

In
Search
of ...

Truth & Right

Tim Henderson, Editor

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"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Phil. 4:8 (NASB-U)

A publication of the
**Wellsburg
church of Christ**
Which meets at:
112 Sunset Ave.
Wellsburg, WV 26070
304-737-1422

We appreciate so much your presence here with us today. We would like to extend an invitation to join us at any of our other times of worship.

TIMES OF SERVICES
SUNDAY
Bible Classes* 10:00 AM
AM Worship 10:45 AM
PM Worship 6:30 PM
WEDNESDAY
Bible Classes* 7:00 PM
(* Bible Classes for All Ages)

Today's Sermons:

*Who is a
Christian?*

*Audio CD's are available
free of charge in the foyer.*

*Please visit our website:
www.truthandright.org*

*If you have any questions regard-
ing what we teach and practice,
please feel free to ask*

"By What Authority Doest Thou These Things?" Matthew 21:23

By: Don Miller

via—Great Plainness of Speech—08-1998

The above question, asked of our Lord by the chief priests and elders of the people, was a very valid question, even though their motive for asking it was impure. The word "authority" means to "have legal or rightful power, a right to command or to act, and to have jurisdiction." They also asked Jesus, "*Who gave thee this authority?*" (vs. 23). This too, is a very valid question.

Today, more than ever, I feel that this question needs not only to be asked but to be answered. Our Lord answered the Jews on this occasion (Matthew 21:25) with a question that states a profound truth concerning authority; He asked concerning the baptism of John, "*Whence was it? From heaven or of men?*" Everything you and I do religiously is authorized by one of these sources, Divine or Human.

The Bible is plain concerning the danger of human authority. Jeremiah 10:23 states, "*The way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.*" Proverbs 14:12 states "*There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*" Millions upon millions of people are following their own feelings, emotions, and religious traditions concerning the doctrine they teach and follow and the way they worship. The Lord says of those in Matthew 15:9, "*In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.*" Now, I don't know about you, but after reading warnings like these, I want to

In this Issue:

"By What Authority Doest Thou These Things - pg. 1—Don Miller	2—pg. 2—Don Miller
"By What Authority ... " Part	Those Serving—pg. 4 Announcements—pg. 4

know “*by what authority doest thou these things?*”

This brings us to **Divine Authority**. Jesus declared in Matthew 28:18, “*All authority is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*” He claims to have **all** authority; if so, how much does that leave me, a mere mortal? He also claims to have **all authority in heaven and in earth**; that pretty much covers where I will be living my short life span. A third thing He states is that this authority is **given to Him**. Remember the second question in our text in Matthew 21:25? Who gave this authority to Him?

The Bible answers that for us. Even though Jesus has all authority, it was delegated to Him from God. In John 17:1,2 Jesus prayed, “*Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that Thy Son also may glorify Thee: as Thou hast given Him power (authority) over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as Thou hast given Him.*” Ephesians 1:20-23 states that God set Christ far above all **power** (authority—vs. 2), and gave Him to be **Head over all things** to the church (vs. 22).

Jesus delegated this authority to His Apostles. In Matthew 16:19, Jesus told Peter He would give him the “keys” to the kingdom (or His church—vs. 18). The other Apostles were also promised this authority in Matthew 18:18. The Holy Spirit played a vital role in this process by being sent to bring to their remembrance all things Jesus had taught them (John 14:26; 15:26) and to guide them into all truth (John 16:13). These things were fulfilled when Peter and the other Apostles used these keys to open the door of the kingdom (church) to the Jews in Acts chapter 2 and to the Gentiles in Acts chapter 10.

The Apostles then delegated the authority of Christ to all mankind through the written word. In Ephesians 3:3-5 Paul states, “*By revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;*” Paul wrote by inspiration, but he states that we can understand it; in fact, he commands us to in Ephesians 5:17. In 1 Corinthians 14:37, Paul states “*The things I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord.*” Whenever I read from the inspired men who wrote the Bible, I am reading what God wanted me to learn and practice. I, too, must operate only

on delegated authority. In Colossians 3:17 we are told “*Whatsoever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.*” The phrase “*in the name of*” means “*by His authority.*” All I say or do, according to this verse, is to be authorized by Christ. Do you agree now that our question (“*By what authority doest thou these things?*”) needs to be answered? It used to be important enough that people would use Book, Chapter and Verse for everything they practiced; now, sadly, that seems to be the last thing considered in religious practices.

Jesus is our Lord, yet He asked in Luke 6:46, “*Why call ye Me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things I say?*” Other warnings in the New Testament along this line are found in Matthew 7:21-23; 1 Corinthians 4:6; 2 John 9-11; Galatians 1:6-9 and Romans 16:17. We are to avoid unauthorized practices (error) like it was the plague! The natural question is, “How do I know if I am using the King’s law lawfully?”

(Continue reading as brother Miller answers that question.)

*“By What Authority Doest
Thou These Things?” part 2*

By: Don Miller—via—Great Plainness of Speech—10-1998

In the first part of this article, we noted that Jesus Christ has all authority (Matthew 28:18). Everything we do or say is to be authorized by Jesus (Colossians 3:17). That authority was delegated to the apostles and inspired men who delegated it to us, through the written word, to guide us in all things (2 Timothy 3:16,17; Ephesians 3:3-5; 1 Corinthians 14:37). The problem facing us today in religion is either a total disregard for authority or just not knowing how to apply the truth as revealed unto us. There is nothing we can do to help those who refuse to submit to the authority of Christ, but maybe we can list some principles revealed within God’s word to help those who are struggling to learn the truth.

Jesus says we can **know the truth** (John 8:32); Paul commands us **to understand** what the will of the Lord is (Ephesians 5:17), and says that when we read the truth we **can understand** it (Ephesians 3:3,4). We do that when we “*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*” (2 Timothy 2:15). One version of this verse says to

“handle aright the word.” Following will be some ways in which we “rightly divide”, or “handle aright”, the word in order to establish what should guide us as we worship and serve our Lord.

First, we must rightly divide the Old Law from the New. If we could just get folks to realize that *“The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached,”* (Luke 16:16), less religious differences would exist. Not only did Christ die on the cross, but so did the Old Law (Colossians 2:14-17). That is when the New Law went into force (Hebrews 9:15-17). Other passages that teach us that we are under the New Law are Galatians 3:22-25; Hebrews 8:6-13; and 10:9,10. In order to insure that we are practicing what Jesus authorized, we must use the New Testament as our guide today.

Second, we must sum up all that is revealed on a subject or topic in order to arrive at the truth. Jesus said in Matthew 4:4 *“Man shall not live by bread alone, but **by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.**”* Jesus used this same principle in Luke 24:27 *“And beginning at Moses and **all** the prophets, He expounded unto them in **all** the scriptures the things concerning Himself.”*

One of the biggest mistakes people make along this line concerns how God will save us today. Most in the denominational world teach that only belief in Christ is necessary (John 3:16), and that by grace through this faith we are saved (Ephesians 2:8). They say there is nothing we must do in order to be saved. When you sum up ALL that is revealed on how to be saved, you indeed find FAITH being necessary (Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24), but you also find CONFESSION (Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 10:32-33), REPENTANCE (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30-31), and BAPTISM (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21) being part of this plan. We are indeed saved by the grace of God, but it is only if we meet the conditions laid down in the will of Christ.

Third, we must keep things in their proper context. The text in Ephesians 2:8,9 is one where men fail to do this. They teach that we are saved by grace (which we are, vs. 8), but that there are no works for us to do because of verse 9. We must continue reading the context and include verse 10. It tells us *“we are His **workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus*

*unto good **works**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in **them**.”* There are works of men in this passage, and works of God that He gave for us to do. Which ones are involved in our salvation and which ones are not?

Fourth, we must never add to or take away from God’s word. That is a principle we find from cover to cover in the Bible (Deuteronomy 4:2; Revelation 22:18-19). When we speak, we must speak as the oracles of God (1 Peter 4:11); whatever we practice in religion we must give book, chapter and verse.

Fifth, even the tense of a word or whether something is singular or plural, can reveal a great truth. For example, Jesus quoted Exodus 3:6 in Matthew 22:31,32 and emphasized the word “AM” to prove that God was still the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob long after they had died physically—they were still living spiritually. We can use this same principle today. In Colossians 1:13 Paul says *“Who HATH (past tense) delivered us from the power of darkness, and HATH (again, past tense) translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son.”* This teaches us the kingdom is now in existence and has been since Paul penned these words. Just this simple truth knocks one false doctrine in the head, and that is the doctrine of premillennialism.

In Galatians 3:16 Paul makes an argument from whether the word “seed” is singular or plural: *“He saith not, and to SEEDS, as of many; but as of one, And to thy SEED, which is Christ.”* We can make the same argument from passages like Matthew 16:18 when Jesus told Peter *“Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my CHURCH”*. Notice, Jesus used the word “CHURCH” (singular, as of one), and not the word “CHURCHES” (plural, as of many). Just this simple principle teaches us that Jesus built only one church and not hundreds (or maybe thousands) that are built by men today!

How do we know if we are using the law of Christ lawfully? By diligent study and rightly dividing the word of truth. These are just a few of the principles laid down in the law, and I hope they may be profitable to you.

Next [week], Lord willing, we will be looking at how to establish Bible authority. Is it by the old way of direct command, approved apostolic example and necessary inference, or by what is called the “new hermeneutic”?

Those Serving This Week

Sunday AM

Class Prayer	Ken Prager
Announcements	Chuck Isinghood
Song Leader	Harold Marshall
Scripture	Ezekiel 29:1-10
Reader	Terry Smith
Prayer	Dave Harless
Speaker	Tim Henderson
Lord's Supper	
Bread	Ed Roberts
Fruit of the Vine	Dan Marton
Serve	Nathan Marshall
Serve	Ken Prager
Closing Prayer	Matt Ferrell

Please inform the one in charge of announcements if you are unable to fulfill your responsibilities.

Sunday PM

Announcements	Chuck Isinghood
Song Leader	Harold Marshall
Scripture	Ezekiel 30:14-26
Reader	Ed Roberts
1st Prayer	Earl Miller
Speaker	Tim Henderson
Communion	Dave Harless
Closing Prayer	Dan Marton

Wednesday

Announcements	Chuck Isinghood
Class Prayer	Dave Harless
Song Leader	Tim Henderson
Invitation	Matt Ferrell
Closing Prayer	Ed Roberts

News N Notes

Please continue to remember these in your prayers:

Recovering:

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| - Ann Rudolph | - Mary Jane Myers |
| - Joyce Coen | - Marie Roberts |

Prayer Requests:

- Phyllis Coen recovering from a broken ankle
- Albert Miller, Earl Miller and Marie Robert's brother, as he recovers from heart surgery.
- Alfred Myers has been diagnosed with a leaky valve in his heart, they are waiting until Spring to see if it improves
- Mary Jane Myer's daughter-in-law has cancer in her neck .
- Zeda Goddard's sons, Dallas and Terry
- Frank Miller, Dorothy Lancaster's brother
- Rick Miller, Dorothy Lancaster's nephew
- Jimmy Roberts, Ed & Marie's son
- Lucille Harless, Dave Harless' mother
- Blake Headen, Alberta's husband, as he continues to deal with cancer treatments.
- Virginia Malick, Peggy Miller's mother, is at home
- Tim Henderson's grandmother, Ovie Henderson, is in rehab following a hip replacement
- Blake Swanson, Dorothy Lancaster's grandson
- Bud and Merl Frey
- Tammy Garrison, Zeda Goddard's daughter
- Ila Marshall, Harold Marshall's mother
- Jim Roberts, Ed Roberts' father
- Cary and Grace Lancaster

Don't forget our Shut-ins

Nursing Home:

- Ethel Mahan
- Pauline Sellers

At Home:

- Josephine Clow
- Mabel Fleming
- Pauline Midcap

Send them a card—give them a call—let them know we are thinking about them.

If someone needs to be added to this list, please call 304-914-2262