

God vs Man 2

In the first lesson of this series we established that everything we do must be done in accordance with the authority of God's scriptures. In this lesson we are going to try and establish how we go about understanding what it is that God wants us to do.

There are two basic forms of authority,

- 1** A) Derived authority (given to one from another source)
- B) Intrinsic authority (belonging to one's nature)

Rom 13:1 **2**
1 Let every person be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God.

Since "there is no authority except from God", every kind of authority other than that of God Himself, must be considered as a gift from God, and therefore secondary to God's power.

John 19:10-11 **3**
10 Pilate therefore said to Him, "You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have the authority to release You, and I have the authority to crucify You?" *11* Jesus answered, "You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been given you from above; for this reason he who delivered Me up to you has the greater sin."

God's authority is His because of who and what He is and it is absolute and unconditional. Any authority man has been given to him by God through His Word. Now note...

Matt 28:18 **4**
18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

God gave all authority to Christ, then Christ gave authority to His disciples, the Apostles; the authority to bind and to loose as they were being given what to speak and write.

Matt 18:18 **5**
18 "Truly I say to you, whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

That is what is seen in...

Acts 2:41-42 **6**
41 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. *42* They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

God has given man everything he needs to live by His authority and to do his will. Notice what Solomon writes in...

Prov 15:31 7

31 He whose ear listens to the life-giving reproof, Will dwell among the wise.

God has provided what we need. **2 Tim 3:16-17**. When we look at the Apostles teaching, God's Word we find there the things we are to do and keep in our words and deeds. There are three different ways that God uses to show His desires for us.

- 8
- 1) Direct Command
 - 2) Apostolic or Approved Example
 - 3) Necessary Inference

As we then seek to establish how the authority of God comes to man, our first topic will be...

- 9
- 1) Direct Command

While it would seem that this form should be the easiest to understand with the least amount of argument, that just isn't the case. For example, look at...

Acts 2:38 10

38 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.

Seems pretty straight forward, doesn't it? Combine that with...

1 Peter 3:21 11

21 Corresponding to that, baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

AND

Mark 16:15-16 12

15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. **16** He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.

When taken together the direct command of baptism to be saved seems obvious, so why can't the world of religion see that.

Now look at...

1 Cor 11:23-25 **13**

23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; 24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." 25 In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Paul writes that Christ told him, and by extension, all Christians, to take the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Him, a direct command given to all Christians to commemorate the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Direct command, you might think this to be the easiest to understand. Our next point goes hand in hand with direct command.

The fact that the scriptures don't necessarily say don't do something does not give authority to do it.

Lev 10:1-2 **14**

1 Now Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took their respective firepans, and after putting fire in them, placed incense on it and offered strange fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them. 2 And fire came out from the presence of the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord.

The point is fairly simple...

1 Cor 16:1-2 **15**

16:1 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I directed the churches of Galatia, so do you also. 2 On the first day of every week let each one of you put aside and save, as he may prosper, that no collections be made when I come.

If this action was acceptable then, it is acceptable now. There is another dynamic that has to be considered in this also.

Nadab and his brother Abihu, sons of Aaron and of the Levitical priesthood, were given the tasks to tend to the burning the incense. God had commanded that the fire for the incense come from the altar. Nadab and Abihu chose to offer strange fire from somewhere else and they were consumed by fire for their disobedience. Here is the important point, God had not told them which fires they could not use, but He had told them which fire to use. The fact that God had specified what was to be used eliminated anything else. That is the same principle when God told Noah to build the ark of Gopher wood. That eliminated any other kind of wood that might have been used. It wasn't necessary to go through the list of other kinds of wood to say don't use them, God had already said which kind to use. With that thought in mind, look at our next point...

16 2) Apostolic or Approved Example

When the direct command of 1 Cor. 11 is taken in conjunction with...

Acts 20:7 **17**

7 On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul began talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight.

It should be pretty easy to see that the Lord's Supper is to be observed on the first day of the week. This is an example of Apostolic or approved example. When we see something occurring in the scriptures that is obviously approved of and stands as an example of what the Christians of the New testament Church engaged in, this becomes for us divine authority to engage in the same activity. If we don't see the new Testament Church engaging in something, we have no authority to do so ourselves.

God doesn't need to tell us not to take it on a Friday or Saturday or any other day, He has already shown us which day to take it, the first day of the week. This leaves no room for substitution or change. Such is the authority of God, it cannot be changed, ignored, or added to if obedience is to be in accordance with His authority.

Founded of the authority seen in direct commands and approved examples we see the disciples preaching, singing, praying, giving, and taking of the Lord's Supper in their worship to God.

There is a third means of establishing authority from the scriptures and that is...

18 3) Necessary Inference

In a passage we have already looked at in Mark 16:15, Christ tells the disciples to

19 ***"Go into all the world to preach"***

That is a direct command that the disciples had to carry out. The question is, how? How were they to go? Walk, run, ride a burro or camel, ride in a cart, take a boat, what was to be the means by which they went. Christ doesn't specify how they were to go, just that they were to go, so the going was left to them to decide the how. As long as they didn't do anything unlawful or immoral in their going, they were acting under the authority of the Lord. In...

Heb 10:23-25 **20**

23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful; 24 and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, 25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.

There are many commands like this. The command is to assemble, when. Is 9:30 am the right time, is 10:30. As foolish as it might sound, we probably all know of circumstances where the time of meeting became such a bone of contention that people felt compelled to leave the Church over it. I know of a situation where Christians left a congregation over the color of the new carpet that was going in. I am sure we have all heard of similar type circumstances where people decided that something so petty and foolish was more important than doing God's will. In the New Testament we read of worship services taking place in people's homes, in rented rooms, on the second floor, and out in the open. Which is the right place? They all are, because they all fit the criteria of a place for the saints to gather together to keep the commandments that they have been given.

This is the area where so much error is justified. The two primary justifications that people use to sanction their actions are...

- 21** C) God doesn't say not to
- D) It isn't necessary to keep a commandment given

As we look at some of the things that are prevalent in the world of religion today, we are going to apply these principles. Is it a...

- 22** 1) Direct Command

Can we see in the scriptures where a command is explicitly given to engage in the activity?

- 23** 2) Apostolic or Approved Example

Can we see in the scriptures where the New Testament Church practiced the activity with the approval of God, Christ, or their agents in the Apostles and inspired teachers of the day?

- 24** 3) Necessary Inference

Can we see that there is something that might be necessary or expedient to help accomplish the commandment that has been given and is still within the scope of the scriptures?

When we respond to the authority of God's Word in faithful obedience, we place ourselves into a position to partake of the divine grace and mercy of God through the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ.