

DECLARING THE GOSPEL

“...I declare unto you the gospel...” (I Corinthians 15:1)

March/April, 2021
THE GOSPEL IS THE POWER OF
GOD UNTO SALVATION
(Romans 1:16)

A Publication of the
Mt. Zion church of Christ
5905 HWY 128
Savannah TN 38372
731-925-3423

Website: mtzionhofchrist.org
Email: mtzion5905@bellsouth.net

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Bible Study.....9:30 a.m.
Morning Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship.....5:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Study.....7:00 p.m.

PREACHER

Gilbert Gough

WATCH

DECLARING THE GOSPEL

Freedom River Ministries
Charter Cable 10
Monday 7:30 p.m., Tuesday 6:00 p.m.,
Thursday 6:30 p.m.

HEAR

ONE MINUTE BIBLE STUDY

each weekday on
WKWX 93.5 FM
8:05 a.m.-11:40 a.m.-4:18 p.m.-6:30 p.m.
WORM 101.7 FM & 105.5 FM
7:50 a.m.-11:25 a.m.-4:50 p.m.-8:50 p.m.

WATCH

ONE MINUTE BIBLE STUDY

on the Mt Zion church of Christ
Facebook page
Posted Each Weekday @ 6:00 a.m.

WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

Hear the Word of God and Believe in Jesus
Romans 10:17; John 8:24
Repent of Sin & Confess Christ
Acts 17:30, 31; Romans 10:9, 10
Be Baptized for the Remission of your sins
Acts 2:38; 22:16

THE AUTHORITY AND APPLICATION OF THE BIBLE

The chief priests and the elders came to Jesus with two questions: “By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?” Jesus responded by saying that He wanted to ask them a question, and if they could answer it, then He would tell them by what authority He was doing the things He was doing. Jesus asked, “The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?” The Jews reasons among themselves by saying, “If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet.” Thus, they simply chose to respond by saying, “We cannot tell.” Jesus then said, “Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.” Jesus did not fail to answer these people. Rather, He showed them that there are only two possibilities when it comes to authority. There is authority from Heaven, and there is authority from men. Where do we get Bible authority today? This question is the most fundamental of all lessons that we need to understand. It affects our salvation. It affects the way we worship. It affects every part of our lives. Today, we need to understand that the only authority for man comes from Heaven. Heavenly authority is the only authority that is divine in its nature. It is the only one we can trust that will not change over time. In Malachi 3:6, God said, “For I am the Lord, I change not.” Heavenly authority is the only authority that we can trust at authority of men, Heaven. Man’s Sometimes it is bias, and what we

We need to authority is one of the important subjects and if we understand the Bible and how will understand how correctly and where But if we fail to authority, then we goes” in religion. If

however, it will undermine principles that we use in our everyday lives. When we talk about authority, we recognize the necessity of authority in other areas of life. The principle of authority is not something new to us. In everyday life, we recognize there is authority that exists and laws that must be followed. For example, think about traffic laws. Let’s say you come to a traffic light that is composed of three different colors—red, yellow, and green. We know that red means stop, yellow means slow down, and green means go. What if we pulled up to the red light and we decided to simply “throw authority out the window”? What if we ignored the standards and said to ourselves, “Let’s make the red light mean ‘go,’ and the green light mean ‘stop’”? How would

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will not lie to us and all times. The however, is not from authority is fallible. based upon prejudice, like or what we think. realize that Bible most fundamental and we could ever study, fully the authority of important it is, then we to worship God to go for salvation. understand Bible may think “anything we think like that,

that work in the world around us? What would it do to the traffic laws? Think about how such an action would affect everyone's driving. There would be wrecks left and right, and there would be great chaos on the roads. We recognize in everyday life that there are laws.

Think about the standards we recognize in matters relating to weights and measures. What if "a gallon of gas" meant one thing to one person and another thing to someone else? Imagine how that would affect everyone. In government, there are laws that must be followed, and in sports there are rules that must be obeyed. There are certain symbols of authority we must respect and obey. The president and congress make the laws, and we must respect their authority. Thus, in everyday life the issue of authority is not something new. But what is so odd is that we sometimes come to religion and we simply ignore the issue of authority. Somehow we think that God must have left matters "open" so that we can simply do whatever we want regardless of what God has said in His Word. So, yes, there is an authority and a standard for us to obey in everyday life.

WRONG SOURCES OF AUTHORITY

First of all, let us consider some wrong sources of authority. If we are not careful, we may think that something is a source of authority when, in fact, it might not be. We may look to some person or some book, or we can simply follow the crowd, thinking all the time they are the authority when, in reality, they are not the authority!

The first wrong source of authority is what we think or assume is right. What we think or assume to be right may not be right in God's sight. The Bible teaches us not to put our own interpretation into Scripture. The text of II Peter 1:19-21 tells us that the Scriptures are of "no private interpretation." We cannot simply take the Bible and say, "This is what I think," or "This is what I want this to mean." The fact is, God meant for it to say exactly what He said, and we must figure out according to Scripture what that is. Consider the words of Proverbs 16:25. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." What we think and what we feel may actually be the total opposite of what God wants us to do. And it may lead to spiritual death. Thus, we must not place emphasis on what we think is right as a source of authority. The Bible says in I Peter 3:15, "...be ready always to give an answer [make a defense] to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." To do that, we must follow the Scriptures. In I Thessalonians 5:21 there is a very important passage regarding this matter. Paul said, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." It is our responsibility not merely to "assume" or "think" that something is right, but instead

to come to the Scriptures in order to prove what God's will is.

A second wrong source of authority is the religious world in general. The religious world in which we live is not our authority today. Neither religious leaders nor the head of a certain religious group is our authority. We are not to look to them. Denominational conventions should not tell us what to believe and what to think; nor are books written by men supposed to serve as our authority today. Jeremiah 10:23 gives us important insight into the fact that man cannot save himself. Jeremiah wrote, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Man cannot save us. A religious leader—regardless of any title that men may bestow upon him—cannot get us to Heaven. A denominational convention cannot tell us what to believe or think. Why? Psalm 119:89 tells us that God's Word is already "settled in heaven." Regardless of what men may decide to vote on or approve, or what they may vote on and cast out, their views on such things are not our authority. The Bible is our only authority in religious matters. The books of men are not what we need to trust as our source of authority. We need to trust God's Book—the Bible. It is the inspired Word of God according to II Timothy 3:16. It is that which will judge us in the last day (John 12:48).

Another wrong source of authority is our feelings. We should not trust in our feelings as a safe authority today. Consider what the apostle Paul said in Acts 23:1. "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." Paul "felt like" he was doing the right thing. In Acts 7 when he stood by and held the coats of those who stoned Stephen, he "thought" that he was doing right. But it was not. In Acts 9, when he was dragging men and women who were Christians out of their homes and throwing them into prison, he "felt like" that was the right thing to do. But it was not! As we think about our feelings, we must recognize they are not a safe guide. They are not to serve as our source of authority. Although what we "feel" is right may give us a wonderful feeling deep down in our hearts, it is not to be trusted as a proper source of authority.

Another wrong source of authority is "the majority." We do not need to put our trust in what the majority is doing. In fact, the Bible tells us not to trust the majority as our guide, and it instructs us not to follow the majority. Exodus 23:2 says, "Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil." Thus, we must not follow what "the crowd" is doing. What is popular, or what may be the latest fad, cannot serve as our authority. Yet too many times that is what people want to do. They want to be like the rest of the world. Whatever is popular, or whatever the majority is doing, seems to become the standard and the authority in religious matters. Jesus said

in Matthew 7:13 that when we follow the multitude, it will prove to be detrimental to our souls. Jesus said, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.” Jesus taught us that many people—most of the Earth’s population!—will travel down the wrong path, which leads to destruction. That ought to tell us that we must not trust “the majority.”

Another wrong source of authority is our ancestors or our families. Regardless of what your family has or has not done in matters of religion, they are not the authority. Today, be encouraged not to trust what your mother and father, brother and sister, or grandfather and grandmother have done as it relates to religion. Rather, trust what the Bible says. Paul had to learn this lesson the hard way. Paul was one who was following family tradition. He was following in the footsteps of his ancestors in stoning Christians or dragging them to prison. Paul learned his actions were not right. In Galatians 1:14 he wrote, “And I profited in the Jews’ religion [or advanced in Judaism] above many my equals [contemporaries] in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers.” Paul did not say he was zealous in regard to what the Law said, but that he was zealous in regard to the traditions that his family had followed. Today, please do not put your trust in your family and what it has done in matters of religion. Instead, trust God and His Word.

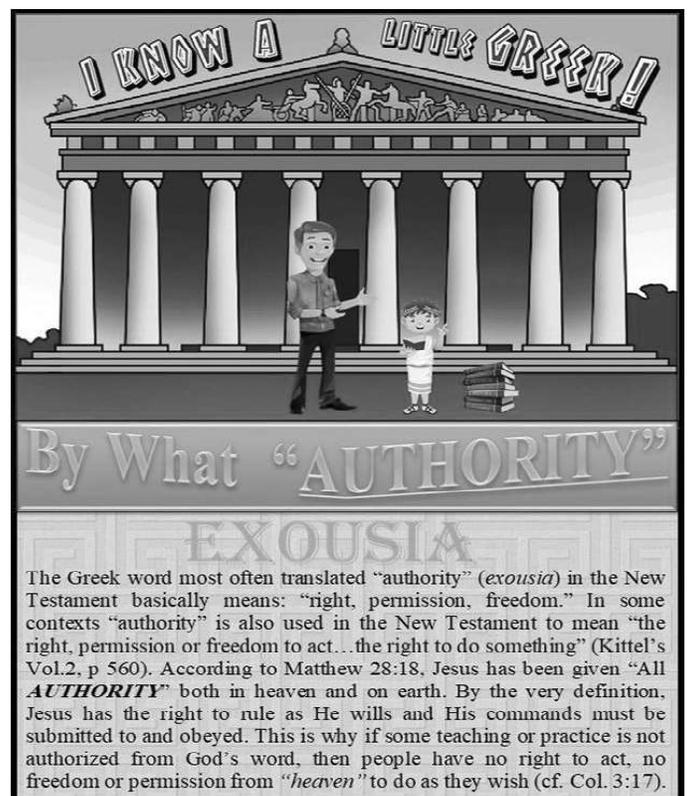
THE CHAIN OF THE AUTHORITY

Where do Christians get their authority today? Where do people who love and serve God find their authority in matters of religion? We must look to the chain of authority that is given to us in the Bible. In this chain of authority, God is the first link. All authority resides with God because He is the Creator, the originator of life, and the One Who is in charge. He created all things (Genesis 1:1). Hebrews 12:9 teaches us that He is our Father. God is the first link in the chain of authority, and we must look to Him. But God has delegated authority to Jesus Christ. Christ was given authority by God, as we see in Matthew 28:18. Jesus said, “All power [authority] is given unto me in heaven and in earth.” John 5:27 teaches us that Jesus has authority over all flesh. Thus Christians are told in Colossians 3:17 that “whatsoever ye do in word or deed”, it must be done by the authority of Jesus Christ. But since Christ is not here with us today, how do we get our authority?

Jesus promised His apostles that the Holy Spirit would come after He left, and that the Spirit would guide them “into all truth.” In three passages—John 14:26; John 15:26; and John 16:13—Christ promised that the Comforter (the Holy Spirit) would come, and that He would guide them into all truth (John 16:13). Thus, God is the first link

in the chain of authority. He then gave authority to Christ. Christ promised that the Holy Spirit would come and that He would guide the apostles into all truth. The apostles then wrote down in the Word of God the truth about religion and the authority that we have today. Where is our authority? **It resides in the Word of God!** What we are to follow today is the Bible. Paul said in I Corinthians 14:37, “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.” In John 12:48, Jesus said it would be God’s Word that judges us. In II Peter 1:21, we are told that “...holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.” We therefore receive our authority today from the Word of God. That is how it comes to us. When we get our authority, it is through reading and studying the Bible. In Ephesians 3:4, we are told that when we read, we can understand the will of God. Revelation 22:18, 19 teaches us that we are not to add to or take away from God’s Word, but that we are to carefully follow everything that God’s Word says. Think about Paul’s statements in I Corinthians 4:6 as they relate to our source of authority today. Paul said, “...that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written...” Thus, the chain of authority for Christians today is very simple. We follow the Bible. We do not listen to other men. We do not follow other teachers. Rather, we come to the Scriptures to see what we are to do and how we are to live.

TO BE CONTINUED



RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

DIVINE

GOD

GEN. 1:1: 1 COR. 8:6: 2 COR. 5:18
1 COR. 15:24-28

CHRIST

MT. 17:5: 28:18: JO. 7:17: 8:28: 12:49
ACTS 3:22: 23: EPH. 1:19: 23: PHIL. 2:9-11

HOLY SPIRIT

JO. 14:26: 16:13

APOSTLES

MT. 28:18-20: 2 COR. 5:20: JO. 17:7, 8, 14



MT. 21:23-27

EXAMPLES: ONE CHURCH

GOD - JO. 6:38
CHRIST - MT. 16:18
HOLY SPIRIT - EPH. 1:22, 23
APOSTLES -

BAPTISM

GOD - LK. 7:29, 30
CHRIST - MK. 16:16
HOLY SPIRIT -
APOSTLES - ACTS 2:38

HUMAN

1 MAN HEAD ("POPE") - EPH. 1:22, 23
EX: MT. 23:9: 1 COR. 15:50
ECC. ORG. & CREEDS - MT. 15:8, 9
TRADITIONS - MT. 15:3
EX: PRAY FOR SAL. - 1 PET. 3:12
MT. 7:21: MK. 16:15, 16
PREACHERS - GAL. 1:8, 9
ANCESTORS - MT. 10:37
MAJORITY - MT. 7:13, 14
CONSCIENCE - ACTS 26:9-11

"BE YE DOERS"
JS. 1:22-25

WHICH DO YOU WANT?

Sources of Authority (right and wrong)

J I M N T P B W R I T T E N G
D C K A C P H F E E L I N G S
P E R A J O R P C G J Z B D D
T A N E N O M E O W P F Q B J
S R H O A C R F J P Y A G I T
C B A O M T E I O U U D O B M
O I T D L I O S T R D L D L U
N A N E I Y N R T Y T I A E L
S S H S A T S A E O S E C R T
C F E B P C I P T D R E R E I
I J A T T I H O I I I S K H T
E E V T K U R E N R O V D Z U
N S E B H L B E R E I N I N D
C U N G U E P Q D S B T A N E
E S O Q R T R U T H L E C L E

Denominational	Holy Spirit	Prejudice	Tradition
Multitude	Comforter	Ancestors	Inspired
Feelings	Majority	Teachers	Creator
Father	Divine	Truth	Popular
Conscience	written	Heaven	Jesus
Bible	Bias	God	Fad

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