

“OUR NEED FOR BIBLICAL AUTHORITY” (#4)

Introduction

I. *By way of review:*

- A. How can we have unity in religious matters, or any other matter? _____
- B. Therefore, if we are going to have unity on spiritual issues, we must be united to follow _____
- C. What is a good “working definition” of authority? _____
- D. Where are the only places men can get authority? _____
- E. Name some false standards of authority. _____
- F. Name the true standard of authority. _____

II. In this lesson, we will begin the study of how to establish Bible authority.

Discussion

I. HOW TO ESTABLISH BIBLICAL AUTHORITY:

- A. The methods by which we establish Bible authority are not uncommon. In fact, we establish authority in this way on a day-to-day basis as we deal with people (This will become clearer as we continue to study.).
- B. The method for establishing Biblical authority is not merely a New Testament teaching, but it is seen throughout the Bible.
 - 1. Perhaps the New Testament explains this process a little clearer than the Old, but the method for establishing Bible authority is there!
 - 2. In the book of Acts, we see how the first century Christians established Bible authority concerning whether or not to bind physical circumcision on folks (Acts 15).
 - 3. Acts 15:7-19 – In a nutshell, we see these folks establishing Bible authority through:
 - a. Direct command or statement (Acts 15:15-18).
 - b. Apostolic Approved Example (Acts 15:7, 12).
 - c. Necessary Inference (Acts 15:7-11).
- C. Now, let’s study this in more detail.....

II. DIRECT COMMAND OR STATEMENT:

- A. This is perhaps the easiest to understand.
 - 1. Direct command or statement simply means a direct statement of truth, or a command which demands, or prohibits action (i.e., “thou shalt” or “thou shalt not”)
 - 2. Some today claim that this is the ONLY way to establish authority. This is simply not true!
- B. Can you think of some New Testament examples of direct commands or statements? _____

- C. Some other New Testament examples:
 - 1. All must repent (Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 17:30).
 - 2. Baptism is necessary for salvation (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; I Peter 3:21). Distinguish between a “command” or “statement” in those four verses. _____
 - 3. Man-made religion is vain (Matthew 15:9).
 - 4. Giving (I Corinthians 16:1-2).
- D. Some Old Testament examples:
 - 1. Noah (Genesis 6:14).
 - 2. Abraham (Genesis 12:1)
 - 3. God speaking to the Israelites (Exodus 20:1-17).
 - 4. Can you name some other Old Testament examples of direct commands or statements? _____

III. APOSTOLIC APPROVED EXAMPLE:

- A. These are beliefs and practices followed by the early church under the guidance of the apostles. These are things meant to be followed by churches in all generations.
 - 1. These folks are teaching by actions rather than by words.
 - 2. Keep in mind as you study that there are some “examples” found in the Bible which are there to show us what NOT to do, rather than what to do! Be cautious to not follow those!
 - 3. Remember, that there are also occasions of “limited” examples. (i.e., “limited” to a certain time/place.)
 - a. For example: Early Christians had miraculous spiritual gifts. Yet
 - b. Not all had powers (I Corinthians 12:29-30).
 - c. They were limited in time (I Corinthians 13:8-10).
- B. Unapproved Examples:
 - 1. The lying of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)
 - 2. The pride of Herod (Acts 12:21-23)
 - 3. The sin of David (II Samuel 11).
 - 4. The wickedness of Ahab (I Kings 17-22).
- C. Approved Examples:
 - 1. Paul said to follow/imitate him as _____ (I Corinthians 11:1).
 - 2. Teaching from house to house (Acts 2:46, 20:20).
 - 3. Helping needy saints (Acts 11:28-30).
 - 4. Partaking of the Lord’s Supper on the first day of the week (Acts 2:42, 20:7).

IV. NECESSARY INFERENCE:

- A. While we may not be familiar with this term, this is simply the unavoidable conclusion one draws from the information given or actions described.
 - 1. We may not use this term, but we use such reasoning frequently. Examples:
 - a. You wake up and see frost on the ground. What is necessarily inferred about the air temperature outside? _____
 - b. We read that Jesus “*went up straightway out of the water*” (Matthew 3:16). What is necessarily inferred? _____
 - 2. Jesus expected His disciples to reason (Matthew 15:10-11, 15-16).
- B. To arrive at an unavoidable conclusion, we must:
 - 1. Read the context.
 - 2. Study other Scriptures (parallel verses, etc.)
 - 3. Keep in mind that not all conclusions are “unavoidable,” but those which are help us to establish Bible authority.
- C. Some examples of determining necessary inference:
 - 1. Jesus taught the Pharisees the unavoidable conclusion that He was the Christ.
 - a. Matthew 21:42-46, 22:41-46 – after reading this, compare it to Psalms 118:22-23, 110:1.
 - b. John 5:39
 - 2. Partaking of the Lord’s Supper *every* first day of the week (Acts 2:42, 20:7). How many weeks have a “first day”? _____
 - 3. Philip preached Jesus to the Eunuch (Acts 8:35). When he saw water, he wanted to be baptized (Acts 8:36). What unavoidable conclusion can we reach concerning preaching Christ? _____

Conclusion

- I. We can establish Biblical authority in one or more of the ways above. However, these are the only ways we can do it.
- II. In future lessons, we will make more applications to what we have learned here. – Jarrod Jacobs