

ESTABLISHING AUTHORITY—PART 4

Determining biblical authority is a process that should be taken very seriously. Since we have the word that will judge us (John 12:48), it behooves us to understand it as best we can. Diligent effort is required. Common sense is necessary. Prayer is a must. It takes an open, honest heart. Only then can we truly begin to understand God's will.

When we study the bible, it is important to note that we cannot be seeking to justify a position that we hold. Nor should we seek to justify a position that a beloved brother or sister holds. We must be seeking what God has said on the matter. If it means changing our position, then we must change it, or risk eternal judgment. Preconceived ideas and prejudices have to be overcome. This can indeed be very difficult. Still the question remains: are we seeking answers or satisfaction? Are we after the truth, or looking for loop-holes? It all boils down to our attitude.

Many people take the parts that they like, leave out the parts that they don't, then add in a little extra to make something new. This is often called "pen-knifing the Scriptures". For you modern folks, that is like using the cut and paste button on your computer. Both are great tools when used properly. Since we will be judged by God's word, would you rather live by the words that he actually said, or by someone else's? I would choose God's, and I hope that you would too.

Many look at God's word all wrong. They say, "God didn't say that I couldn't do ____". They should be saying, "God said that I can do ____". There is a big difference. Often, in defining what we can do, God has also defined what we cannot do by way of exclusion. This is a fundamental principal of authority. It is used in interpretation of law everywhere.

So, what are you doing with God's word? Are you using it to help you live rightly, or as a false defense of your own will?

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