

The Bible – God’s Authority

Text : **Hebrews 2**

INTRODUCTION :

- A. Few who believe in God have difficulty believing that He has all authority.**
1. He has authority because He is the creator of all.
 2. God has all authority because He is all powerful.
- B. Some believers have difficulty with the concept of God’s reign on the earth today.**
1. He does not visit with us in the cool of the evening as He did with Adam.
 2. He does not speak to us out of a burning bush as He did to Moses.
- C. Even though God does not physically appear, He still has a will for man.**
1. God has a will and a desire for the life of every person born on the earth.
 2. When God places a person into the church, He has a will for that person’s service.
- D. God has a law by which all men will be judged.**
1. That law has been delivered; it has been confirmed; and it has been in circulation from the beginning. (**predates the Law of Moses ... Joseph knew adultery was wrong**)
 2. The most basic premises of God’s laws are instinctive within man :
 - a. Men instinctively worship.
 - b. Men instinctively respect each other and form social networks.
 - c. Men form families in which to procreate and to protect the weak.
 3. Ignorance of the law is never an excuse at any level.
 - a. Civil law applies equally to all whether they know it or not. (**e.g., speed limit**)
 - b. **John 12: 48-** “... **the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.**”

Realizing that we will all stand before God to be judged in that great and final day, with this lesson we want to look at how God reveals His standard to men in the 21st century.

I. Jesus of Nazareth was the manifestation of God on the earth.

- A. Jesus left Heaven to walk on the earth. (He became the Son of God. ... change)**
1. **John 1: 1-4** **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. ⁴In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. ⁵The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.**
 - 14-** **And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.**

2. His leaving Heaven was a matter of personal choice done for our benefit.

Phil. 2: 5-7a Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, ...

- a. Before His life on earth, Jesus was God.
- b. He voluntarily lowered his own status in order to become man.

B. When Jesus came to the earth, His power and authority was voluntarily limited.

1. **Phil. 2: 7-11** but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- a. As a man, Jesus (God) became a subject instead of the ruler.
- b. Jesus has been restored to power and glory, but now has a body. (ascended in it)

2. **Read ... Heb. 2: 5-9**

- a. Vs.- 8 .. All things are not yet put under the feet of Jesus.
- b. Satan still operates on the earth, but God will confine Satan when the time is right.

3. It is understood that God the Father has not been put in subjection to His Christ.

I Cor. 15:26-28 The last enemy that will be abolished is death. ²⁷ For **HE** HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER **HIS** FEET. But when He says, “All things are put in subjection,” it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. ²⁸ When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.

C. Jesus now has the authority to deal with Satan at His own pleasure.

Matt. 28: 18-19 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the ...”

D. Jesus now rules over His church and everything else.

Eph. 1: 19b-22 ... *These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might ²⁰ which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,

II. How does Jesus rule over His church ?

A. We know He brings some things about by His providence.

1. No one knows how God’s (Christ’s) providence works.
 - a. We know God exercises His power on the earth in some way.
 - b. We have not been given a mechanism to determine what acts are His or how.
 - c. **Deut. 29: 29**
2. Many things have and still do happen that we attribute to providence, but can’t prove.
 - a. For example, the bible has survived concerted efforts by great powers to destroy it.
 - b. Some simple things could be providential, “He just happen to be in the right place.”
3. To deny providence would be to deny God’s ability to answer prayer.
 - * **Man can never limit God or His Christ.**

B. Jesus delegated authority to His Apostles.

1. This is one of the reasons certain men were appointed to be Apostles.
 - a. **Mark 3: 14-15** And He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that He could send them out to preach,¹⁵ and to have authority to cast out the demons.
 - b. There were other men qualified to be witnesses who were not named.
 - c. Remember ... **Acts 1: 15f**
2. **Read and exegete ... Matt. 16: 13-19**
 - a. Peter received a revelation directly from God. **Vs. 17**
 - b. He was given authority to speak in the name of God / the Christ. (**represent Him**)
3. The Apostle Paul conducted his ministry on the basis of authority given by God.

II Cor. 10: 8-9 For even if I boast somewhat further about our authority, which the Lord gave for building you up and not for destroying you, I will not be put to shame,⁹ for I do not wish to seem as if I would terrify you by my letters.

C. The Holy Spirit visibly confirmed the Apostle’s authority.

1. Before they spoke in **Acts 1** the H. S. manifested himself by sound and visually.
2. The Apostles of Jesus manifest the same power as Jesus did while on the earth.
 - a. They spoke by inspiration. (**Acts 1 / I Tim. 4**)
 - b. They worked miracles. (**Acts 3:6 / 5:15**)
 - c. They raised the dead. (**Acts 9: 40 / 20: 9-10**)
 - d. They gave other people the ability to do miraculous things. (**Acts 8: 14-24**)

D. The Apostles used their written words to govern the church.

1. The words of the Holy Spirit were communicated via the written word.
 - a. **I Tim. 4: 1-** But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,
 - b. **Notice :** There are teachings being propagated by **un**holy spirits and demons.
2. The Apostles gave to us the words they received from God, i.e., from Christ.
 - a. **I Cor. 15: 1-2** Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,
 - b. **I Cor. 11: 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;
 - c. **Gal. 1:12-** For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.
 - d. Peter affirmed that Paul’s writings were “given to Him” (**II Pet. 3:15** & context)

III. The writings of the Apostles carry the authority of God’s law.

- A. The Apostle communicated his understanding of the gospel via his writings.

Eph. 3: 3-5 ... that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. ⁴ By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;
- B. The things written by the Apostles were the same things they taught in person.
 1. **II Thes. 2: 5-** Do you not remember that while I was still with you, I was telling you these things?
 2. Peter wrote to remind the brethren to remember what was taught by the Apostles, by Jesus and by the prophets.
 - a. **II Pet. 3: 1-2** This is now, beloved, the second letter I am writing to you in which I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, ² that you should remember the words spoken beforehand by the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior spoken by your apostles.
 - b. All of these were communicated to them in writing.

C. The writing of the Apostles restated the commands of the Lord.

1. **II Thes. 4: 2-** For you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.
2. **I Cor. 14: 37-** If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord’s commandment.

D. Christians cannot exceed what is written.

1. **I Cor. 4: 6-** Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written, so that no one of you will become arrogant in behalf of one against the other.
2. **II John 9-** Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.

E. The message of the Apostles cannot be altered.

Rev. 22: 18-19 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book;¹⁹ and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.

IV. Thus, the bible is the way God communicates His will to man today.

A. Apart from the bible, it is impossible for man to have a relationship w/God.

1. **Rom. 10:17-** So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.
2. **Eph. 2: 8-** For by grace you have been saved through faith

B. Man must conform his life to the pattern laid down in the scriptures.

1. **Heb. 2: 2-4** For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, ³ how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard, ⁴ God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.
2. **Heb. 10: 28-29** Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on he testimony of two or three witnesses.²⁹ How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

3. **Heb. 12: 25-** See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned *them* on earth, much less *will* we escape who turn away from Him who *warns* from heaven.
4. God has provided NO other way for people to be saved.
 - a. **John 6: 68-** Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life.
 - b. **John 14:6-** Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.

C. God’s revelation is complete.

1. God never intended to answer every question man could conceive. **Deut. 29.29**
2. God gave us all we need to know to be saved and to serve Him acceptably.
 - * **It was never God’s plan to micromanage anyone’s life or service.**
 - a. **II Pet. 1: 2-3** Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; ³ seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.
 - b. **II Tim. 3: 16-17** All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.
3. Those who think other things are required are lacking in knowledge and understanding.
 - a. Example : “Peril Of Great Price” and “Doctrines and Covenants”
 - b. Writings of those who claim to be modern day prophets
 - c. Creeds, commentaries and other writings of men are fertilizer, NEVER seed.

CONCLUSION :

- A. God has spoken directly to us through His holy word.
- B. For a person to reject His word is to reject Him.
- C. To leave God’s message unopened is to reject God’s will for our lives.
- D. When one knows God’s will and does not apply it to his life, he rebels against God.
- E. Conversely, those who love God seek to learn how to please Him.
- F. What is your relationship with God’s word ? **WITH GOD ?**

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