

“BY WHAT AUTHORITY ARE YOU DOING THESE THINGS?”

INTRODUCTION

A. Matthew 21:23-27

Jesus was once asked, “By what authority are you doing these things?” In His reply, Jesus acknowledged that religious authority comes either “from heaven or from men”. This lesson identifies religious authority from heaven.

B. Proverbs 20:10

It is dishonest to use varying standards of measurement in the marketplace. It is even more dishonest to use varying standards of measure in religion. It would be altogether unprofitable for two parties to initiate a study of the scriptures without first agreeing on a single objective standard of truth.

I. GOD EXISTS.

A. Hebrews 3:4

Nothing can exist without having been built. God is the answer to the existence of the universe.

B. Romans 1:20

Proof of God’s power and existence is obvious in creation.

C. Psalm 19:1

His work identifies Him.

D. Acts 14:17

He is born witness of by having provided for His creatures.

II. GOD GAVE ALL AUTHORITY TO CHRIST.

A. Matthew 28:18

Jesus claimed universal authority.

1. “Given”

a. John 12:49

Jesus acknowledged that His authority came from God.

b. Acts 2:36

Jesus was made Lord by God.

c. Matthew 17:1-5

God told men to listen to Him.

d. Hebrews 1:1-2

It is through Christ that God communicates with man.

e. 1st Corinthians 15:27

Nevertheless, God retains His superiority.

2. "All"

a. Matthew 6:24

He does not share His power.

b. Acts 4:12

No one else has the power to save.

c. John 14:6

He provides exclusive access to God the Father.

C. John 12:48

The words of Jesus are the standard by which all will be judged. Therefore, submission to His will is essential.

III. CHRIST AUTHORIZED HIS APOSTLES.

A. Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4

Jesus told the apostles they would preach His gospel worldwide, beginning when they were empowered with the Holy Spirit, which thing did come to pass.

B. 2nd Corinthians 5:20

They are His ambassadors. As political ambassadors are sent by a head of state to represent policy abroad, so the apostles of Christ were commissioned by Jesus to proclaim His gospel to the world.

C. **1st Thessalonians 2:13**

The apostle Paul commended those of Thessalonica because they received his preaching “*not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God*”.

1. **John 13:20**

Acceptance of Christ is entirely dependent on acceptance of those whom He sent.

2. **Luke 10:16**

Likewise, by rejecting Christ’s representatives, Christ is rejected.

IV. **THE APOSTLES RECORDED GOD’S WORD IN SCRIPTURE.**

A. **1st Corinthians 14:37**

The authority of Christ is revealed to us in the writing of the apostles.

B. **2nd Peter 1:20-21**

Those who wrote the scriptures were not recording their ideas, but God’s.

C. **2nd Timothy 3:16-17**

God is the source of every scripture.

D. **John 16:13**

Jesus stated that the Holy Spirit would guide the apostles “*into **all truth***”.

What they did with the truth is worthy of our consideration.

1. **Acts 20:20, 27**

The knowledge of the apostles was withheld from no one.

2. **Ephesians 3:1-5**

It is available to all who will read their writings.

V. **THE SCRIPTURES ARE SUFFICIENT**

A. **Jude 3**

“*The faith... was **once for all** delivered to the saints*”. The faith, not subjective faith as in what I believe or you believe, but objective faith as in the system of belief set forth by the Lord, is final.

B. 2nd Peter 1:2-3; Galatians 1:6-9

Additional revelation is not forthcoming. *“All things that pertain to life and godliness”* have already been supplied. All revelations past the Bible are untrustworthy.

C. 1st Peter 1:25; Luke 21:33

God preserves His word perfectly for us. The word of God will always endure. The words of Jesus will never pass away.

1. Is it honest to use varying standards of authority in the marketplace (Proverbs 20:10; Deuteronomy 25:13-15)?
2. From what source should religious authority be derived (Matthew 21:23-27)?
3. How do you know that God exists (Hebrews 3:4; Romans 1:20; Psalm 19:1; Acts 14:17)?
4. Who has all authority (Matthew 28:18)?
5. Does the Lord share his power (Matthew 6:24; Acts 4:12)?
6. Where does Christ's authority come from (John 12:49; Acts 2:36; Matthew 17:1-5; Hebrews 1:1-2)?
7. Who did Jesus authorize to be his witnesses to the world (Luke 24:46-49; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4)?
8. What is the result of rejecting the apostles (John 13:20; 2nd Corinthians 5:20)?
9. Are the words of the apostles any less important than the words Christ spoke personally (1st Corinthians 14:37; 1st Thessalonians 2:13)?
10. Did the writers of scripture record their own ideas or God's (2nd Peter 1:20-21; 2nd Timothy 3:16-17)?
11. Is the faith God delivered in the New Testament sufficient for all men of all times (Jude 3; 2nd Peter 1:2-3)?
12. How much of the truth did the Holy Spirit guide the apostles into (John 16:13)?
13. How much of the apostles' knowledge did they withhold (Acts 20:20, 27)?
14. How can the knowledge of the apostles be gained by others (Ephesians 3:4)?
15. How many revelations beyond the original gospel are trustworthy (Galatians 1:6-9)?
16. For how long can God's word be relied upon (1st Peter 1:25; Luke 21:33)?