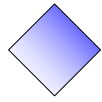


# The Voice of Truth



April 6, 2014

## Authority in Religion By Jimmy Pettigrew

Jesus Christ has ALL AUTHORITY. Moses prophesied, *“The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall harken,”* (Deut. 18:15, 19). Peter applied this Mosaic prophecy to Jesus in Acts 3:19-26. God said, *“Hear him”* (Matt. 17:5)! Jesus said, *“All authority hath been given to me in heaven and on earth,”* (Matt. 28:18). This leaves no authority for me, John Calvin, Mary Baker Eddy, Martin Luther, Joseph Smith, John Wesley, a Pope, or anyone else. The question is, *“What did Jesus do with his authority?”*

Jesus placed His authority in His word, the word that He spoke. Christ said, *“He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day,”* (Jno. 12:48). If the word of Christ is that by which we are to be judged, then it behooves us to know what He said as compared to what others are saying. Also, if we are to be judged by His word, it makes no difference what WE SAY, what WE THINK, or how WE FEEL in religious matters. Christ’s authority was not placed in Men, Councils, Assemblies, Ecumenical Groups, Catechisms, Disciplines, Creeds, Manuals, or Confessions of Faith. Christ’s authority was placed only in His word.

Jesus’ all-authoritative word was given from His mouth to His apostles. In His prayer, Jesus said, *“For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me... I have given them thy word,”* (Jno. 17:8, 14, 18, 20). Christ promised the apostles help in remembering His word, saying, *“These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you,”* (Jno. 14:25-26). Paul could not have declared *“the whole counsel of God”* unless he had received Christ’s word (Acts 20:27). Peter could only have received *“all things that pertain unto life and godliness”* and his knowledge of Christ through that word (2 Pet. 1:3). But,

what did the apostles do with that authoritative word?

Jesus commissioned His apostles to preach His word (Matt. 28:18-20; Mk. 16:15-16). Their obedience to His command is shown in THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES. Paul declared the word had been *“preached to every creature which is under heaven”* in his lifetime (Col. 1:23). Besides preaching the all-authoritative word of Christ, the apostles wrote it. In First Corinthians 15:1-4, Paul said he was making known, in a letter, the things which he first received. The Thessalonians were urged to *“stand fast”* and *“hold”* that which they had been taught, whether by word of mouth or by his first epistle to them (2 Thess. 2:15). Paul emphatically declared, *“The things that I WRITE unto you are the commandments of the Lord,”* (1 Cor. 14:37). Therefore, that which he wrote was the all-authoritative word he had received from Christ through the Holy Spirit.

The all-authoritative word of Christ was written for OUR benefit. Luke’s purpose for writing was, *“that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed,”* (Lk. 1:1-4). *“...these things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life in his name,”* was the purpose for writing the Gospel of John (Jno. 20:30-31). Paul’s purpose for writing was that, *“when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ,”* (Eph. 3:4). Again, John wrote, *“These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full,”* and *“these things write I unto you, that ye sin not,”* (1 Jno. 1:4; 2:1). Are the words written by the inspired writers sufficient to guide us in religion?

John 20:30-31 tells us that it was written so we could believe and thereby be saved. John 2:1 tells us that it was written to keep us from sinning. It is through the written word of God that we have been *“given all things that pertain unto life and godliness,”* (2 Pet. 1:3). Paul’s statement, *“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is*

*Continued on Page Two*

### In This Issue...

Pages 1 to 2 - Authority in Religion  
Pages 2 - “The Truth”

Page 3 - Led By The Holy Spirit | GOD HAS A RIGHT  
Page 4 - THE ONE BODY | What Must I Do To Be Saved?

*Continued from Page One, "Authority in Religion"*

*profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,"* **Second Timothy 3:16-17**, should prove that the WORD of the in-

spired writers is the sufficient guide for us today. If the all-authoritative word furnishes us with ALL THINGS, do we need the catechisms, creeds, dogmas, or manuals written by uninspired, fallible men? Certainly NOT! ♦

## "The Truth" By Jarrod Jacobs

Last week, we asked the question "What will you do with the truth?" This question caused me to think about the truth itself. The Bible has much to say about truth and contrasts it with error. We can also go to the Bible to see the source of all truth. For example, in **John 17:17**, our Lord spoke to the Father in prayer and said, "*Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.*" This is a bold statement, for in saying this, Jesus was not only saying that what has originated with God is truth, but He was also inferring that the words which originate with anyone else are false! Let us turn to the Bible and see some characteristics of this truth that has originated with God.

### "Teachable"

It is possible, and yes, necessary to teach God's word to others (**II Tim. 2:2**). This is not to say there are not some difficult places (**II Pet. 3:16a**), but the Bible was written in such a way so as to provide men with knowledge of God's way and lead them to salvation (**Rom. 1:16**). The Bible reveals that it is not an option, but a command, to teach the teachable truth!

### "Revealed"

The truth of God has been revealed to men (**Titus 2:11; I Pet. 4:11; II Pet. 1:20-21**). We do not have to search in far-flung areas of the world to find "bits-and-pieces" of the truth, for it has been revealed to us through Christ (**Heb. 1:2**). Today, we have this written word in its completed form (**Jude 3**), so that lost people can be saved.

### "Understandable"

God's revealed truth is also understandable! In fact, it is written that we need to read so that we may understand the mystery of Christ (**Eph. 3:4**). The apostle Paul also wrote, "*Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is*" (**Eph. 5:17**). It is something wonderful when we think about how God's truth is understandable to man! Yes, some claim the Bible cannot be understood. Such a position not only contradicts plain statements in Scripture, but it also reflects negatively upon God. When someone says that the Bible cannot be understood, they have said God is at fault for giving us His word, expecting us to hear, believe, and obey it, but then wrote it in such a way that we cannot understand it! Such a posi-

tion is false. The Bible is understandable!

### "Thorough"

What is meant by this? Put simply, God's word, the truth, is thorough enough to provide us with "*all things that pertain to life and godliness*" (**II Pet. 1:3**). Notice, God has not given us just "some things," or "most things," but "all things"! That is significant. In another letter, we find it said, "*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work*" (**II Tim. 3:16-17**). In these two verses, we again see that God's truth is comprehensive in nature, and profitable for all areas of life. The world wishes to deny this fact and tries to belittle the power and comprehensive nature of God's truth. When they do this, they are robbing themselves of true blessings. What will we do? Will we fall in line with the world, or will we examine the evidence for ourselves (**I Thess. 5:21**)?

### "Heavenly"

The truth of God is heavenly truth! In other words, it originated with God. When speaking about this fact to various Christians, the apostle Peter wrote. "*And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns, and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man: but men spoke as they were carried along by the Holy Ghost*" (**II Pet. 1:19-21**).

### Conclusion

Did you see the hidden word in the points above? If not, look again and see it: T-R-U-T-H! The very word "truth" teaches us some lessons, does it not? God's word is truth and we need to respect it. Let us render our full obedience, "obeying from the heart" (**Rom. 16:17**) God's truth that we might see Heaven one day. Are you obedient to the truth? If not, what is stopping you? The truth will set us free (**Jn. 8:32**), and leads us on the path toward Heaven. Let us get on that road today! Credit: The Old Paths - 12/23/12 ♦

## Led By The Holy Spirit

### By Larry Ray Hafley, Cookeville, TN

It is not uncommon today to hear preachers and evangelists in denominationalism described as being “Spirit filled” and “led by the Spirit.”

The terms are scriptural, and they include Bible based concepts (**Acts 6:3; 11:24; Gal. 5:16-25**). We have no quarrel with scriptural terms and sentiment. But are these “Spirit filled” men truly “led by the Spirit”? How can we tell? How can we know?

The Spirit of God says, *“Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out in the world”* (**1 Jn. 4:1**). Because there are many false spirits, or prophets, do not believe every one you hear. Examine, investigate. Try them. Test them. “Yes,” you ask, “but how?” One who was truly a Spirit filled, Spirit led man, an apostle of the Son of God, said, *“We (the apostles and prophets, LH) are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby (in this manner, in this way, LH) know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error”* (**1 Jn. 4:6**). One who hears the apostles is of God, or from God (**Lk. 10:16; 1 Cor. 14:37**). One who will not hear them is not of God. That is what the Spirit of Christ says (**1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Thess. 2:15; 2 Pet. 3:1, 2**).

If a man today claims to be “Spirit filled,” he will not be a member of a denominational church. He will not be a member of a church you cannot read about in the Bible. Did the apostles of the New Testament, men who were truly Spirit led, ever attempt to lead people to be members of a Baptist or a Pentecostal Church? No, they did not! If a man is led by the Spirit today, as they were in the first century, why should he induce people to join churches about

which the Spirit of God in the Bible knows nothing?

The Spirit teaches that Holy Spirit baptism and miraculous gifts have ceased (**1 Cor. 13:8-10; Jas. 1:25**). Though certain men of God worked miracles in the Bible, no one does so today. Though certain people received Holy Spirit baptism and spoke in tongues, no one does so today (**Mk. 16:17-20; Heb. 2:1-4**). If a man is “Spirit filled,” he will not contradict the Spirit of God who wrote the Bible concerning these teachings.

Do these allegedly Spirit led men worship with instruments of music? Do they observe the Lord’s supper each Lord’s day (**Acts 20:7**)? Do they use money making schemes, selling, and begging for contributions (**1 Cor. 16:2**)? Do they observe “holy days” and follow human traditions, such as Easter and Christmas? Do they wear religious titles, such as “Reverend”? **If so, they do that which no Spirit filled, Spirit led man in the New Testament ever did!**

Do these “Spirit led Pastors” tell men to *“Repent, and be baptized...in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins”* (**Acts 2:38**)? Or do they tell sinners to simply, “Bow your head and say a little prayer, and ask Jesus to come into your heart”? Do these men tell the world that baptism has no part in the salvation of sinners? **If so, they do that which no Spirit filled, Spirit led man in the New Testament ever did!** As such, they are not filled with the Spirit, nor are they led by the Spirit of God.

Yes, they are filled with a spirit. Yes, they are led by a spirit, but it is *“the spirit of error”* (**1 Jn. 4:6**)!

*Credit: The Old Paths - 11/18/12 ♦*

## GOD HAS A RIGHT

### Author unknown

- God has a right to a definite part of your time
  - He has the power to take all of it.
- God has a right to a definite part of your money
  - He has the power to take all of it.
- God has a right to be glorified through your tongue
  - He has the power to take all of it.
- God has a right to be honored through your influence
  - He has the power to take all of it.
- God has a right to your life
  - He has the power to take all of it. ♦

## THE ONE BODY

The church is the body of Christ, "And he is the head of the body, the church (**Col. 1:18**). There is only one body, one church. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (**Eph. 1:22-23**). The New Testament teaches that there is only one body; this one body is the church. We are "fellow heirs of the same body" (**Eph. 3:6**). We are "reconciled to God in one body" (**Eph. 2:16**). Christ is founder of only one church. "Upon this rock I will build my church" (**Matt. 16:18**). Jesus did not say that we would build a church, His church or one of His churches. He said, "I will build my church." The word "church" signifies singularity. Jesus did not build many different churches, but one! None should encourage any to seek the church of your choice, but the church of Christ's choice, that is, the one that is Christ-built, blood-bought (**Acts 20:28**), the one in which He is the Saviour of (**Eph. 5:23**).

Since there is one, and only one church and since Christ saves only those in that one church; thus, if one living today is not a member of that church (**Rom. 16:16**), then he is not saved. ♦

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What a man possesses is not as  
Important as what possesses him!

What sort of church would the  
Lord's church be, if every member  
Were just like me?

The Bible let it light your path

Tragedy in Bible class!  
The vacant chair and unopened Bible,  
Are they yours?

Happy is the man who walks so close to God  
That there is no room for the devil to  
Get in between.

Yesterday is the tomorrow that got away! ♦

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### 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

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#### 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)