

Prayer List

Sheila
Ophelia
Josh
Daniel
Olene

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 9:50 a.m.
Assembly 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Pinole Tidings

www.pinolechurchofchrist.com

Vol. 13, No. 35 - June 10, 2012

Elders:

Brad Behrens - bradbehrens@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Michael Odom - MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Ernie Sprinkel - preacher@pinolechurchofchrist.com

This Week's Question:

Who pitched a tent in Jerusalem to house the ark of the covenant?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Samson - Judges 14:20

Published by the church of Christ which meets at 755 Pinole Valley Road, Pinole, CA 94564, Phone (510) 724-1994, (Mailing address: church of Christ, P.O. Box 453, Pinole, CA 94564)

Whoever Speaks by David Posey

"Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God..." (1 Pet. 4:11). That's God's way of saying, "speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where it is silent." We have no right to speak about spiritual matters unless we can do it with the authority of God so that "in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 4:11b).

Whatever authority we are using is the standard by which we measure whether an act is right or wrong. Elders and preachers who equivocate on issues, express doubt about the veracity of any Scripture, or who rarely let the Scriptures speak in their actual decisions, produce spiritually weak members. Spiritually weak members nearly always become morally weak members.

Religious acts must be measured by God's authority – His is the only authority that counts. He has the authority and so His word is authoritative: "sanctify them in truth, Your word is truth," said Jesus in His prayer to His Father (Jn. 17:7). Peter added that "His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence" (2 Pet. 1:3). Those who say it doesn't matter what you believe are fundamentally misguided and confused. For, if it doesn't matter what you believe, does it matter whether you believe?

The right to say a thing or to do a thing must come from God. "Authority," from man's perspective, means the right to act. We don't "establish" this authority, in the sense of instituting it. That's

the Lord's business and He's done it already. Our job is to ascertain or discover the authority He has established. We must discover God's authority before an act can be right.

There are seven things that hinder the discovery of authority, and keep us from speaking as the "utterances of God."

1. A low priority for Bible reading. We let too many things distract us from the regular reading of Scripture. If the Bible contains "all things that pertain to life and godliness," we can ill-afford to ignore it, even for a day. Churches are stronger where daily Bible reading is encouraged and where the public reading of Scripture is practiced (1 Tim. 4:13).

2. Lack of personal, objective knowledge. In Hosea 4:6, God says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." It was always a lack of applied knowledge that caused Israel to commit spiritual suicide. When you hear the following, you can be sure there is a lack of solid Bible knowledge:

- When opinion is put in the place of solid Bible study. Instead of saying, "As Paul says..." we say, "I think..." There is a place for opinion, but not when it comes to discovering God's authority.
- When we rely on past teaching instead of fresh study. There is nothing wrong with remembering good teaching in the past, but we need to constantly review and refresh our minds.
- Emotionalism is substituted for faith: we say "I feel..." instead of "I know..."
- OPK: "other peoples' knowledge." Our knowledge is from borrowed viewpoints, instead of learning for ourselves. I've actually heard people say, "I believe anything brother _____ says on the subject." It is dangerous and foolish to put such faith in any man.
- Views adopted, but never personally confirmed. "I don't know, but my preacher says..." "My dad taught me...that's good enough for me!" "If it was good enough for dear old mom." There is no authority in man; it all rests in God.

3. Satisfaction with pat answers, fill-in-the-blanks, "pigeonhole knowledge," instead of thinking issues through. In Mk. 12:24, Jesus told the Sadducees that they understood neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. If a preacher in an average Bible class in the average church asks what "grace" means he will probably get the answer, "unmerited favor." But what

is unmerited favor? And is that all it means? Is our speech to always be with "unmerited favor" (Col. 4:6)?

4. Putting tradition in place of truth. Jn. 5:39-40; Mt. 15:1-8. What would happen if a church decided to eliminate mid-week Bible classes in favor of home studies, as Berry Kercheville suggested in the April 1999 issue of Focus? Some actually believe that doing so would be wrong, but by what authority? There is nothing at all in Scripture that pinpoints a certain time or place during the week that we must meet, other than the first day of the week.

5. Taking comfort in "packaged religion"; denominational thinking; affiliation with the "right church" instead of personal faith. Many will go to **** because they gave finding "the right church" little or no thought (they ignored authority on this issue). On the other hand, not one soul will enter heaven because he was in a strong church. The local church is designed to assist you in your effort to satisfy your longing for personal righteousness (Mt. 5:6), not to become a substitute for it.

6. Arrogance & pride. There are some who think they know it all. They are above studying their lessons, because they've "arrived." They justify a lack of study and participation in extra classes because they are "experienced." No class or teacher has skill enough to teach them, because it's all old hat. They are proud to the core and that pride will lead to their personal destruction (Pr. 16:18; 18:12). Arrogance quickly turns to ignorance (Hb. 5:11-12). How can anyone look at the Bible and say, with a straight face, "I've got nothing more to learn." That is utter ignorance.

7. Dishonesty: Hidden agendas, ulterior motives. The Scribes and Pharisees were notorious for trying to trap Jesus. They came on several occasions to "test him." There are brethren who are born of the same spirit. When they ask a question, it is to gain advantage, to win the point, but not to discover truth. If our main aim is to win an argument, make a point, justify a position, validate an act or feel good about ourselves, we will never discover what God wants us to do.

Conclusion:

Our aim in understanding authority is to understand that Christ has all of it. Jesus said, "all authority has been given to Me in heaven and in earth" (Mt. 28:18). That's the point. When we speak, we must speak as the very utterances of God because only when we speak as the Bible speaks are we speaking "with authority."