it!

Credentials matter to God, but they do not fall out of the sky. You have to build them and if you do, you have God's abounding grace and mercy to help you. God looks for faithful stewards. Stewardship is always measured by attention to details. Attention to details is the foundation of any great work.

The word *elachistos* was also employed by Jesus when He said: *...Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me* (Matt. 25:45). Here in this context, Jesus refers to *the least* who are strangers, naked, sick, impoverished, imprisoned, hungry and thirsty: the seemingly least important (verses 42-43). He refers to people who are on the bottom of society. Never mind how and why they got there. We are to pay attention to them. That is also why He said when you make a feast, do not invite your friends who can invite you back, but invite *...the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind* (Luke 14:13).

Little things matter to God and the littlest things of all are really the acid test of the genuineness of our Christianity. As there is no place for sloppiness in the armies of men, so there is none in the armies of God. We are called to be soldiers. We are at war. When a soldier neglects to tie his boots or he forgets his ammunition clip, it becomes a big issue. And beloved, understand and remember that as you make a commitment to be faithful, even in the smallest

of things, that your commitment must be followed through by daily spiritual disciplines.

You say spiritual disciplines are hard. Love has strength to do hard things. Just as muscles carry a man in the physical, so spiritual disciplines will carry you in your walk with God. Add the infilling and the leadership of the Holy Spirit to spiritual disciplines, and you will be delivered from rigidity to be as flexible as the wind. Remember Jesus' words that all they that are born of the Spirit are like the wind (John 3:8).

Finally, if all I said is not convincing to you, recall that Joseph made it from the pit to the palace because of his credentials. Moses was chosen to be the savior of Israel because he was faithful in all his house (Heb. 3:2, 5). These men won God's trust through their credentials. He put both of them over a pagan empire. And do not forget the high credentials God requires for anyone entering the ministry. Credentials matter. Those who have them will not only be placed in positions of spiritual authority in this life, but also hereafter for Jesus said: *And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations* (Rev. 2:26).

In summary, spiritual authority does not come by education, by position, by spiritual gifts, by popes and bishops or by institutions of men, but by faithfulness in that which is least. That means everybody can get it.

If you do not love God with all your heart, this all sounds rather strenuous to you. But if you do love God with all your heart, soul and mind, you will soar as a high altitude eagle in the upper currents of the divine life. Love is addicted to service and energized thereby.

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