



# LENEXA EDITOR

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## WHAT IS REAL AUTHORITY?

*Jim Stauffer*

As we watch events in our own country, we often see a struggle for power among men. While the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of government are allotted their roles and responsibilities in the Constitution, each tries to encroach on the authority of the others.

A lot has been made of Executive orders our last three Presidents have issued. At least some of them have fallen into areas of authority of other branches.

Men can issue orders from a position of authority even when they lack the ability to prosecute such orders to their intended result.

Fortunately, for the child of God, His authority carries much more weight. Jesus said, *All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth* (Mat. 28:18). This was spoken after He had calmed the turbulent sea (Mat. 8:26). John tells us the signs of power Jesus demonstrated on the earth were to serve as evidence He possessed this authority and lead men to believe on His name and receive eternal life (John 20:30,31).

As the time for His death approached, Jesus promised His chosen 12 He would send another Comforter *to guide them into all truth* (John 16:13). Paul tells us this guidance came in the form of a verbal revelation of the mind of God (1 Cor. 2:10-13). Armed with this revelation they were commanded to, *make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit* (Mat. 28:19,20). Further details of what Jesus spoke on that occasion are the responses of the hearers and the promise to them by God. He told them, *He who has*

*believed and been baptized shall be saved: but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned* (Mk. 16:16).

Now, bear in mind, this is not the promise of a man who is dependent upon other men to see it is carried out. This is the promise of God through Christ, Who created all that is in the heavens and the earth (Joh. 1:1-3). The promise of the One with *all authority in heaven and on earth* is that the gospel of salvation will be preached among men and those who accept it will be saved and those who reject it will be condemned.

In Mat. 25 we see three scenarios presented by the Lord illustrating some of the reactions of men to the message of the Lord and His coming in judgment.

There is the story of the 10 virgins intent on meeting the bridegroom at a wedding feast. 5 were wise and 5 were foolish. The lesson is to use the time we have in our earthly life to prepare ourselves for His coming. The 5 foolish virgins did not do this and while they were out buying more oil for their lamps the bridegroom came and they were left out.

The parable of the talents teaches us the men who received 5 and 2 talents used the time their master was away to work on His behalf, each doubling the amount he had been given. The master said to them, *Well done, good and faithful slave.....enter thou into the joy of your master* (Mat. 25:21,23). The third man who was given 1 talent hid it in the ground out of fear. The master said of him, *throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth* (Mat. 25:30).

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The third story Jesus tells depicts the judgment scene itself. He has all nations gathered before Him. He separates them into *the sheep on His right and the goats on His left (Mat. 25:33)*. Reading on we find the sheep represent those who obeyed His authoritative commands and the goats represent those who did not. His final word to all is the sheep will inherit eternal life and the goats eternal punishment (**Mat. 25:46**).

Please, for your own benefit, recognize the difference between the authority of men which sometimes comes to pass and the authoritative commands of the One who has *all authority in heaven and on earth*.

## Idiotic Things People Say, II

An old man made a wise observation once, when he said, "People will believe anything as long as it's not in the Bible." For the vast majority of humanity that seems to be true, unfortunately. There are as many reasons for this as one can imagine but one of the more prevalent reasons is the second of my "Idiotic Things People Say" and that is,

"You can prove ANYTHING by the Bible."

You know if they said anything that idiotic about the works of Shakespeare folks would be up in arms but they say it about the Word of God and barely a whimper! This is the argument used by those with a certain political agenda when they want to emasculate the Constitution because they know that when you accept this premise you reduce the document in question to a meaningless jumble of words, and nothing more! But this is not true of ANY REASONABLE document be it the Constitution, Shakespeare or the Bible. When the Almighty chose to put his will for man into a written form He also intended that men adopt the accepted means of interpretation and understanding His Word as you would use for any serious written communication. It cannot be otherwise.

The Apostle Peter addressed this problem in **2 Peter 3:15 & 16** where he said, *"even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given to him, wrote unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; wherein are some things hard to be understood, which the ignorant and unsteadfast wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."* Peter said the Word of God could be UNDERSTOOD. That means it only has one message and it is not a meaningless jumble!

**Cleveland Reddinger**

## Confidence in Christ (1 John 2:28-3:10)

A prominent theme in religious teaching is confidence. In an uncertain world religious teachers

offer their listeners confidence. What does the future hold? Will God shield us from hardship? Are we confident in our salvation? How may we be certain in the face of uncertainty? The Bible has much to say about confidence, but does it match what the religious world teaches about confidence?

John's first epistle is an affirmation of confidence. John writes, *"And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming" (1 John 2:28, NKJV)*. One day Christ will appear when He comes again for judgment. The Hebrew writer, after speaking of the inevitability that all must *"die once, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27)* promises, *"To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation" (Heb. 9:28b)*. John is talking about Jesus' appearing for judgment. He promises a way we need not *"be ashamed before Him"* but confident. How? Three words: *"abide in Him."* John devotes the words that follow this promise to an explanation of what this means.

Part of what it means to *"abide in Him"* means acting like Jesus. Since *"He is righteous"* the one who is truly *"born of Him"* is one who *"practices righteousness" (1 John 2:29)*. Here is where the world's view of confidence misses it. The world says even if we sin, even if we don't do right, even if we don't live like Christ in God's grace we may be confident. Clearly *"all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23)*, and victory over sin rests in Christ's sacrifice on our behalf, not any good deeds we can do. John explains, *"He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin" (1 John 3:5)*. But John offers no confidence to the soul who continues in sin. Instead, *"Whoever abides in Him does not sin" (1 John 3:7a)*. In fact, *"Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him" (1 John 3:7b)*.

To some this doesn't seem like much of a reason for confidence! Is John teaching that we can only have confidence if we are flawless? No! At the beginning of this chapter John explained, *"My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1)*. John acknowledges that Christians may sin, but he is urging them to live in such a way that they *"may not sin."* When the Christian sins John teaches, *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" (1 John 1:9)*.

John is setting down definitions. *"Whoever has been born of God does not sin" (1 John 3:9a)*—*"He who sins is of the devil" (1 John 3:8a)*. By definition a child of God does not sin. Not because it is impossible for him to sin (as we have already seen), nor because he never stumbles into sin, He does not sin because so long as *"His seed" [that is Christ's word] remains in him* it will



influence his life in such a way that **“he cannot sin.”** So long as we allow the word of God to abide in us we will not sin.

John is teaching confidence but he also wants the reader to avoid deception. There is a danger of self-deception. John writes, *“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8)*. We must acknowledge our weakness and confess sin when it comes into our lives. But we must also avoid deception from those who would offer a false confidence. He writes, *“Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous” (1 John 3:7)*. It is a deception to imagine that we *“abide in Him”* while we abide in sin. The child of God will never attain flawlessness, but he must give a lifelong effort to live like our Savior—*“He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.” (1 John 2:6)*.

Being counted as *“children of God”* is an immeasurable *“manner of love”* that God has *“bestowed on us” (1 John 3:1a)*. But being a child of God means some things. First, it means that, *“the world does not know us, because it did not know Him” (1 John 3:1b)*. How foolish to imagine that we can live like those of the world and think we are children of God! But it also means when He comes in judgment *“we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is” (1 John 3:2b)*. That doesn't mean we will be gods, but what a blessed promise that in the age to come we shall share more of His likeness than we now enjoy. But if we hope to be *“like Him”* in the age to come it must start here. It is this choice made in the present age that determines our true kinship to Him. John explains, *“In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest” (1 John 3:10a)*. There is confidence that comes as we imitate our Master, trusting in His mercy and relying on His sacrifice on our behalf. There is no confidence that rests in sin - *Whosoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother (1 John 3:10b)*.

**By Kyle Pope, Amarillo, Tx.**

**Taken from focusonline.com**

## **GOOD DISCUSSION OF SALVATION BY FAITH ONLY (ONE TIME FAITH ONLY)**

**by Robert F. Turner**

**Bro. Turner:**

Does *“should not perish”* in **JOH.3:16** mean "ought not" implying that one "could" perish; or does it mean that the believer positively will not perish?

**Reply:**

I have long felt that this passage was abused: both by those who taught "security" once a person had

believed and also by those who over-simplified the passage to mean "ought not" perish, if he would go ahead and obey.

"Should" is past tense of "shall" as the dictionary will show. But it is also used to form the conditional mood; and this is its use here. Marshall's interlinear translation says: "may not perish but may have life".

There is no separate word in the Greek for "should" or "may". These terms are part of the translation of the tense of the verbs "perish" and "have" and both are subjunctive in mood. (This quickly gets over my head but I am using standard reference works, available to all. ) Webster says of subjunctive: " -- representing the denoted action or state not as fact but as contingent, possible, doubtful, desirable, etc.".

The contingency, however, is given in the passage under consideration. It is on the condition that one *“believeth in Him”* that he should not perish; and that makes his safety depend upon continued faith in Christ. The error of the "security" advocate is in the assumption that this faith can take place at a point of time in the past, and then and there secure the one then involved for a time yet to come. The assurance is to one who is "believing" -- and this faith, with its fruits of submissive obedience must continue if the assurance is to continue. Saved by faith is not salvation "at the point of faith, and without further acts of obedience" as was once the wording of debate propositions. Faith is the motivation for a life of service. (**JAM.2:7-26**) It can be *“shipwrecked” (1TI. 1:19)*, *“denied” (5:8 )*, *“cast off” (5:12)*, or *“erred concerning”* (missing our aim) (**6:21**). One's faith can be *“overthrown” (2TI. 2:1 8)*, or, with Paul as our example, we can *“keep the faith”*, and receive a crown of righteousness. (**2TI.4:7-8**) I am aware of the varied uses of the word here, but this only emphasizes the point I seek to make. The "believer" goes far beyond one who mentally acquiesces to the fact that Jesus is the Christ. His *“faith”* (which is accounted unto him for righteousness) embraces his total response, and can in no sense be characterized as "faith only".

**JOH.3:16** teaches truth; it has its own completeness as a statement of truth.

We may go elsewhere and find other truths that enlarge and enhance our appreciation of this passage, but this also says something most vital and we should learn to stop here long enough to appreciate and savor its goodness. We must not be driven from this rare treat by our fear of those unscriptural uses to which the verse has been put. The passage, as given by the Holy Spirit, is well able to defend itself to the glory of God. **WE MUST NEVER FORGET TO SPEAK THE TRUTH EVEN WHEN MEN PERVERT THE VERY PASSAGES AND PHRASES WE MUST USE TO TEACH IT.**

**Eph. 2:19** So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, 20 being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; 21 in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

**1 Pet. 2:9** But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

**Psa. 1:1** Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

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## **What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

**Hear** the gospel - Romans 10:17

**Believe** in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

**Repent** of sins - Acts 17:30

**Confess** Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

**Be Baptized** for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

**Be Faithful** unto death - Revelation 2:10