

All Authority – The Position of Christ over His People

(Matthew 28:18)

Introduction: There is an aggressive assault on authority in religion. Your beliefs are under attack. The religious world is debating whether or not they will accept what the Bible says on specific issues. Denominations in the world are changing their views on biblical issues because of the swaying opinions of the populous. From the media that we choose to inform us and entertain us, all the way to the leaders of our country whom we elect to guide us, many are engaged against what is good and right. I recently saw two things that prove this.

First, churches are debating how they are going to handle same-sex marriages. In other words, whether or not they will approve or sanction them. This is not a new concept. Consider the Council of Trent.

The Council spent a lot of time (1545-1563) deciding what the Catholic church was going to believe about basically everything religious (instead of just studying the Bible and teaching what it said, thereby not adhering to God's authority) and that the Bible and church tradition were going to have equal footing in their eyes (basically, papal/church authority at least equal to God's authority).

Second, I saw a poll flash on the television screen of a news program recently showing that 51% agree with the stance the President has taken on same-sex marriages. He approves of them.

Barnard College in New York on 5/14 "No matter who you love or what God you worship, you can still pursue happiness -- I will support you every step of the way," President Obama.

What does the future look like? It looks like you and I will have to stand for what is right...on a myriad of issues. But, in order to stand we must know, be persuaded, and have confidence in the authority of the Bible and of Christ. So, what is the position of Jesus?

- I. In order to discuss the position of Christ over His people, we need to establish who He is. Who is Jesus? Consider the premise set forth by C.S. Lewis, lunatic, liar, or Lord?
 - a. Statements during radio broadcast:
 - i. "A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic – on a

level with the man who says he is a poached egg – or else he would be the devil of hell.”

- ii. “You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God; or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God.”
- iii. “But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.”

b. The three choices.

- i. Group 1: Some believed Jesus was Lord and God. “Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.” John 20:28
- ii. Group 2: Others considered the affirmations and actions of Jesus as acts of blasphemy. “The Jews sought the more to kill him...but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.” John 5:18
- iii. Group 3: And some thought that Jesus was insane and should be ignored. John 10:20

c. He has authority over us.

- i. Romans 14:9 – Christ both died and was raised that He might be Lord both of the dead and living
- ii. Buried with Him...Colossians 2:12-13; Philippians 2:6-11 – A name above every name
- iii. Transfiguration “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased” (Matthew 17:5)

II. The positions of Christ over His people.

a. He is Lord over...

- i. Heaven (Ephesians 1:20-22; 1 Peter 3:22 Matthew 26:64)
- ii. Earth (Mark 4:35-41; Psalms 2:1-12; Psalms 110:1-6)

b. He is King (1 Timothy 6:15; Revelations 17:14; 19:16).

c. He is the Good Shepherd (John 10:2, 14; 1 Peter 2:25; 1 Peter 5:4).

d. Christ is head over all things. He is the final authority (1 Corinthians 15:20-28).

e. Jesus provides credentials that prove that his authority is not just an empty allegation; the truth is He has all authority. His wonderful lessons, His character, His miracles, the detailed prophecies that He fulfilled, and above all His resurrection proves that He is the absolute authority.

III. How I approach the Bible reveals what I believe about the authority of Christ.

- a. Centurion showed his faith by understanding the authority of Jesus (Matthew 8:5-10)

- b. Open mind and an open heart.
 - i. I am not going to find Jesus' authority if I'm not looking in the right place.
 - 1. Looking to see what others are doing
 - 2. Looking to see what churches are doing
 - ii. Where does this authority come from? Creator, Redeemer, Savior, God gave it to Him.
- c. Confidence in the scriptures. If I doubt any portion, it will show through in my words and actions. If I don't accept any portion, it will show through.
 - i. Consider these terms of supplemental uses of the Bible.
 - 1. Traditional - The Bible plus tradition.
 - 2. Ecclesiastical - The Bible received and understood only through the church
 - 3. Charismatic - The Bible plus what the spirit reveals directly
 - 4. Mystical - The Bible as it produces an 'experience' within us
 - ii. Consider these terms that represent the Bible being filtered.
 - 5. Rational - The Bible, subject to one's own understanding of science, sociology, history...
 - 6. Material - The Bible, minus supernatural elements: miracles, resurrections, providence, direct revelation
 - 7. Biased - The Bible only as it confirms pre-existing convictions

Read these quotes and decide which of the above seven approaches is implied:

- "What does your church believe about...?"
- "Most denominations have changed their teachings about..."
- "If I accepted that, I'd be going against my mother and father..."
- "Everyone has a right to his own interpretation...to decide what's right"
- "My preacher tells me that it's wrong to do..."
- "The Bible speaks in different ways to different people..."
- "The Spirit led me to move to South Africa to open a hospital..."
- The teachings of the church are out of date with our culture..."
- "I know the Bible says that, but in my heart I know..."
- "I just don't believe a loving God would send anyone to Hell..."

Conclusion: Jesus spoke with authority in the temple. He demonstrated authority over the demons. He gave authority to his disciples over the unclean spirits. He showed His authority over the earth, over the heavens, over death itself. Really, the position of Christ breaks down to one question: Who do I think Jesus is?