

THE QUESTION OF AUTHORITY 336

TEXT: Luke 20:1-8.

20:1 Now it happened on one of those days, as He taught the people in the temple and preached the gospel, that the chief priests and the scribes, together with the elders, confronted Him 2 and spoke to Him, saying, "Tell us, by what authority are You doing these things? Or who is he who gave You this authority?"

INTRODUCTION:

A. Authority is basic to every activity of life.

1. Buy a pound of meat.
2. Gal. Milk or gas.
3. Buy a yard of cloth
4. There is even a standard for what a yard is:

Yard is 36" or .914,379,80 meter
meter (m) distance "The metre is the length of the path travelled by light in vacuum during a time interval of 1/299 792 458 of a second."

5. Rules for sports. The weight of a disc in high school and jr. high.

B. It is basic in religion.

1. We don't speak the same things because we don't have same authority.
2. If we agree on authority all other issues can be settled.

BODY:

I. WHAT IS OUR AUTHORITY?

- A. God Is The Ultimate Authority. Eph. 4:6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.
- B. God Gave All Authority To Christ. Matt. 28:18. And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
- C. Christ Conferred This Authority On The Apostles.

1. Jn. 16:13. (NKJV) "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.
2. Matt. 18:18. "Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.
3. 1Cor 14:37 (NKJV) If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.

D. Scripture is God's final word and authority.

1. 1 Cor. 13:8-13. Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known. And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.
2. Jude 3. (NKJV) Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.
3. 2Tim 3:16 (NKJV) All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

E. We Must Have Authority For All We Do In Service Of God. Col. 3:17 (NKJV) And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

F. We must walk by faith.

1. 2 Cor. 5:7. For we walk by faith, not by sight.
2. Rom. 10:17. So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
3. Therefore, whatever is not in the Bible is not of faith Rom. 14:23. But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin.

II. HOW DO WE ESTABLISH BIBLICAL AUTHORITY?

A. By Direct Command Or Statement. Mark 16:15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

1. Generic- go Mk. 16:15. Any way you want. Walk, ride, etc.
2. Specific- Preach the gospel. Mk. 16:15. Only Gospel.

B. By Inspired Example.

1. The Lord's Supper command- 1 Cor. 11:23-26. For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

■ **1 Corinthians 16:1-2** Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first *day* of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.

2. We learn when by inspired example- Acts 20:6-7. But we sailed away from Philippi after the Days of Unleavened Bread, and in five days joined them at Troas, where we stayed seven days. Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.

C. By necessary inference.

1. Command to assemble- Heb. 10:25. not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.
2. A meeting place is inferred.
3. Where, the time, are matters of judgment.

D. The law of exclusion:

1. Anything not taught is w/o authority.

- a. Order steak and salad and baked pot. Waiter brings that plus a large pizza. (Take it back).
- b. Send a child for bread. Child brings bread, milk, eggs.
- c. Send for sleeping bag, send you stove, tent, etc.
- d. Elements of the Lord's Supper.

God has authorized:
 Unleavened bread and fruit of the vine.
 Everything else is excluded!

2. Some ignored his Law.

a. Lev. 10:1-2. **Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them. So fire went out from the Lord and devoured them, and they died before the Lord.**

b. 1 Sam. 15:8-9. **He also took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them. But everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed.**

c. 2 Chron. 26:16-21. **But when he was strong his heart was lifted up, to his destruction, for he transgressed against the Lord his God by entering the temple of the Lord to burn incense on the altar of incense. So Azariah the priest went in after him, and with him were eighty priests of the Lord--valiant men. And they withstood King Uzziah, and said to him, "It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the Lord, but for the priests, the sons of Aaron, who are consecrated to burn incense. Get out of the sanctuary, for you have trespassed! You shall have no honor from the Lord God." Then Uzziah became furious; and he had a censer in his hand to burn incense. And while he was angry with the priests, leprosy broke out on his forehead, before the priests in the house of the Lord, beside the incense altar. And Azariah the chief priest and all the priests looked at him, and there, on his forehead, he was leprous; so they thrust him out of that place. Indeed he also hurried to get out, because the Lord had struck him. King Uzziah was a leper until the day of his death. He dwelt in an isolated house, because he was a leper; for he was cut off from the house of the Lord. Then Jotham his son was over the king's house, judging the people of the land.**

Re-Emphasizing the "Silence" Argument

David Tarbet December 18, 1986 Gospel Advocate p. 756-757

Through the years brethren have wrestled with an important principle of Bible interpretation: respect for the silence of Scripture. Thomas Campbell put it like this: “Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent.” Campbell was not the first, nor the only one, to point out the significance of biblical silence.

The concept of biblical silence has been used to forbid participation in co-operative ventures of evangelism, multiple communion cups, Sunday schools, church-owned property and even prayers before the offering. We have all heard it stated that churches of Christ do not use instrumental music in worship simply because the Bible is silent on the matter.

On the other hand, the “silence” of Scripture has been interpreted as giving permission to do whatever the Scripture does not specifically condemn. Thus, instrumental music is sometimes defended on the basis that the Scriptures are silent on the matter; therefore, God must not care whether we use it or don’t use it.

It is my conviction that the specific voice of God commits us to worship with a cappella, not instrumental, music. It is what the Scripture says that binds us to a course of action. Silence in and of itself is not a valid basis for forbidding a practice. Silence becomes significant only if God has already told us clearly and specifically what His will is, and if our action or practice represents an addition, substitution or change in what God has told us to do. However, when God has not spoken specifically on a matter, the silence of Scripture is not prohibitive.

Why do we not direct prayer to the “saints” who have gone before? Not because the Scripture is silent on this subject, but because the Scripture has clearly and specifically told us to pray to God through Jesus Christ, our Mediator (1 Timothy 2:5). When the Scripture has been specific as to the object of our prayers (God) and also as to the mediator of prayer (Jesus Christ), its silence with regard to praying through other unauthorized mediators (like saints”) is significant.

The use of instrumental music in Christian worship ought to be tested by this same principle. God has specified the kind of music He desires: vocal music. “Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:19). Is His silence with regard to another kind of music (instrumental) significant? Yes. His silence is as significant as it is on other matters...

In all these things, the Scriptures have specified God’s will. Respect for the voice of Scripture binds us to do what God has said. Respect for the silence of Scripture prevents us from practicing or approving something that represents a change, substitution, addition or subtraction from what God has specifically authorized. We can hardly allow one innovation without permitting them all.

Let our convictions then, be clearly stated: When God has not specified a thing; we must refrain from interpreting His silence as prohibitive. In all such cases we are free to do things as best we can to the praise and glory of God. However, silence is significant where God has specified His divine will. His specifics limit and restrict us to do only what He has specified. We dare not run ahead of God to condone or approve what He has not condoned or approved: What He has failed to authorize, we must not authorize!

III. LET US APPLY BIBLICAL AUTHORITY.

A. Baptism is a command.

1. Mk. 16:16. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.
2. Acts 10:48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.
3. Immersion specified--all others excluded- Rom. 6:4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

4. It is for penitent believers--excludes babies- Mk. 16:16. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.
5. It is for remission of sins therefore, baptism because one is already saved is excluded.

B. Singing is Commanded.

1. Eph. 5:19. speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,
2. Col. 3:16. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.
3. Making music is generic--anything goes if we all do it.
4. Singing is specific-excludes all others--such as playing.

CONCLUSION:

A. Important to do things exactly right.

1. Num. 20:7-13. **Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, "Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals." So Moses took the rod from before the Lord as He commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. Then the Lord spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them." This was the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel contended with the Lord, and He was hallowed among them.**
2. Ask Saul 1 Sam. 15:
3. 1 Cor. 10:11. Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

B. Nearly right is not good enough.

C. Did you do exactly what God said to become a Christian.