

March 3, 2008

SERMONS FOR SUNDAY

March 9, 2008

a.m. *"See That It Spreads No Further "*

Scripture: Acts 4:13-22

p.m. *"The Bond Of Brotherhood"*

Scripture: 1 John 4:7-19

Authority

Don Hatch

The restoration of God in the daily lives of individuals is handicapped because belief in authority is greatly diminished. Entreating mankind to accept Christ's authority therefore falls on deaf ears and hardened hearts. If godly principles were restored the process of making America weaker would be turned around. The fault is not in the plea, but in the failure to heed God's will. The necessity of authority cannot be underestimated. Perhaps it is the religious indifference to authority that has caused the moral decline. The idea that God has an all-inclusive authority, in a sense of ability to command and enforce obedience or to have rule over by reason of dominion needs to be rejuvenated. To start with religion and demand of it surrender to divine authority is foremost. Authority in religion demands that God be sovereign by right of creation, omnipresence, omniscience and omnipotence. In the nature of mankind is demonstrated that they cannot provide for themselves because it is not within mankind to direct their ways (Jer 10:23). Mankind needs a standard of authority in religion and submission to the notion of responsibility to the Word of God. A standard of right and wrong must be distinguished in order for mankind to understand and recognize God as the final authority.

Authority must be **objective** [something that actually exists] and not **subjective** [existing only in the mind; illusory]. The implanted word is able to direct the soul to salvation (Jas 1:19-27). God alone guides mankind to be in harmony with His will. Authority originates from without correcting that which is within. Authority cannot exist on the basis of religious experience, aspirations and hope which do not derive from God's word. These cannot and will not establish authority. For mankind to do that which they hold to be right in their own sight destroys the standard and denies accountability toward God and responsibility to their fellow man.

God is sovereign and all authority is inherent within Him. As the Creator of the world the "earth and the fullness thereof" belongs to Him (1 Cor 10:26; Psm 44:1, 2). God rules over all and has divine power and authority in heaven and on earth (Matt 28:18-20; 1 Cor 15:20-29). Paul said that God made the world and everything in it being Lord of heaven and earth He established the nations (Acts 17). God is the object of religion. Religion cannot be determined anymore by subjectivism than it can be by science. Science gathers data and theories to gain facts. The object of science is to explore existing facts. Facts are conveyed to the scientist in many ways. Christianity has its facts and there is nowhere else to go but to the Bible for the knowledge of God Almighty. In Christianity there is knowledge from an Almighty, Self-revealing Creator who has all authority. Jesus Christ came to demonstrate subjection to the Father. In Christianity the object is God who is known only through His revelation and there can be no rational objection to His authority or the recognition of His divinity. Emphasis must be put on the fact of God's revelation wherein He reveals righteousness, godliness, wisdom and countless other

unsearchable items not found except in His writings. Therefore the Bible has to have authority and the willingness of Christians is to put faith and trust in God. The Bible should be taken at face value. Nothing has proved to equal to its value.

God spoke and revealed Himself in Christ Jesus. Jesus declared the Father (Matt 11:27; Heb 1:1-5; Jn 1:1-17). Christ the head of Christianity remains the avenue to God. Christ was the light of the knowledge of the glory of God revealing in His person the mystery of godliness and divine revelation. Jesus had complete reverence for the Father and His word (Jn 8:25). The Holy Spirit as the divine agent of revelation vouchsafes that there is a God, in whom we live and move and have our being (Acts 17:28). The evidence is overwhelming that the Holy Spirit spoke repeatedly about God's authority. The Father is supreme in authority and has granted to Jesus Christ authority in heaven and earth (Matt 28:18-20). Authority in Christianity is not found in men, synods, councils, conclaves or meetings of a ruling class in a church. Revelation is from God and it is not in man to direct his steps (Jer 10:23; 2 Tim 3:16). The truth which sets mankind free is within the Bible not human philosophy (Col 2:6-9; Matt 16:13-18). God's authority is greater than the traditions of men (Matt 21:23-27). Christianity seeks the approval of God through Christ our Mediator (1 Tim 2:1-6).

The scriptures are sufficient (2 Tim 3:14-17). We find within Scripture expressed commands, approved apostolic examples and frequently observed necessary inferences. The apostles of Christ acted upon authority as have all servants of God. They gave us approved examples which were prima facie [obvious] evidences of Christ commanding the church. Necessary inference is indisputable language used to indicate an action which must be taken like eating the Lord's Supper each first day of each week (Acts 20:7). Within the commands, approved apostolic examples and necessary inferences are found the essentials of obedience to God. We must have authority for our practices and they must be derived from the scriptures. God forbids us to go beyond the scriptures for doctrine and practices (Gal 1:6-10; 2 Jn 9-11; 2 Cor 4:13; 1 Cor 4). We must be confident that God has all authority.

FAMILY CARE

A Message From Our Shepherds

In our world today, we hear a lot about people claiming they are directly guided by the Holy Spirit. They are called while doing certain things or going to certain places. Really? What is the nature and the work of the Holy Spirit? There is a lot of false teaching, confusion and misunderstanding about the Holy Spirit, but we need to study the Bible to see what it reveals (2 Tim. 2:15). We can only know about the Holy Spirit by what God has revealed in His word (Deut. 29:29). If we have an understanding of the nature and work of the Holy Spirit it will help clear up some of the confusion that exists.

Is the Holy Spirit an influence, a mere energy or is He a divine person like God the Father? The Holy Spirit is not a glorified "it", element like vapor or electricity, an incomprehensible influence nor the word of God. He is a divine person, God the Spirit. He is referred to by personal pronouns, masculine gender, singular number "He" and "Him" (John 16:13-14). To deny what the Bible teaches about His personality is to deny the testimony of Christ. The Holy Spirit has a mind (Rom. 8:27). Therefore He knows (1 Cor. 2:11), teaches (John 14:26) and speaks (1 Tim. 4:1). He can be lied to (Acts 5:3), resisted (Acts 7:51) and blasphemed (Mk.

3:29), and grieved (Eph. 4:30). The Holy Spirit is eternal (Heb. 9:14), he was the Father and Son in the beginning (Gen. 2:26). The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament took part in physical creation (Gen. 1:2; Job 26:13). He strived with man through the preaching of Noah (Gen. 3) and revealed to holy men of God the will of God (2 Sam. 23:3; 2 Pet 1:21). His major work in this dispensation or New Testament age was to give the laws to produce, govern and rule the new spiritual creation, the church (Eph. 2:3-5).

The Bible is the guide given us by the Holy Spirit. Christ came to reveal His Father's will (John 8:28; Heb. 1:1-2). Christ spoke things to His apostles and the apostles guided by the Holy Spirit spoke these things to others (Mat. 10:19-20). Christ said the Holy Spirit would teach and bring all things to the apostles' remembrance what he had spoken (John 14:26, 15:26-27, 16:13). Paul said (1 Cor. 2:13) that he spake not what man teaches but that which the Holy Spirit teacheth. Paul declares in Eph. 3:3-5 that the revelation was revealed unto the apostles and prophets by or through the Spirit and they wrote it down. So these men of God spoke or gave revelation as they were influenced or moved by the power of the Holy Spirit (2 Pet 1:21). The Holy Spirit like Christ speaks to us today only by His revealed written word (1 Tim. 4:1). Therefore, the New Testament is called the revelation of the Holy Spirit. There is no direct intervention and guidance to some and not to others as is claimed today. We all have the same availability...the Bible.

Have a great week being a servant of God! Pray without ceasing!

~ Dean Webb

SOWING THE SEED OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN 2008

The Paradox of the Church

When a congregation is established according to the New Testament pattern, it is composed of perfect and imperfect elements. Because it is divinely directed, it deserves respect and appreciation. Everything the church is and does is to be divinely authorized. God's part is perfection. He designed a perfect plan of salvation and system of worship (2 Tim 3:16, 17). The Bible is our only guide because it is the "perfect law of liberty" (Jas 1:25). The church has a perfect Savior. The paradox is that men are not perfect, nor do they follow the plan of God perfectly. The perfection of God deals with man's imperfection by teaching Jesus Christ as Savior. Being justified in Christ the church finds access to peace with God through Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1-11). Being reconciled to God by Jesus, the imperfect is cleansed and redeemed.

GOD...The Teacher

There was a lack of religious teaching in the Palestine of the first century. The scribe was a familiar figure both in Galilee and Judea. He was met everywhere...in the synagogue, the marketplace, in the houses of the rich. He was known and greeted with respect wherever he went. With him were numerous attached followers and eager scholars who were expected to retain the material taught and to transmit it without variation. He was often referred to as a "lawyer" or a "teacher of the law".

Among these various religious teachers came *The Teacher!* He was one who taught, not as the scribes and Pharisees, but as one having authority. Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, addressed Jesus by saying, “*Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him*” (John 3:2).

Nicodemus was right. Jesus was a teacher come from God! Moreover, the Father gave Him commandment what to say and what to speak. For this reason you can understand why God would say of Jesus, *This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him*” (Matthew 17:5).

While the world has known many teachers, there is none like Jesus. He was in the beginning *with God, and was God.* In Him “*are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,*” and He cares for us. This Teacher alone holds the key to life – abundant and eternal.

How long has it been since you have sat at the feet of Jesus? Has He provided your continuing education? Why seek out those whose knowledge is partial when The Teacher is here?

We cannot afford to reject His instruction, as some did during His personal ministry. Of them, He said, “*The queen of the South will arise at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here*” (Matthew 12:42).

Great privileges entail great responsibilities. Listen to The Teacher!

~ John Gipson; minister & elder with the Wind Song Church of Christ in Little Rock, AR.

GREETER ASSIGNMENTS

Sunday, March 9, 2008

Front foyer: Megan McNeely, Kenica Parish; Robert & Betty Ruckman

Back foyer: Stan & Doris Selby

Sunday, March 16, 2008

Front foyer: Henry & Frances Seidmeyer; Thomas Rathbun

Back foyer: Paul & Bernice Guisinger

Family News:

MISSION PRINTING

Mission Printing will meet **Sunday** at 4:00 p.m. in the Jr. Auditorium.

MENS' GATHERING/DEVOTIONAL

The **Monday morning** gathering will meet at 6:00 a.m. in the Annex.

SINGING SESSION

The **Sunday afternoon** singing session will meet in room #116 at 5:15 p.m.

LADIES

Ladies' Bible Class will meet **Tuesday, March 11th** at 9:30 a.m. in the Annex.

Also, if you are not able to attend our Tuesday class because of daily commitments, a period of Bible study is being planned for **Sunday, March 9th** from 4:45pm-5:45pm upstairs in room #206.

39ers

Just a reminder that Breakfast with the Teens is this **Saturday, March 8th** at 8 a.m. in the Annex.

SPRING FORWARD

This **Sunday, March 9th** is Daylight Savings Time; don't forget to "spring" your clocks forward.

BEAR PROGRAM

We are in need of more volunteers to help with our Bear Program. If you would like to cut, stitch, stuff, or paint for this worthy cause, please pick up an instruction sheet from either foyer. See Carol Swinney for more information.

DAYS OF DEVOTION

We have a few copies of the book Days of Devotion from the Shenandoah Lectureships. The cost is \$10.00; please check with the church office if you're interested.

THANK YOU!

Dear Belt Line family, thank you for all of the cards, calls, visits, & especially prayers during my recent hospital stay. It's comforting to know there is a caring family standing beside you! In Christian love, Debra Alonzo

To my Brothers and Sisters at Beltline: Our thanks go out to all of you for your prayers, cards, and phone calls. It has been a fast 100 days for us. We went through 2 cataract surgeries, a mouth and tongue surgery, and God's prayers were answered. All three were successful; God has really blessed me for 84 years, and I have one more bump in the road. March 12th, I go in for surgery. We ask you to pray for me again, that this will be successful. With all our love, Bob & Gwen Bingham

We sincerely appreciate all of the ways that you have shown your love during this time of Jean's surgery & recovery. We're happy to be a part of this church family. Glen & Jean Kelly

PRAYER CONCERNS

- √ **Nathan Allen** has strep throat.
- √ **Bob Bingham** will need surgery; he's scheduled for March 12th.
- √ **Bob Bradley** is in Las Colinas Medical, room #210 for tests.
- √ **BC Fowler** is home from the hospital.

- √**Fauna Garrett** is in Baylor/Irving, room #484.
- √**Jean Haddock** is scheduled to be released today (3/3).
- √**Judy Hancock** is awaiting cat scan results.
- √**Garldean Latham's** health has improved.
- √**Frances LaFerney** is scheduled for another procedure on her back today (3/3).
- √**BJ Prince** is scheduled to undergo treatments on her back.
- √**Rebecca Jones** (Carol Swinney's friend) is very ill with cancer.
- √**Kent Lashley** (Donna Meyer's son-in-law) went to the ER over the weekend.
- √**Nita Spencer** (the Webb's niece) got better report last week.
- √**Frances Tipton** is still having a hard time.

Continue to remember those who are recuperating or suffering with long-term illnesses, including: Thomas West, Bran Anderson (Bill Paschall's friend), Paul Batot (Mike's dad), Shirley Bryant (James Gilliam's sister), Vern Daniel (Janice's son) Frank Garrett (Fauna's husband), Elizabeth Oliver (Becky Henry's sister), Lewis Porter (Marcella's brother), Nell Rogers (Carol Swinney's sister), Earl Scott (Mary Scott's son), Chelsea Sutton (the Garrison's granddaughter), Allen Taylor (the Taylor's grandson), Lewis Tomlinson (Nelda Bell Newton's son), Larry Toye, & our shut-ins.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Be sure and mark your calendar -

- Mar 8 – 39er's breakfast with the Teens in the Annex at 8 a.m.
- Mar 9 – New Ladies' Bible Class @ 4:45 p.m. in room #206
- Mar 11 – Ladies' Bible Class at 9:30 a.m. in the Annex
- June 15 – Family Bible School

NURSERY ATTENDANTS

Sunday morning:

- Shellie Pearce

Sunday evening:

- Debra Alonzo

LORD'S TABLE/MORNING

Front Table

- Mike Garrison
- Ty Harvey
- Bob Bingham
- Tom Prince
- Jerry Baker
- Rob Farmer
- Brandon Thomason
- Darrell Allen

Rear Table

- JC Ross
- Robert Taylor
- Jeremy Hardegree
- Bobby Bowen
- Virgil LaFerney
- Bill Paschall
- Max Melton
- Keith Vaughn

SUNDAY A.M. PRAYERS

- Dean Webb
- John Mayer
- Marvin Brown

SCRIPTURE READING

- Ty Harvey
Acts 4:13-22

SUNDAY P.M. PRAYERS

- Robert Bickel
- Garl Laltham
-

LORD'S TABLE/EVENING

- Glen Kelly
- Thomas Rathbun
-

COMMUNION TO SHUT-INS

- Rob Farmer

FOR THE RECORD: WEEK ENDING ATTENDANCE & BUDGET

	<u>Last Week</u>	<u>This Week</u>	<u>YTD Avg.</u>	<u>Goal</u>
Sun. Class	102	81	96	125
A.M. Worship	166	160	167	210
P.M. Worship	125	84	95	112
Wed. Class	97	86	94	110
Ladies Bible Class	27	24	26	35
Contribution	\$4641	\$7062	\$5615	\$5400

MISSIONS

- Gary Workman – Ukraine
- 21st Century Global Missions
- Charlie & Mary DiPalma - India
- Roland & Rose Mohsen – France
- JB & Ivy Paul – Bitragunta, India
- Glen & KuinTattersall – Australia
- Oleg & Natasha Yakimenko - Russia
- Wil & Telanda Sadler – Military Missions
- Christ's Haven Children's Home - Keller, TX
- Foster's Home for Children – Stephenville, TX
- Ian & Mabel McPherson – Tasmania Australia
- Wayne Jackson – Christian Courier on the Web
- Ted Lingren - Sisophon Bible School – Cambodia
- Mission Printing Worldwide Literature Distribution
- Terry & Pam Laurence – Bear Valley School of Preaching
- Dennis & Beth Johnson - Chennai Teacher Training School - India