

The Church Vs Churches – Bible Authority Pt. 2

INTRODUCTION:

1. I want to continue our study of the Church VS the Churches concerning the proper view of the Bible's authority because...
 - A. It is *foundational* to everything we do in service to God.
 - B. It is one of the main things that sets the true church apart from those of men.
 - i. For, as we saw last week from the official statements of various churches, the common view of the Bible's authority is far different from what is revealed within the scriptures.
 - ii. For, although we read statements that say how the Bible has "complete and absolute authority," about how the Bible is "the recognized authority to communicate God's truth, which is to be taught, believed, and obeyed," and how "it is our final authority in all things that pertain to life and godliness," in many of these same statements we read that "God's authority is communicated in the church and its tradition, in human reason, in conscience and experience, in nature and history, in Christ and the Bible" and how "God reveals Himself in **all of the ways mentioned above**; yet the Bible is the **primary means of God's authoritative self-disclosure** for people today." (www.sbc.net/resolutions/1119/on-the-sufficiency-of-scripture-in-a-therapeutic-culture)
2. So, today I want to consider a more complete view of Bible authority that the N.T. church must possess and how it stands in stark contrast to that of the churches of today.

BODY:

I. The N.T. church is built on the foundation of Jesus and His Apostles:

- A. Jesus is the church's foundation (1 Cor. 3:11 – "For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.")
 1. This is seen in Christ's sacrificial work, but also in His work of revealing God's saving word (Heb. 1:1-2 – "GOD, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ²has in these last days spoken to us by *His Son*, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds").
 2. The significance of His words cannot be ignored (John 6:63 – "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.")!
 3. To not obey Jesus' words is death as Peter stated in Acts 3:22-23, "For Moses truly said to the fathers, 'The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. **Him you shall hear in all things**, whatever He says to you. ²³ 'And it shall be *that* every soul who **will not hear** that Prophet **shall be utterly destroyed** from among the people.'").
- B. Because Christ's *words* were fully revealed through the apostles, they too are said to make up the church's foundation (Eph. 2:19-21 – "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone")
 1. The Holy Spirit revealed *Christ's complete* truth to the apostles (Jn. 16:12-14 – "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ 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. ¹⁴ He will glorify Me, for **He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you**.")
 2. The apostles were the ones who revealed Christ's words to the world!
 - a. They preached His words (1 Thess. 2:13 – "For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God **which you heard from us**, you welcomed *it* not *as* the word of men, but as it is in truth, **the word of God**, which also effectively works in you who believe.").
 - b. They also wrote Jesus' words down for us in the N.T. (1 Cor. 14:37 – "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**.")

- i. Their written words revealed Christ's will (Eph. 3:4 – “how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly **written** already, ⁴by which, when you **read**, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)”).
 - ii. The *purpose* of their written words was to guide the church (1 Tim. 3:14-15 – “These things I **write** to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; ¹⁵but if I am delayed, I **write** so that you may **know** how you **ought to conduct yourself** in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”).
3. The true church understands that the only acceptable foundation upon which to build is Christ and His words revealed for us in the N.T. (Luke 6:46-48 – “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say? ⁴⁷Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: ⁴⁸He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the **foundation on the rock**. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock.”).

II. The N.T. church acknowledges that Christ's words have complete authority

A. Christ's word have complete authority or control over the church's doctrine and practice.

1. A church's view of this is important because it will drastically affect the role God's word plays in determining its beliefs and practices.
2. What we have found is that churches generally acknowledge the necessity of obeying Christ and the Bible but have little idea as to the level to which this must be applied.
 - a. We hear, even brethren, claim “you don't need bible authority for everything you do.”
 - b. Or, we hear the religious world cry “legalism” anytime their actions are questioned for having no scripture to authorize them!

B. The **Bible** claims **complete authority**:

1. Why? Because...
 - a. Jesus, its author, has complete authority (Matt. 28:18-20 – “And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, ‘**All authority** has been given to Me **in heaven and on earth**. ¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰**teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you**; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.”).
 - b. Jesus is head over *all things* to the church (Eph. 1:22-23 – “And He put **all things under His feet**, and **gave Him to be head over all things to the church**, ²³which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”).
 - i. Since Christ has *all* authority, man has none!
 - ii. And, since Christ is head over all things to the church, man is head of nothing!
 - c. And, Jesus showed we can't separate His authority from His words (Luke 6:46 – “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?”).
2. Thus, Christ's church recognizes the *complete* authority of His revealed, N.T. word over its doctrine and every practice.
 - a. To claim this requires true submission (Matt. 7:21-23 – “Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²²Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”).
 - b. The true church depends on Christ's word revealed in the N.T., not on church councils, tradition, or human experience or reason, for its doctrine and practice!

III. The true church limits itself to what is revealed by Christ in the N.T.

- A. Because the N.T. is the *fullness of Christ's truth REVEALED* through the Apostles/prophets, the true church acknowledges the N.T. to be *the only means* by which we can know what is acceptable to God (1 Cor. 2:11-13 – “For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so **no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God**. ¹²Now **we have received**, not the spirit of the world, but the **Spirit** who is **from God, that we**

might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. ¹³ These things we also **speak**, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."). From this we learn...

1. The church cannot know the things of God without them being revealed by the Spirit.
 2. The apostles were given this Spirit to *reveal* the things of God for us!
 3. Thus, a church's doctrine/practice is only acceptable if it is revealed in the word!
- B. Because the N.T. is the **fullness of Christ's truth REVEALED**, the true church obeys the words of the N.T. without addition or subtraction (Rev. 22:18-19 – "For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.").
1. Because it is *revelation*, it is not subject to man's thoughts, reason, or experiences.
 2. And, the seriousness of adding and/or subtracting from it should give all cause to pause!
- C. Because the N.T. is the **fullness of Christ's truth REVEALED**, the true church does not seek to justify its doctrine or practice on the bases of the SILENCE of the Scriptures.
1. Churches that claim to respect Bible authority often think that if the Bible is silent and provides no apparent objection to some form of action, then it is at their discretion to do it.
 2. **Bible:** Silence is not permission.
 - a. God presented this principle when David sought to build God a temple (2 Sam. 7).
 - i. What David wanted to do was a good thing that was intended to bring God glory.
 - ii. But, God refused based on His *silence*, that He had *never asked* for a temple (2 Sam. 7:4-7 – "But it happened that night that the word of the Lord came to Nathan, saying, ⁵ "Go and tell My servant David, 'Thus says the Lord: "Would you build a house for Me to dwell in? ⁶ For I have not dwelt in a house since the time that I brought the children of Israel up from Egypt, even to this day, but have moved about in a tent and in a tabernacle. ⁷ Wherever I have moved about with all the children of Israel, **have I ever spoken a word to anyone** from the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?'"").
 - b. When the HS has not given authorization in the N.T., we are not to act (Acts 15:24 – "Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, "You must be circumcised and keep the law"—**to whom we gave no such commandment**").
 3. Those who act on God's *silence* would not be so accepting of others doing the same to them.
 - a. How would such people respond if they took their car to a shop and told them to change the oil only to return and find that the shop had changed the oil, but also put in a new engine, installed new tires, and painted the car?!
 - b. Would any of these churches think it acceptable if they told their preacher he could withdraw \$500 dollars for expenses from their bank account, so he also drew out \$24,500 more...*because they were silent about it, they didn't say not to?*
 4. The true church, the one that follows Christ, only teaches and practices what God says through His word to teach and practice.

CONCLUSION:

1. We have seen that the true church of Christ...
 - A. Is built on the foundation of Christ and the words of His apostles revealed to us in the N.T.
 - B. Acknowledges the N.T.'s complete jurisdiction, control, or authority over its doctrine and practices.
 - C. Limits its doctrine and practices to what is revealed in the N.T., refusing to add/subtract from it.
2. Thus, the true church of the Bible stands in stark contrast to the churches of today.
3. If you want to be part of the real thing, you must come to Christ and be a part of His church, accepting him as your Lord and Christ and obeying His will in F-R-C-B, being raised to new life of submissive service!