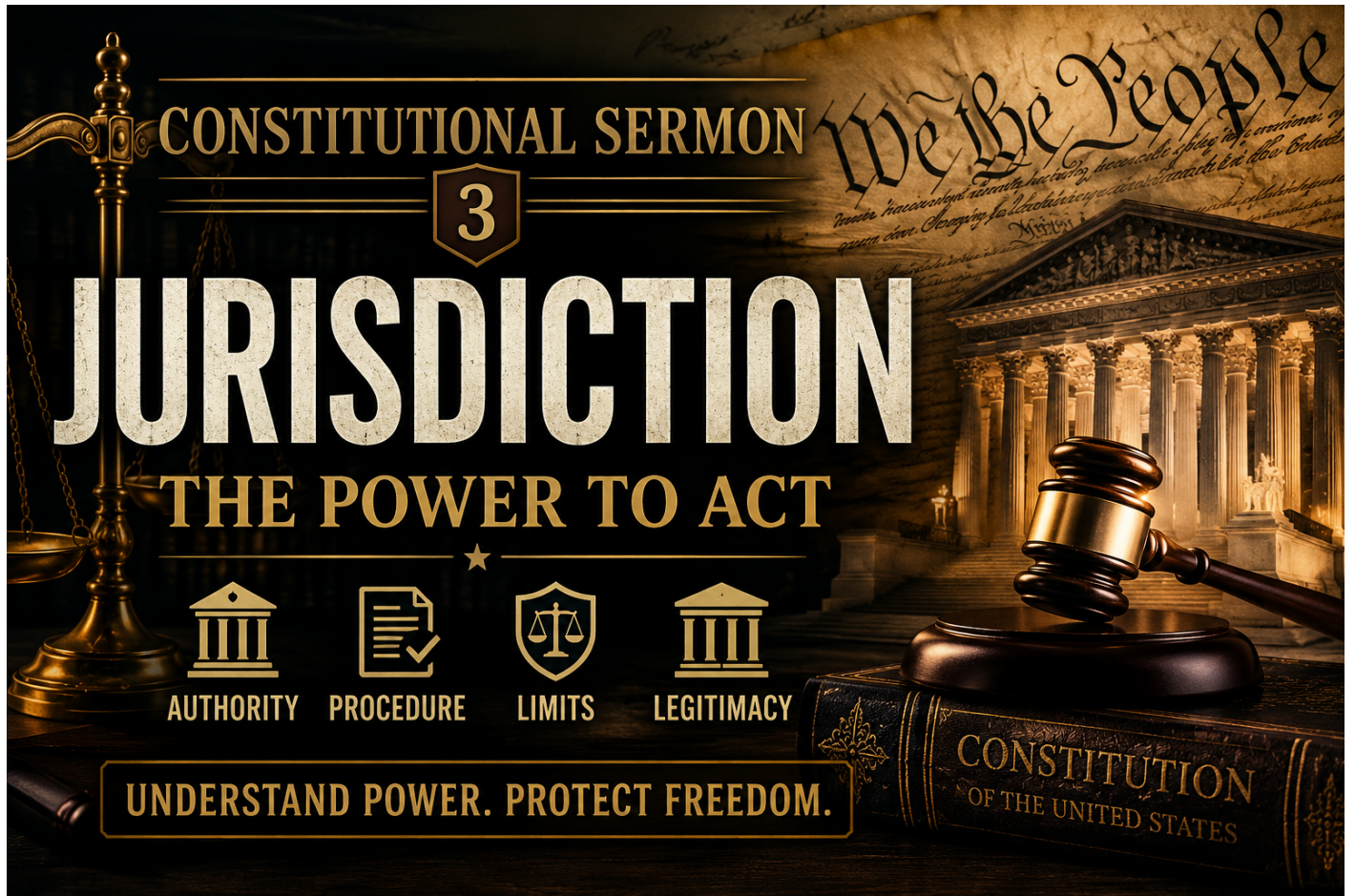




Rock of Truth Church Publication #006

Constitutional Sermon #3 Study Guide

JURISDICTION — THE POWER TO ACT

May 28, 2026

Introduction

This study guide is designed to train students to think structurally, procedurally, and constitutionally. The purpose of this lesson is not simply to memorize legal vocabulary, but to begin understanding how lawful authority operates within organized constitutional systems. Jurisdiction is one of the most important concepts in all of law because it determines who possesses lawful authority to act, where that authority applies, what procedures govern operation, and what limitations exist. A disciplined constitutional thinker learns to slow down and ask structured questions: • Who has authority here? • What law created that authority? • What type of jurisdiction exists? • What procedures apply? • Were constitutional protections followed? • Does lawful scope exist?

1. What Is Jurisdiction?

Jurisdiction means lawful authority to act. Courts, agencies, and officials do not automatically possess unlimited power everywhere. Their authority must operate within lawful boundaries established through constitutional structure and statutory framework. Real-world example: A local court may hear traffic violations occurring within its territorial boundary, but it would not generally hear federal patent disputes. Constitutional thinking asks: • What authority is operating? • What law created this authority? • What boundaries apply?

2. Authority vs. Jurisdiction

Authority and jurisdiction are related, but they are not identical. A government body may possess general authority while still lacking jurisdiction in a specific matter. Real-world example: An agency may regulate licensing matters under statute, but it cannot suddenly prosecute criminal felonies outside its delegated authority. Disciplined litigants examine: • Scope • Delegated authority • Constitutional limitation • Procedure

3. Subject Matter Jurisdiction

Subject matter jurisdiction refers to the type of case a court or tribunal is authorized to hear. Real-world example: Probate courts generally handle estate matters, while criminal courts hear criminal prosecutions. Students should ask: • What type of proceeding exists? • What law created this court? • What procedural rules apply?

4. Personal Jurisdiction

Personal jurisdiction refers to lawful authority over a specific person or party. This often involves: • Residence • Presence • Business activity • Legal connection Real-world example: A business operating within a state may become subject to jurisdiction involving disputes connected to activity occurring there.

5. Territorial Jurisdiction

Territorial jurisdiction involves geographic boundaries of authority. Real-world example: Traffic enforcement, zoning, and local licensing usually operate under state and municipal territorial authority. Constitutional thinking asks: • What geographic boundary applies? • What level of government is operating?

6. Administrative Jurisdiction

Administrative agencies operate through delegated statutory authority. This includes: • Licensing systems • Regulatory enforcement • Administrative hearings Real-world example: A licensing board may regulate professional conduct under statute, but still must follow procedural and constitutional limitations.

7. Jurisdiction and Procedure

Procedure matters because even lawful authority must operate through lawful process. Important questions include: • Was notice provided? • Was jurisdiction established? • Were records preserved? • Were timelines followed? Disciplined litigants preserve documents, communication records, and hearing notices carefully.

8. Challenging Jurisdiction Properly

Jurisdiction may be questioned lawfully through structured procedural argument. Real-world example: A litigant may challenge whether a court possesses proper subject matter jurisdiction over a dispute, but that challenge must generally follow lawful procedure. Disciplined constitutional thinking focuses on: • Structure • Procedure • Scope • Records

9. Emotional Arguments vs. Structured Thinking

One of the biggest mistakes in legal situations is emotional reaction. Fear and impulsive behavior often destroy clarity and preparation. Law generally rewards: • Preparation • Documentation • Clarity • Procedural awareness Disciplined thinkers remain calm and preserve the record.

10. Real-World Constitutional Application

Jurisdiction affects: • Traffic matters • Contracts • Administrative hearings • Trust operation • Court procedure Students training as disciplined pro se litigants or trustees must learn to: • Examine authority carefully • Understand procedure • Preserve records • Operate calmly under pressure

Constitutional Thinking Checklist

Constitutional Question	Purpose
Who has authority here?	Identifies lawful actor

What law created the authority?	Examines lawful source
What type of jurisdiction exists?	Determines lawful scope
What procedures apply?	Identifies procedural requirements
Were records preserved?	Supports procedural clarity
Were protections followed?	Evaluates lawful restraint

Independent Study Questions

1. Why does jurisdiction matter in constitutional systems?
 2. What is the difference between authority and jurisdiction?
 3. Why does subject matter jurisdiction matter?
 4. Why should litigants preserve records carefully?
 5. What role does procedure play in lawful authority?
 6. Why do emotional reactions damage legal strategy?
 7. Why do agencies still operate within limitations?
 8. How does jurisdiction affect contracts and property matters?
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Closing Invitation

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Sunday Worship Service — 11:00 A.M. Eastern

Rock of Truth Radio — Thursdays at 8:00 P.M. Eastern

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