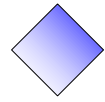


# The Voice of Truth



October 6, 2013

## Authority

By Jimmy Pettigrew

The critical issue in religion today is the question of authority. So, what does authority mean? Authority means the right to command and enforce obedience. Who has all authority in religion today? *“And Jesus came to them and spake unto them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth” (Matthew 28:18).* “All” means what? The Greek meaning of the word “all” is “any, anyone, every, everyone and the whole.” The word “authority” refers to the power of Him whose will and commands must be submitted to and obeyed. Christ’s claim is that of all authority! *“Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him” (1 Peter 3:22).*

Therefore, we may correctly conclude that what men believe and practice today in the name of religion must be authorized by the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul wrote, *“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Colossians 3:17).* Men must respect the authority of Christ and submit to that authority in order to be saved. Now, where is the authority of Christ exercised today? Honest, sincere people today need to appreciate the fact that the authority of Christ is now exercised exclusively through His New Testament. This is a religious problem today; people fail to respect the authority of the New Testament today! Men have appealed to the Old Testament for the authority to practice polygamy, mechanical instruments of music in worship, keeping the Sabbath, burn incense in worship, and to practice infant baptism. No New Testament writer ever sanctioned them, and no New Testament church ever practiced them; they are thus without the authority of Christ. We are not to go beyond what is written **(1 Corinthians 4:6)**. We must not go beyond the doctrine of Christ **(2 John 9-11)**. The “doctrine of Christ” is that body of teaching which came from the Lord. It is that “form of teaching” which delivers from sin **(Romans 6:17)**, and in which we will be judged by **(John 12:48)**. To teach and practice another gospel is to invoke the wrath of God upon us **(Galatians 1:6-9)**. As it is vital to hear the scrip-

tures, so also it is important to respect the silence of the word of God **(Hebrews 1:5; 7:14)**.

Let me ask a question: When the apostle Peter on the mount of transfiguration desired to build three tabernacles, one for the lawgiver, Moses; one for the representative of the prophets, Elijah; and one tabernacle for Christ, what did God say? Peter put Jesus on equality with Moses and Elijah, like people do today to authorize their practice of mechanical instruments of music worship, or keeping the Sabbath etc., but God did not. *“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him” (Matthew 17:5)*. Thus God determined not three tabernacles, nor three to be honored, but one, the Son. Now, we are to hear Him! Let’s ask another question: Did God pronounce a condemnation upon those who refuse to hear His Son? *“For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people” (Acts 3:22-23)*.

*“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ he hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ he hath both the Father and the Son” (2 John 9)*. What does it mean to transgress, and abide not in the doctrine of Christ? It means simply to refuse to be governed by the authority of the New Testament. Well, what about one who refuses to abide in the doctrine of Christ? He hath not God; that is, he has no claim on God as being his God. What of the one who abides in the doctrine of Christ? He hath both the Father and the Son; that is, he sustains that relationship to the Father and the Son which enables him to claim both of them as his own. It seems it would be impossible for the writer to teach more clearly than he does in this passage that God accepts in religion only that which He authorizes in the New Testament. Therefore, what men practice in religion today must

*Continued on Page Two*

### In This Issue...

**Pages 1 to 2 - Authority**  
**Pages 2 to 3 - “Straightway”**

**Page 3 - The church of Christ | What Do I Owe My Congregation?**  
**Page 4 - BAPTISM - URGENT AND ESSENTIAL | What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

*Continued from Page One, "Authority"*

be authorized by God's word and since God speaks to us by His Son (**Hebrews 1:1-2**), the word of Christ is the authority that must be respected now, and this authority is exercised through the New Testament.

Whatever is offered as worship to God, which is not authorized by the New Testament, is not acceptable to Him! •

## **"Straightway"** By Jarrod Jacobs

Last week, I had the pleasure and privilege of baptizing a dear lady into Christ. In our study together, we talked about **Acts 16:25-34**, where it says among other things, that when the Philippian jailor heard the truth preached, *"he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway"* (**Acts 16:33**).

The word "straightway" in the KJV is an important word because it denotes the speed with which an event happened. Other Bible versions use the terms "immediately", "at once", "right away", "without delay", and "presently" in this text. All of these words denote the speed of the action taken. What does this teach us?

### **Our Soul's Salvation Depends Upon Our Action.**

We understand Christ's blood was shed for everyone (**Matt. 20:28; Titus 2:11-12; Rom. 5:8**; etc.) At the same time, our salvation depends upon our response to the Lord's sacrifice. In the case of the Philippian jailor, he asked Paul and Silas, *"What must I do to be saved?"* (**Acts 16:30**).

Notice that the jailor recognized he had something to do. He asked, *"What must I do ...?"*. He was not the only one to ask such a question, either. On more than one occasion, folks in the New Testament recognized that they had to take action if they wished to be saved (**Acts 2:37, 9:6**, etc.).

It is the same for us today. If we expect to be saved, we must take action (Heb. 5:8-9; Matt. 7:21)!

### **Our Soul's Salvation Must Not Be Delayed.**

The Philippian jailor not only acted, but he also saw the need for taking immediate action when it came to his soul. In our study, we find in **Acts 16:25** that the apostle Paul and Silas were praying and singing at *"midnight"* before the earthquake occurred. After the earthquake, the jailor entered and took advantage of the gospel plan of salvation.

Therefore, this man, after hearing the truth at midnight, determined he needed to be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins, and did so "immediately"! They did not wait until a later time, but went right then! What was necessary in finding a body of water big enough to baptize the jailor and his family, I do not know. What I know is that he did not use the lateness of the hour and inconvenience as an excuse for disobedience. Once he learned the truth (**Acts 16:31-32**), he responded "straightway", "immediately," "without delay" (**v. 33**).

Had this man waited or put off his salvation for a day, a year, or just when he felt it *"convenient"* (**Acts 24:25**), he might have never been saved from sin! The New Testament clearly states: *"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation"* (**II Cor. 6:2**). The reason for such urgency is because we do not have a lease on life (**Prov. 27:1; Jas. 4:13-14**). The jailor didn't know if or when another earthquake was coming, and we don't know what might happen in a day that would forever keep us from making our lives right with God. Friend, what is keeping you from being saved "straightway"??

### **Our Soul's Salvation Should Be Our Greatest Concern**

The reason why folks like the Philippian jailor and our new sister in Christ took action "straightway", "at once", "without delay" is because there is no greater concern in life than the concern for our soul. At one point in His preaching, Jesus asked two questions: *"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"* (**Matt. 16:26**). If this does not tell us something about a soul's value, then what would? Jesus, by using these comparisons, shows us that one's soul is worth more than anything in this world. Since this is true, why wouldn't we respond to the gospel "straightway", "presently", "right away"? To put it off is to take a great risk by assuming we will have yet another week, or another day, even another minute! (**Prov. 27:1**)

Continued from Page Two, "Straightway"

### Conclusion

To borrow a phrase, what is hindering you from obeying the gospel (**Acts 8:36**)? Your soul is your most valuable

possession. It is eternal (**II Cor. 4:16**)! Therefore, prepare your soul for eternity, and do so now, today, "immediately," "straightway", before it is everlastingly too late (**Jn. 9:4; Ps. 90:8-10**)! *Credit: The Old Paths - 11/14/10* ♦

## The church of Christ

### Has:

- One Builder – Jesus Christ (**Matt. 16:18; Eph. 3:9-11**)
- One Purchaser – Jesus Christ (**Acts 20:28**)
- One Head – Jesus Christ (**Eph. 1:22-23**)
- One Savior – Jesus Christ (**Eph. 5:23**)
- One destiny – eternal salvation (**Eph. 5:23**)

### IS:

- The spiritual body of Christ (**Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23**)
- The kingdom of Christ (**Matt. 16:18-19; Heb. 12:28**)
- The depository of those saved (**Acts 2:47**)
- One body, not many bodies (**Eph. 4:4; 1:22-23**)
- One way to be added to the church:
- One must believeth that Christ is the Son of God (**Jno. 8:24**)
- One must repent of sins (**Lk. 13:3**)
- One must confess that Christ is the Son of God (**Rom. 10:9-10**)
- One must be baptized into Christ (**Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:26-27**) ♦

## What Do I Owe My Congregation?

Author unknown

**I owe it my loyalty.** I must help carry out every good work it undertakes. I should help other congregations in special efforts, but I should not neglect my home congregation. I owe it my dependability. I am depending on it for many things it does in my behalf. It is not fair and right for me to depend on it and not be such that it cannot depend on me.

**I owe it my financial support.** It takes money to operate the church and preach the gospel. I am responsible to the Lord to give as He has prospered me. My home congregation has first call on my financial ability, for if the members of the church do not support the work of the home congregation, it will not be supported. The expenses go on whether I am there or not, so I should make up my contribution when absent.

**I owe it my presence.** If everyone stayed home there would be no worship of God. I am responsible as anyone to attend all of my congregation's services. I must not be a parasite.

**I owe it the influence of a godly life.** The life I live either helps others to obey the gospel or makes it the harder for them. How I live affects the work of the church and the salvation of the lost. I should live in such a way that my life will be blessing to others. ♦

*Truth is truth even if no one believes it.  
Error is error if everyone believes it. ♦*

*If a hypocrite is between you and God,  
He must be closer to God than you are. ♦*

# BAPTISM - URGENT AND ESSENTIAL

## By David Riggs

In New Testament times people were baptized as soon as they heard the gospel and had faith in Christ (**Acts 2:41; 8:35-39; 16:30-34**). There were no postponements or delays; there was no such thing as waiting for a "baptismal day." It was always "straightway," "the same day," "the same hour of the night," etc. They thought baptism was urgent and essential.

Furthermore, the inspired men of the New Testament did not take baptism lightly. They never poked fun at it saying, "There's no power in the water," neither did they accuse some of trusting in "water salvation." They taught that Jesus made atonement for sin in His death, and they commanded all to believe, repent, and be baptized in order to receive the benefits of His death (**Rom. 6:3-4**). They viewed baptism as an act of faith in and submission to Jesus Christ, the Savior, who has all authority (**Matt. 28:18-20**).

All would freely admit that there is no power in the water of baptism. The power is of the Lord. Jesus healed a blind man by anointing his eyes and saying, "Go wash in the pool of Siloam." (**John 9:6-7**). The blind man did not object by saying, "There is no power in the water." He knew that the power was of the Lord and he needed to obey to receive the blessing. Likewise, there is no power in the water of baptism, but one must go to the water to receive the blessing. To be cleansed of leprosy, Naaman was told, "Go and wash in Jordan seven times..." (**2 Kings 5:10**). There was no power in the water of Jordan, but if Naaman had not obeyed, he would not have been cleansed. Similarly, if one does not obey in baptism, he will not be

cleansed.

One is not lost just because he is not baptized. He is lost because he is a sinner. If someone who can't swim falls into a lake and a boat is sent, but he won't get into the boat, is he drowning because he won't get into the boat? No, he is drowning because he is in the water. Likewise, one is not lost just because he is not baptized, but because he is in sin. Just as the boat is the means of rescue and one must get into it, the gospel is the means of salvation and must be obeyed (baptism included) to rescue from sin.

Who has the right today to label baptism as "non-essential" or in anyway minimize any of the commands of Christ? Aren't all of the commands of the Lord essential? He said, "Why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?" (**Luke 6:46**). As Lord, He has the right to make baptism an important step in the plan. He is the Savior and His will must become our's. He is the "author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him." (**Heb. 5:9**).

If when baptized, you put one Christ (**Gal. 3:27**), wash away sins (**Acts 22:16**), have remission of sins (**Acts 2:38**), are saved (**Mark 16:16**), benefit from Christ's death (**Rom. 6:3-4**), enter the body of Christ (**1 Cor. 12:13**), what is your condition without baptism? Why not repent and be immersed in the name of Christ for the remission of sins? Let no man deceive you. Humbly obey the gospel today.

Credit: <http://oakridgechurch.com/riggs/> ♦

### What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3
- Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24
- Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30
- Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21
- Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27
- Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

### About the Hillcrest church of Christ

Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew

#### How to Contact Us

Telephone: (920)499-5677  
E-mail: [hillcrestcofc@live.com](mailto:hillcrestcofc@live.com)



#### Our Address

1621 Hillcrest Drive  
Green Bay, WI 54313



#### Schedule of Assembly

Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am  
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am  
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm\*

\*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

[www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com](http://www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com)