

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.



John 8:32 and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

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HOW TO ESTABLISH BIBLE AUTHORITY

by Heath Rogers

In last week's article, we noted that God is the proper source of authority in religious matters. Our authority must come from heaven and not from men (**Matt. 21:25**). God has given authority to His Son, Who gave the Holy Spirit to the apostles. These and other inspired men have written the New Testament. In this article, we will consider the proper way to understand how God is speaking to us today through the New Testament.

God reveals His wisdom and power through His creation (**Ps. 19:1; Rom. 1:20**), but He has revealed His mind and will to us through the Scriptures. Some people have the idea that the Bible can't be understood by ordinary people. They mistakenly believe one must be gifted or specially trained to properly understand the Bible.

God created man and He created communication. He knows how we learn and comprehend, so He understands perfectly how to communicate His will to us. God's word is meant to be understood (**Eph. 3:4**). We can understand the New Testament by following the rules we use to communicate with one another: we listen to what others say and watch what others do.

1. Direct Statements and Commands. God's word speaks to us through direct statements of truth to be believed and commands to be obeyed. When the New Testament says Jesus is the Son of God (**John 20:31**), we are to believe this truth. When it commands us to repent and be baptized for the remission of our sins (**Acts 2:38**), we know we must meet these conditions to receive this great blessing.

2. Approved Examples. Sometimes God's will can be understood by following the examples of those who were acting with His authority. The apostle Paul told the Philippians, "*Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern*" (**Phil. 3:17**). The apostles taught believers to observe all things commanded by the Lord

(**Matt. 28:20**). Their obedient actions are a pattern for us to safely follow today.

3. Necessary Inference. Sometimes we communicate with one another by "filling in the gaps." An inference is when we aren't told something specifically but understand it must be true from what we are told. For example, if I told you that I attended the funeral of a friend, you would probably offer condolences for the passing of my friend. I didn't specifically say that my friend died, but you correctly understood this to be true from what I told you. God's word does this as well.

All of these methods are used regarding the Lord's Supper. The observance of this memorial is a command "*received from the Lord*" (**1 Cor. 11:23**). He commands us to "*do this in remembrance of Me*" (**vs. 24-25**). Through direct statements we know the elements of the Supper are bread and fruit of the vine (**Matt. 26:26-29**). Following the approved example of the church in Troas, we assemble to partake of the Supper on the first day of the week (**Acts 20:7**). Using necessary inference, we know the bread must be unleavened, because this was the only bread available as Jesus was instituting the Supper (**Matt. 26:17, 26**). The frequency of this memorial is also established using necessary inference. Every week has a first day (Sunday), so it is necessary for us to infer that the church in Troas assembled to partake of the Lord's Supper every first day of the week (**Acts 20:7**).

These basic rules of communication are how we can properly understand God's will from the New Testament.

SALVATION THROUGH A DISOBEDIENT FAITH?

By Dennis Abernathy

Romans 15:4 says: "*For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we*

through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." Keep that passage in mind as you read the rest of this little article.

Hebrews 11:30 says, concerning the conquest of the ancient evil city of Jericho: *"By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days."* This historical Old Testament event illustrates the fact that faith must be followed by obedience. If the Jews in Joshua's time had merely believed that the walls of Jericho would fall down if they complied with God's Word, but then refused to do what God told them to do, surely no miracle would have occurred. Such a DISOBEDIENT faith would not have accomplished anything.

Salvation from sin, by faith, requires simple obedience. Beside faith itself, God requires repentance from sin, confession of faith in Jesus Christ, and scriptural baptism in water, for the remission of sins. Now, doing these things does not earn salvation, any more than walking around Jericho earned the Jews the miracle that followed. But, until these terms of pardon are complied with, one will not be saved by faith and the grace of God. It does absolutely no good for one to believe he could be saved by God's grace if he believed and obeyed the gospel of Christ, if he refuses to obey it! Salvation by faith does not come through a DISOBEDIENT faith!

Some sincere people entertain the idea that salvation by faith means salvation the instant one believes. They therefore, conclude that salvation comes before confession and baptism. But that is a false concept. Do you remember what the Bible said about Jericho being conquered by faith? *"By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, AFTER they were compassed about seven days"* (**Heb. 11:30**). Please notice, how that blessing by faith, came after other stipulated conditions for that promised blessing were met. It's the same way in the matter of salvation by faith today. We will be saved by faith today after we repent, confess Christ, and are buried in baptism-not BEFORE!

Remember, *"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning."* Let us read and learn from them.

'I Don't Want My Kids To Be Different'

Although most Christians wouldn't say it in so many words, many parents seem to be very concerned about things that might make their kids look *'different'*. They are concerned about raising their children in strict, disciplined ways that might make them stand out in contrast to others. They mistakenly feel a need to have their kids *'blend in'* with kids at school, etc.

Well, let's see about that . . .

- Statistics indicate that 13% of teens in America have had sex before their 15th birthday, and 70% have had intercourse before they reach 20¹. *'But, I don't want my kids to be different.'* Really!?! Are you sure about that?
- 6.5% of 8th graders, 17% of 10th graders, and 23% percent of 12th graders used marijuana in the past month, while 3.6% of 8th graders, 14.5% of 10th graders, and 28% of 12th graders reported getting drunk in the past month². But you say, *'I don't want my kids to be different.'* Are you kidding!?!
- 35% of teenage boys and 26% of teenage girls admit to shoplifting. 83% say they have lied to their parents about something significant, and 64% admitted to cheating on tests³. Yet, you're still worried about your kids being *'different'*? How can that be!?!

Why are parents so worried about their children being viewed as *'normal'* in such a wicked, immoral world? NOW is the time to be teaching them, training them, and helping them to realize that pleasing God will require a way of life that is truly *'different'* – even *'weird'* – by the norms of the ungodly society that surrounds us. If you don't instruct them in their youth to *"come out from among them and be separate"* (**2 Cor. 6:17**), don't be surprised if they reach adulthood without a true and sacrificial love for God. Think!

by Greg Gwin

Response to Men or Truth

One of the interesting aspects of inspiration is that while the Holy Spirit gave men the message to preach, He did so using the unique personalities of the writers. Perhaps nowhere is this fact more clearly seen than in the preaching of Hosea and Amos. Both prophesied around the same time and to the same kingdom. Yet each of their personalities was evident in the way they spoke.

Hosea preached with the compassion of one who experienced in his own life the love God had for unfaithful Israel (**Hos 1:2**). Though he warned the nation to repent, the tone throughout is one of love. Amos, on the other hand, was a farmer turned prophet (**Amos 7:14-15**). He preached the same basic message of repentance that Hosea taught. Yet Amos' approach was to "tell it like it was," and his tone focused on the justice of God punishing Israel (**Amos 5:24**).

Likewise today, men who preach the gospel have differing personalities and styles. One may energetically

and forcefully teach the justice of God by focusing on his righteousness in punishing men for their sins. Another may compassionately call on men to repent of those sins to avoid such punishment. Sometimes we are guilty of “tuning out” a man if we don’t like the way he organizes or presents a lesson. At other times, we may laud and magnify a man whose speaking, we believe, is polished.

Paul spoke to those at Corinth saying, *“And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God” (1 Cor 2:1)*. Paul used care so that people were not drawn to the eloquence of the messenger but to the relevance and importance of the message. He wanted to be sure their faith rested in the *“power of God”* and not in the *“wisdom of men” (1 Cor 2:5)*.

The question is, “How do we respond to those who preach and teach the gospel?” When Israel did not respond to either Amos or Hosea, they were not rejecting these prophets but their message, and ultimately the One from whom the message originated. Such must not be true of us. We must remember that if a man speaks the truth, no matter what his presentation is like, we must heed that message. We are not excusing those who wield the sword of the Spirit without love, but our eternal home depends on our reception and submission to truth, no matter how it is delivered.

Brace Rutledge – Think On These Things

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THIS?

What do you really think about people and situations? Most have heard of a man named John Calvin. Many who have not really given much consideration to all the things he has written and taught would simply remember he was active during the reformation period and is one of the most famous Protestants.

He has a sterling reputation in secular history for his work in resisting some of the teaching of the Catholic Church in his day. What many people do not know is what he has actually taught regarding religion.

Ask yourself this question. Does an individual have any control or input into whether he pleases God with his life on earth and therefore can look forward to heaven as his reward?

John Calvin is the most notable proponent of predestination of election in history. There have been others before, after and during his time who agreed with him, but he is the one to whom the religious doctrine is attributed.

His position in simple terms is that the fall of man in the Garden of Eden was so complete there is nothing good a man can do on his own. He cannot decide in his mind and commit his heart to doing the right thing concerning God’s revealed will, the Bible.

The doctrine says God has chosen who would be the elect, thus who would be saved, before the Creation itself. He did not decide this based on any goodness or evil within the person, but simply by His authoritative will has chosen who will be saved and who will be lost.

This is accomplished by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit on the heart of those God has chosen and they become elect regardless of what their thoughts on the matter were. They are given faith in God by this operation of the Holy Spirit and can from that point on do nothing to lose their salvation. On the other hand, those to whom He did not choose to grant this faith can do nothing to truly believe and obey Him and thereby achieve elect status. And this is because they are unable to do anything good in and of themselves. Calvinism calls this being totally hereditarily depraved.

Yet, Jesus said, *Come unto me, all ye who labor and are heavy laden.....* Jesus calls me to Him, but according to Calvin, I cannot come. Paul told Timothy, *This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. (1 Timothy 2:3–4)* Peter told his large audience on Pentecost as recorded in **Acts Chapter 2**, *Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. (Acts 2:38)* He did not explain to them that God would send them faith by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit and he made no distinction among them by saying to all of them to repent and be baptized. Later in the chapter we see as many as received the word and were baptized were added to the church.

Friends, there is only one distinction Scripture offers between people. It tells us all have sinned and need redemption. Then it tells us all those who obey Christ will receive that redemption and salvation (**Romans 3:23; Colossians 1:13,14; Hebrews 5:8,9**).

The simple truth is the Bible is God’s message revealed to man for the very purpose of receiving salvation from sin and it is the only message that has unchallenged authority in its message. God’s word is the truth (**John 17:17**) Do you want to be the one who believes something other than what God has revealed and then expect to receive heaven which He has promised to those who believe Him?

Jim Stauffer

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.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

Visitors welcome

We conduct in home Bible Studies

We offer Correspondence Courses

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NEWS AND NOTES:

THOSE IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

ALMA BAUMGARTNER, DENESE GORING, BROOKLYN BOYER, TRACY RICHARDSON, MATT BASSFORD, WAYNE MOODY, DAVID AND JOANNE BECKLEY, KEN KLING, MARK WALKER, PAT M-CLOUD. JAN PATRICK IS IN BROOKDALE O.P. FOR REHAB. JORDAN SHOUSE

Bible Classes: Sunday Morning
James - Jim Stauffer

Wednesday Evening: **Joshua, Judges, Ruth** - Bill Miller

Sunday Sermon: **Zeal for the Lord**



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