

Recognizing and Applying Authority

INTRODUCTION.

- A. If I were to ask you, “Who is your leader and who do you follow?” How would you reply? In other words, who is guiding your life?
- B. This is an important question because Jeremiah wrote, “*O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.*” (Jeremiah 10:23, NKJV) While you may attempt to guide your life without any divine directions, you will wander about your life in a lost state.
- C. The first step in choosing a reliable leader to find one with authority. Then, upon recognizing the leader’s authority, you apply that authority in your life. You let the authority of that leader change your life.
- D. With this lesson, I will help you to recognize the right source of authority.
 - 1. We will begin by considering examples who either recognized and followed God’s authority, who recognized but did not follow God’s authority, or who did not recognize God’s authority.
 - 2. We will then establish how to recognize the authority of God.
 - 3. Next, we will show that the authority of God is found in His written word.
 - 4. Lastly, we will ask the question, “Will God’s authority change your life?”
- E. Let us begin by examining some Bible examples.

I. EXAMPLES.

- A. Examples of those who recognized and followed God’s authority.
 - 1. Abraham. (Genesis 12:1-5; 18:17-19)
 - 2. Moses. (Exodus 3:1-6; 5:1-3; Deuteronomy 34:10-12)
- B. Examples of those who recognized, but did not abide by God’s authority. (I Kings 13)
 - 1. King Jeroboam. (I Kings 13:4-6,33-34)
 - 2. The old prophet. (I Kings 13:11-18)
 - 3. The young prophet. (I Kings 13:19-26)
- C. An example of one who rejected God’s authority: Pharaoh.

1. Pharaoh did not recognize the God of Israel. (Exodus 5:1-2; 11:9-10)
2. The Lord killed the first born of Pharaoh's house. (Exodus 12:29-31)
3. Pharaoh again rejected God's authority and pursued the people of Israel. God destroyed the army of Pharaoh. (Exodus 14:5-9, 26-31)

II. HOW CAN WE RECOGNIZE GOD'S AUTHORITY?

- A. When we behold the power of God, we witness the display of his power and authority.
- B. Looking into nature reveals the power of the creator. All the way from the organized make up of the atom to the established rotation and operation of our solar system, we see God's power and authority. Look deep into the miracle of birth and you will see evidence of God's power and authority.
- C. While it is true that looking into nature reveals the many wonders of creation, the Bible is the greatest record of the manifestation of the power of God.
 1. God created the universe. (Genesis 1)
 2. God gave life to man. (Genesis 2)
 3. God has given life to the dead. One specific case was the raising of Jesus. (Romans 4:24; 8:11; 10:9)
 4. God allowed many miracles to confirm His word. (Hebrews 2:3-4; John 20:30-31)

III. THE AUTHORITY OF GOD IS FOUND IN HIS WRITTEN WORD.

- A. After recognizing God's authority, we must search to find His authority and instructions for our lives. This search begins with Jesus.
- B. God sent Jesus to convey the message of salvation. Jesus taught with authority.
 1. Jesus taught as one who possessed authority. (Matthew 7:28-29)
 2. God instructed the disciples to listen to Jesus. (Matthew 17:1-5)
 3. God had a specific message for Jesus to deliver. (John 5:24-30; 17:6-8)
 4. After His death, Jesus stated that all authority had been given to Him on heaven and on earth. (Matthew 28:18-20)
 5. Jesus Christ will continue to reign until He turns the kingdom back over to His father. (I Corinthians 15:24-28)
 6. Jesus is the head of the body, which is the church. (Ephesians 1:22-23)
 7. The world will be judged by the words of Jesus. (John 5:26,27; 12:47-50)

- C. Jesus delegated authority to the apostles so that the world could know the will of God.
 - 1. Jesus gave the apostles the authority to bind and loose. However, the apostles could only bind and loose what had already been bound and loosed within the will of God. (Matthew 16:19)
 - 2. When Jesus left this world, He sent the Holy Spirit to aid the apostles in their recollection and knowledge of what was to be bound and loosed. (John 14:25-26; 16:12-15)
- D. The apostles and inspired men recorded the word of God in written form so that we might have a complete record of God's will for man.
 - 1. Romans 1:16-17 - The gospel is complete. It is the power of God unto salvation. It reveals the righteousness of God.
 - 2. II Timothy 3:16-17 - The Bible is complete because all scripture was given by the inspiration of God.
 - 3. II Peter 1:3 - We have been given all things that pertain to life and godliness.
 - 4. Galatians 1:11-12 - The gospel taught by Paul was complete. This complete gospel had come through the revelation of Jesus Christ.
 - 5. Jude 3 - The writer Jude wrote through inspiration that the gospel had once for all been delivered to the saints. This statement shows completeness.

IV. WILL GOD'S AUTHORITY CHANGE YOUR LIFE?

- A. Letting God's word change your lives begins with a genuine respect for God's word.
 - 1. Do you recognize and follow God's written word? If so, then you will be like Abraham and Moses who recognized and applied God's authority within their lives.
 - 2. Do you recognize God's word, but fail to follow it? If so, then you are like Jeroboam, the old prophet, and the young prophet; all who recognized God's authority, but failed to make application of it in their lives.
 - 3. Do you reject God's word, thereby rejecting Him and His authority? If so, then you are like Pharaoh.
- B. Of the three choices, which one will send you to Heaven?
 - 1. Recognizing and applying God's authority?
 - 2. Recognizing God's authority, but not applying it in your life?
 - 3. Not recognizing God's authority?

- C. Jesus said that only those who do the Father's will would spend eternity in Heaven. (Matthew 7:21-23)
- D. If you will allow your respect for God's authority to change your life, then you will begin to make application of that authority. You will take the sin out of your life, and replace it with righteous obedience. Then, and only then, will you enter into Heaven.
- E. Consider an example of one who changed because he recognized God's authority and applied it to his life: The apostle Paul.
 - 1. Paul went from being a murderer of Christians to a minister of the Gospel.
 - 2. After it was all said and done, Paul was able to say the following: *"For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing."* (II Timothy 4:6-8, NKJV)

CONCLUSION.

- A. If you will recognize and apply God's authority as seen in His word, then you can be like Abraham, Moses, Paul, and the many other faithful followers. You can let the word of God change of your life if you will simply bow down to God's authority.
- B. If you are not a Christian, then please turn to God in faithful obedience and have your sins washed away. Then, continue applying God's word in your life and you will spend eternity in Heaven.
- C. Do you recognize God's authority? Are you applying it in your life? If not, then begin today.

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