

# All Authority in Heaven and on Earth

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## INTRODUCTION

- A. Illustration about the captain arguing with the lighthouse, *Illustrations for Biblical Preaching*, p. 26.
- B. People run into problems when they reject authority.
  - 1. When a child rejects his parents' authority, he may lose privileges he holds dear.
  - 2. When one disobeys the authority of the state, he may find himself behind bars for a very long time.
  - 3. When one disobeys the authority of his employer, he may find himself in line at the unemployment office.
- C. Authority is important in so many activities.
  - 1. If there were no authority at a ball game, mayhem would erupt and we'd never know who won.
  - 2. If there were no Bureau of Standards, the amount of gasoline we receive when purchasing a gallon would be vastly different.
- D. Authority is important in religious activities.
  - 1. The activities we undertake in the name of religion affect our salvation; these activities are not unimportant.
  - 2. We need to be certain that we are acting with God's authority, participating in these religious activities the way God desires.
  - 3. This morning, we want to examine the authority of God

## THERE ARE MANY MISTAKEN AUTHORITIES

- A. Some people use human reason alone as their authority in religion.
  - 1. These individuals believe that whatever logic or human thinking tells them to do they are permitted to do.
  - 2. Yet, human reason by itself is not proper authority.
    - a. "There is a way that seems right to a man. But its end is the way of death" (Prov. 14:12).
    - b. "O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself. It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps" (Jer. 10:23).
- B. Some people follow the voice of the people.
  - 1. These people believe that whatever the majority of people do must be right; they are willing to do whatever the majority does.
  - 2. But, the majority is not a proper authority (Mt. 7:13-14).
  - 3. A bumper sticker reads, "Don't follow me: I'm lost too!"
- C. Some people follow the authority of their parents.
  - 1. These people believe that whatever Mommy and Daddy did must be right: they cannot conceive of anything that says their parents might be wrong.
  - 2. But, parents are not proper authority "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me" (Mt. 10:37).
- D. Some people follow the authority of personal desire
  - 1. They reason that whatever they want to do must be right. The attitude is: "If it feels good, it must be right."
  - 2. Yet, personal desire is not a proper authority — "In those days there was no king in Israel: ever, one did what was right in his own eyes" (Jud. 17:6).
- E. Some people follow the authority of human tradition.
  - 1. They reason that the traditions developed by men over time must be right; many religious groups have elaborate traditions they follow.

2. Human tradition is not proper authority — “You have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition” (Mt. 15:6).

## **PROPER AUTHORITY**

- A. Since there are so many improper authorities from which we may choose, we need to recognize proper authority.
- B. All authority inherently resides in God.
  1. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1) — Since God created everything, it only stands to reason that he would have authority over everything.
  2. “There is no authority except from God” (Rom. 13:1) — Human leaders derive their authority from God.
  3. God is a Lawgiver; he gives law.
    - a. “Law will proceed from Me” (Is. 51:4).
    - b. “There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy” (Js. 4:12).
    - c. For one to be able to give law, he must have authority.
  4. God is King.
    - a. “The LORD shall reign forever and ever” (Ex 15:18).
    - b. “And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunders, saying, ‘Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!’” (Rev. 19:6).
    - c. Reign means to exercise royal power: the Lord has royal power, for he has all authority.
- C. God has given all authority to Jesus Christ.
  1. “Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth’” (Mt. 28:18).
  2. “They were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, What is this? What new doctrine is this? For with authority He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey Him” (Mk. 1:27).
  3. Jn. 5:26-27.
  4. Jesus exercises authority he has received from the Father
- D. Jesus gave authority to his apostles.
  1. The Holy Spirit would tell the apostles what Jesus wanted them to know (Jn. 16:13).
  2. “Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven” (Mt. 18:18).
    - a. The “you” here is plural in the Greek — Jesus is speaking to all his apostles.
    - b. “Will be bound” and “Will be loosed” are actually passive participles in the Greek, meaning that what the apostles bind will have already been bound in heaven.
  3. The mystery of God’s grace “has been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets” (Eph. 3:5).
- E. The apostles imparted some of their authority to others by the laying on of hands.
  1. “Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Spirit was given” (Acts 8:18).
  2. “When Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied” (Acts 19:6).
- F. For a time, therefore, the Word of God was in inspired men — Inspired men told God’s people what God wanted from them.
- G. In time these men wrote the Word of God in inspired books.
  1. “All Scripture is given by “inspiration of” God” (2 Tim. 3:16).
  2. “No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Pet 1:20-21).

- H. Thus, the very authority of God is inherent in the words of the Bible.
1. “When you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God” (1 Thess. 2:13).
  2. “If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord” (1 Cor. 14:37).
  3. The Bible is the very word of God; God’s authority resides in the Bible.

## **WHAT ARE WE TO DO WITH THE AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE?**

- A. We must have authority from God for what we do.
1. The chief priests and the elders came to Jesus and asked him by what authority he performed his ministry (Mt. 21:23-27).
    - a. Jesus asked them by what authority John had baptized human authority or divine authority.
    - b. The chief priests and elders recognized the need to have authority from God — they reasoned among themselves, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say, ‘Why did you not believe him?’”
    - c. They also recognized that they could not say his authority came from men. for the people recognized John as one having divine authority.
  2. Just as the chief priests and elders recognized they had to have authority from God, we need to recognize we need authority from God for everything we do.
  3. Whenever a church wants to do anything, they need to ask, “Where is the authority? Is there divine authority for what we want to do?”
- B. “Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ” (Col. 3:17).
1. “By the name of means “by the authority of.”
  2. Whatever we do, we must have authority from God.
- C. “These things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written” (1 Cor. 4:6).
1. We must stay within the bounds of divine authority — we are not able to do whatever we want.
  2. We cannot go beyond what is written — that which is written in the word of God must be our standard; we cannot deviate from it.
- D. “We walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor. 5:7).
1. “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17)
  2. Since we are to walk by faith and that faith can only come through the word of God, we must examine the word of God and do what it teaches so that we can walk by faith.
- E. Far too few individuals follow biblical authority.
1. They will do whatever feels good to them, they will follow their denomination’s teaching, they will follow parents or friends.
  2. May we be those who reject all authority except divine authority, and may we follow it!

## **CONCLUSION**

- A. If we are to be saved, we must follow divine authority.
- B. If you are not a Christian, you must:
1. Believe — “Without faith it is impossible to please God” (Heb. 11:6).
  2. Repent of our sins — “Unless you repent you will all likewise perish” (Lk. 13:3).
  3. Confess our faith in Christ — “With the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. 10:10).
  4. Baptized into Christ — “Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins” (Acts 22:16).
- C. If you are an unfaithful Christian, you must:
1. Confess your sins — “Confess your trespasses to one another” (Js. 5:16).

2. Repent and pray to God for forgiveness – “Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you” (Acts 8:22).
- D. What do you need to do this morning to make your life right before God?