

Our Authority In Church

by

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Not what seems best

In every study of the word of God there must be some standard of authority. All questions must have some reliable source of answers. All of us must have a definite authority on which to depend upon to be right. Because our subject is a religious one, we now ask, "WHAT IS OUR AUTHORITY IN THE STUDY OF CHURCH ORGANIZATION? WHAT STANDARD WILL BE USED TO BE SURE THAT QUESTIONS WILL BE GIVEN A CORRECT ANSWER?" Today some people will say that every man is left to choose what he may think is right in matters concerning religion. "You can just do what seems best," those people say. "Everyone is his own standard". The Bible says, "*it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps.*" (Jer. 10:23). "*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*" (Prov. 14:12). JESUS SAID, "*But in vain do they worship me, teaching the commandments of men.*" (Matt. 15:9). We can learn and see that, in any religious matter, man's opinion is no authority.

Not what others do

Secondly, belief on religious authority is that what is done by the majority of people must be correct. Those who believe in a certain plan or practice of the church rule will always boast of how many people have accepted to follow their plan or what they practice (Those who use many cups feel the same. They have many followers). This is quite an incorrect idea as far as authority in religion is concerned. Jesus said that many think they are right, but He does not know them. (Matt. 7:22). Many follow in false ways, but only a few follow the truth. (Matt. 7:13-14). We can learn a lesson from the Israelites who wanted a king so as to be like the nations around them. By trying to be like others they rejected the plan of God to rule over them (1 Sam. 8:5-7). Therefore this is a warning to the Lord's church not to try to be like the denominations around them. As a church of Our Lord, we have been called out of them (2 Cor. 6:17). We are a peculiar people (1 Pet. 2:9). The problem is that weak members of the Lord's church have allowed some corruptions into their

congregations. E.g. instrumental music, multiple cups usage in the Lord's table, and women preachers, etc.

Only the New Testament

The only true standard of authority in religion is the New Testament. We have catechism, book of common prayers, or creed as religious authority but those are not the true standard of authority in religion. Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth. (Matt. 28:18). He sent the Holy Spirit to the apostles to guide them into all truth. (John 16:13). Whatever is written in scriptures is inspired of God and is sufficient unto every good work for Christians (2 Tim. 3:16-17). We are not to add nor take from God's Book. (Rev. 22:18-19). All of us, in order to be accepted unto heaven must abide in the teachings of Christ and not go beyond them. (2 John 9-10). Men must not change or pervert the Gospel. (Gal. 1:7-9). It is important to understand that the Old Testament is not an authority for Christians. It was only a schoolmaster until faith in Christ came, but now men are no longer under the schoolmaster. (Gal. 3: 24-25). The law was taken away and nailed to the new and better covenant, the New Testament of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Heb. 8: 6-13).

Therefore, those who respect God's authority will always teach what the Bible teaches and refuse to teach anything not authorized in Scripture. God's people must speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent.

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