

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mrs. Douglas, Mr. and Mrs. Hadley, Mrs. Elizabeth Jackson, Mr. Mathis, Lamar Mathis, Ms. Matchett, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mr. Sowder, Mr. Winns.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website:
www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com.
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

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Bible Authority - Part 1

By Derek Long

In every area of our lives, we must be guided by some standard we accept as authoritative. If someone was to draw a line on a piece of paper and ask you how long it is, you both would have to agree to an accepted standard as your rule to measure it by. We might use a ruler and say the line is so many inches. If so, we were accepting a common standard which was determined to be an inch as our guide. In matters of religion we need a common standard to use as our authority as well. We need a guide to show us what to do and not do.

Our standard of authority in matters of religion cannot be ourselves. The Bible gives several warnings about allowing ourselves to become our own standard of conduct. In Judges 17:6 and Judges 21:25 we get a glimpse of what happens when "everyone did what was right in his own eyes." The picture in these chapters is not something we want to recreate today. In 1 Kings 12:33 one part of the sin committed by Jeroboam was instituting a feast "in the month which he had devised in his own heart." Proverbs 3:5 tells us to, "trust in the Lord with all your heart," and warns us to, "lean not on your own understanding." Proverbs 14:12 and Proverbs 16:25 both teach, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death." Proverbs 28:26 calls the person who trusts in his

own heart a fool. In Jeremiah 10:23 the prophet admits, “O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.” 1 Corinthians 2:5 speaks about how our faith, “should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.” All of these verses and many more would show how we cannot rely on whatever we think might be right or wrong to guide us in the decision we make. We cannot say things like, “I don’t see anything wrong with that so God should be pleased with it.” We need to look to a standard beyond ourselves to determine what God wants and does not want us to do.

Our standard of authority for our life should come from God who created us and therefore has authority over us as a potter does the clay (Isaiah 64:8). God has chosen to reveal His mind to us in the words contained in the Bible (1 Corinthians 2:9-13). 2 Timothy 3:16-17 teaches, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.” Scripture is literally the message which God breathed out. Scripture contains for us the very words of God. Therefore in seeking to know what we should or should not do, we need to ask the question, “What does the Scripture say?” (Romans 4:3). By following Scripture in everything we do, we will be acting by the authority of God and not man.

Our standard of authority today is Jesus who has received all authority (Matthew 28:18). When Jesus was transfigured on the mountain, God clearly stated, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!” (Matthew 17:5). God made it plain we need to listen to what Jesus taught in contrast to Moses and the Prophets today. Hebrews 1:1-2 speaks of how God in these last days has chosen to speak to us through His Son. The Law of Moses served its purpose and has been done away and replaced by the New

Covenant (Galatians 3:23-25; Colossians 2:14-17; Hebrews 8:7-13). Many people seek to establish God’s will for us today by appealing to the Old Testament and yet we no longer live under that law today.

Our standard of authority is contained in the writings of the New Testament prophets and apostles. Jesus left His apostles upon the earth and told them the Holy Spirit would guide them into all truth, teaching them all things, and reminding them of all things (John 14:26; 16:13). The Holy Spirit would come upon such men and guide them to write the things contained in the New Testament (Ephesians 3:3-5). Therefore the things written by the first century apostles and prophets are the commandments of the Lord for us to follow today (1 Corinthians 14:37). The New Testament Scriptures are to guide our lives today.

Colossians 3:17 teaches, “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.” Everything we say and do needs to be able to be shown as something Jesus would authorize us to do. If we cannot find authority from Jesus to say or do something today, we need to stop doing it. To do things for which there is no law results in us committing lawlessness or sin (1 John 3:4).