

Establishing Bible Authority

- 1) What does it mean to “*establish authority*”?
- 2) Is Bible authority needed only for church functions and policies or is Bible authority needed for every single thing done in our private lives as well?
- 3) How can we know for certain that 2 Tim 3:16-17 includes more than simply the OT scriptures?
- 4) Everything taught in the Bible is taught in one of two ways – what two ways?

Establishing Bible Authority

- 5) Implication is not ... (what)?
- 6) Does silence forbid or permit?
- 7) Is the NT silent about church buildings?
- 8) What is the “*Explicit-Only*” doctrine and is it correct?

Establishing Bible Authority

Authority – *“the right to command and enforce obedience or administer punishment”*

Two forms of authority:

- Primary authority
- Delegated authority

Primary Authority

God the Father

1 Corinthians 11:3

3 But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

Primary Authority

God the Father

Daniel 4:35

35 All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing;

He does according to His will in the army of heaven
And among the inhabitants of the earth.

No one can restrain His hand

Or say to Him, "What have You done?"

Delegated Authority

Jesus

Matthew 28:18

18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority **has been given to Me** in heaven and on earth.

Delegated Authority

Jesus

Matthew 11:27

27 All things have been **delivered to Me by My Father, ...**

Delegated Authority

The Apostles

Matthew 16:18-19

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

19 And **I will give you** the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

Delegated Authority

Perfect-Passive-Participle

Matthew 16:18-19

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Literally

Matthew 16:18-19

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Summary

- God the Father (primary authority)
- Jesus (delegated authority)
- Apostles (delegated authority)

Summary

- God the Father (primary authority)
- Jesus (**official representative of the Father**)
- Apostles (**official representative of Jesus**)

Ambassadors

2 Corinthians 5:20

20 Now then, **we are ambassadors for Christ**, as though God were pleading through us: **we** implore **you** on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

“We” / “You”
(Apostles) / Christians

Ambassadors

1 John 4:6

6 **We** [apostles] are of God. **He** who knows God hears **us**; **he** who is not of God does not hear **us**. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

“Establishing Authority”

Colossians 3:17

17 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.

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To have authority from Jesus:

- Either Jesus Himself authorized it
- Or the apostles authorized it.

Written Authorization

No one may say:

- “I feel the Lord is leading me to do a certain thing.”
- “Jesus told me to do a certain thing.”

Written Authorization

John 16:13

13 [Jesus said to His apostles] 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.

Written Authorization

- **If** the Spirit would reveal “all truth” to the apostles,
- **And if** the apostles wrote down all which the Spirit revealed
- **And if** that revelation was preserved,
- **Then** there would be no further need for revelation.

Peter: “All truth revealed”

2 Peter 1:3

3 as His divine power has given to us **all things** that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,

Paul: “All truth written down”

2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

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OT Scriptures Only???

2 Timothy 3

15 and that **from childhood** you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

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“Scriptures” vs. “All Scriptures”

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“Every Good Work”

- 1) **Lord supper** – a “good work” not found in OT.
- 2) Therefore the “all scriptures” (v16) must include more than OT.

“complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work”

2 Timothy 3:16-17

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17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

- If **more revelation** is needed \Rightarrow 2 Tim 3:16-17 is wrong.
- If **extra help from Holy Spirit** is needed \Rightarrow 2 Tim 3:16-17 is wrong.

“complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work”

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Reproof ⇨ harsh admonishment when one *intentionally* does wrong

“complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work”

2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for **correction**, for instruction in righteousness,

17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Correction ⇒ gentle admonishment when he *unintentionally* does wrong

The “Bottom Line”

For something to be authorized there must be a scripture authorizing it.

- Religious activities
- Non-religious activities

Two Ways of Authorizing

Explicitly

“fully and clearly expressed;
leaving nothing implied”
(American Heritage)

Implicitly

“implied or understood though
not directly expressed”
(American Heritage)

Explicitly (fully and clearly expressed)

1 Timothy 4:1

1 Now the Spirit **expressly says** that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,

Implicitly (understood though not directly expressed)

Mark 12:26-27

26 But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘**I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob**’?

27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken.”

“Establishing Authority”

- Everything must be authorized (Col 3:17).
- Either Jesus or His apostles must have authorized it.
- Everything must be **explicitly** or **implicitly** authorized.
- If silence \Rightarrow unauthorized (silence forbids).

Silence Forbids

Gen 4:4-5
Lev 10:1-2
Dt 4:2
Dt 29:29
1 Ch 13
Prov 30:6
Mt 15:9
1 Cor 4:6
Gal 1:8-9

Acts 15:24
Rom 10:17
↓
2 Cor 5:7
Heb 1:5, 13
Heb 7:14
2 Jn 9-11
Rev 22:18-19

Implication “Silence”

Alexander Campbell:

“... nothing can be rationally inferred from any verse in the Bible that is not in it; and whatever can be logically deduced from any sentence in the Book, is as much the revelation of God as anything clearly expressed in it.” (Christianity Restored, 69)

Noah ⇒ “Build an ark”

- Some type of measuring device.
- Some sort of wood-cutting device.
- Some sort of wood-hauling device.
- Some sort of device which would nail or cement or bind the wood together (nails, rope, wood dowels).
- Some sort of brush or mop to apply the pitch (tar).

Confusion

Some are confused:

“The preachers are saying **individual cups** are wrong and **instrumental music** is wrong because the Bible is silent about them, but then they turn around and say we can have **a church building** and **songbooks** and a thousand other things which the Bible is also silent about. How can they condemn cups and instrumental music and Bible classes because of silence, but then accept church buildings, songbooks and other things?”

Implication “Silence”

When God commanded the church to assemble (1 Cor 11:33), He **implied** anything necessary to carry out the command.

- He included the building.
- The church building is authorized as a permission.
- We are permitted to build a building or rent one if we choose.

Six Possibilities

Explicitly

Implicitly

- Required

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- Required (Acts 2:38)

Six Possibilities

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- Permitted

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- Required (Acts 2:38)
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- Prohibited (Mt 5:44)

The “Explicit-Only” Doctrine

Thomas Campbell:

“Although inferences and deductions from Scripture premises, when fairly inferred, may be truly called the doctrine of God’s holy word, yet are they not formally binding upon the consciences of Christians farther than they perceive the connection, and evidently see that they are so; for their faith must not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power and veracity of God. Therefore, no such deductions can be made terms of communion, but do properly belong to the after and progressive edification of the Church. Hence, it is evident that no such deductions or inferential truths ought to have any place in the Church’s confession.”

(<http://www.mun.ca/rels/restmov/texts/tcampbell/da/DA-2ND.HTM#Page25>).

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F. L. Lemley:

Since all inferences are of human origin, unless we want to hold on to human patterns we should discard necessary inference as poor pattern material. (Warren, When Is Example Binding?, 91)

Any time a process of human reasoning or deduction has to intervene between the word and a conclusion, the conclusion is human and not divine, and therefore cannot be (even when true) a part of the New Testament pattern. (ibid., 90)

Only those examples that are objects of direct command are binding on us. (ibid., 91)

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The “Explicit-Only” Doctrine

Question:

- How did Thomas Campbell reach his conclusion?
- How did F. L. Lemley reach his conclusion?

The “Explicit-Only” Doctrine

Jesus’ rebuke of the Pharisees (Mk 12:26-27) shows the “explicit-only” doctrine is false.

Conclusion

In the days of Ezra the temple was being rebuilt.

Ezra 5:3

3 At the same time Tattenai the governor of the region beyond the River and Shethar-Boznai and their companions came to them and spoke thus to them: "Who has commanded you to build this temple and finish this wall?"

Conclusion

A letter was sent to Darius the King:

Ezra 5:17

17 Now therefore, if it seems good to the king, **let a search be made** in the king's treasure house, which is there in Babylon, **whether it is so that a decree was issued** by King Cyrus to build this house of God at Jerusalem, and let the king send us his pleasure concerning this matter.

Conclusion

A search was made:

Ezra 6:1-2

1 Then King Darius issued a decree, and **a search was made** in the archives, where the treasures were stored in Babylon.

2 And at Achmetha, in the palace that is in the province of Media, **a scroll was found, and in it a record was written** thus:

Conclusion

The king's proclamation:

Ezra 6:11-12

11 Also I issue a decree that **whoever alters this edict**, let a timber be pulled from his house and erected, and let him be hanged on it; and let his house be made a refuse heap because of this.

12 And may the God who causes His name to dwell there destroy any king or people who put their hand to **alter** it, or to destroy this house of God which is in Jerusalem. I Darius issue a decree; let it be done diligently.

Conclusion

- No one had the right to alter the decree.
- Men were obligated to obey the decree.
- A record of the decree was kept.
- Diligent searching thru the scroll to find authority.
- Once the authority was found, the command was obeyed.
- We should have as much concern with God's word.