

- This year, we have been focusing every first Sunday morning on the idea of glorifying God. We began by establishing the fact that we were put on this earth to glorify God in all that we do. In all that we do we are to honor, praise, and give reverence to God. We discussed that we accomplish this goal by fearing God and keep His commandments, and we see this in **Ecclesiastes 12:13**. The wise man Solomon recognized the importance of glorifying God and how that it is accomplished through fearing God and obeying his commands. Another way that we could phrase this fear of God and obedience to His commandments is to say that we glorify God through Respecting His Authority.
- We want to continue our series this morning by considering this idea of Respecting God's Authority. This idea ties in very nicely with our yearly theme because as we will come to see throughout the lesson God has authority and He is gloried when we respect and follow that authority. This is certainly not something that is prevalent throughout the world. Not everyone respects the authority of God. We know this is the case by the rampant sin in this world and the completely unbiblical practices of many in the religious world. You wouldn't image that those who deny God would care anything about His authority or following it, but you would think that those claiming to love and honor Him would do so by obedience and respecting of His authority. This just isn't the case. One such example can be seen all around us this weekend. For some churches, this single weekend is the one that focuses on Jesus's death, burial and resurrection and the supper that He instituted for His followers to observe. However, God's Word (**Acts 20:7**) shows us that this is something that Christians should consider ever Lord's Day. We must be honest and admit that God's authority is not respected by the majority. That does not mean, though, that we have a valid excuse to do the same. Prayerfully throughout this lesson, we will be impressed reminded of the fact that God does have all authority and that He is glorified when His authority, His say on any matter is respected and obeyed.

### **I. God is worthy to have the authority in all things.**

- A. If God was not worthy to have authority, then there would be no worry for us to respect and submit to it.
  1. If there was not a god who had authority then we would be free to live and behave as we wish.
  2. We would be responsible to no one at all.
- B. This just isn't the case, though. God is very much in a position of authority in a general sense and there are many reasons for that.
  1. He is the creator of all things. (**Genesis 1,2**)
  2. All things continue to go on because He allows such. (**Revelation 4:11**)
  3. He is higher than we are. He knows infinitely more and is infinitely more wise. His will is accomplished through His words and commands (**Isaiah 55:8-11**)
  4. He is the one that has given us the opportunity for life after the grave. (**John 3:16**)
  5. No one else can boast these characteristics, therefore no one can say they have the ultimate authority but the God of heaven.
- C. God's authority has been revealed to us through the writings we have recorded in the Bible. (**II Timothy 3:16,17**)

### **II. Jesus Christ has authority over the Church He died for.**

- A. Jesus came with the mission to establish His Kingdom, and through doing so He came to have authority over it.
  1. Jesus came to do the will of His Father because He recognized the Father's authority. (**John 4:34; 6:38-40**)
  2. Part of God's will was for Jesus to establish His kingdom and this Kingdom would come into power through His resurrection from the dead. (**Matt. 16:18**)
  3. Jesus, after that resurrection and before His ascension, confirms His authority to the Apostles. (**Matt. 28:18**)
  4. He also passed along authority to His Apostles as the new leaders of the Kingdom on earth. (**Matt. 16:19; 28:19,20**)
  5. These men would sit on 12 thrones leading and judging "Israel", the church/kingdom. (**Matt. 19:28**)
- B. Therefore, the church should only act by the commands of Jesus and His Apostles.
  1. Jesus has authority, and His Church should follow it. (**book of Colossians**)
  2. The Apostles had authority and every letter we have in the New Testament was either written by an Apostle or a man directly associate with them. The Church should respect and honor their writings that lead the Church.

### III. The Apostles recognized that God's authority must be respected.

- A. They did not write according to their own will.
  - 1. Peter said that nothing of Scripture was left up to the writer to interpret. **(II Peter 1:20,21)**
  - 2. Earlier in the chapter, Peter makes the point that everything they knew about life and godliness was not determined from their own mind but it was given to them by God. **(II Peter 1:2,3)**
  - 3. The Apostles had a degree of authority, but they still respected and followed the ultimate authority from above.
- B. They looked to God for guidance in what they did. The discussion that took place in Jerusalem concerning the Gentiles is a perfect example of them relying on God's authority as the final say. **(Acts 15)**
  - 1. There was much discussion and debate concerning whether the Gentiles A) could be saved and B) whether they must be circumcised to be saved. **(vv.1-6)**
  - 2. Peter showed that he had come to the forced conclusion that the Gentiles could be saved based upon God giving them the Holy Spirit just as had happened to the Apostles back in **Acts 2. (vv.7-11)**
  - 3. Barnabas and showed that their preaching to the Gentiles was approved by God because He allowed them to confirm the Gospel message by signs and miracles. **(v.12)**
  - 4. James looks at direct statements from God's Prophets that He would accept Gentiles into the Kingdom. **(vv.13-21)**
  - 5. The letter that was sent as a result of this discussion shows that this was all decided first and foremost based upon the Holy Spirit's approval. **(v.28)**

### IV. When we respect God's authority, God is glorified.

- A. When we fail to respect God's authority, someone else takes the authority and this disrespects God.
  - 1. There are numerous examples of God's authority not being followed and unfortunate consequences that followed.
  - 2. Adam and Eve ate of the forbidden tree and were banished from the presence of God. **(Genesis 3)**
  - 3. Nadab and Abihu were killed for offering unauthorized fire. **(Lev. 10:1,2)** Their actions did not glorify God and they paid the price of doing such. **(Lev. 10:3)**
  - 4. David did not respect God's commands concerning the transportation of the ark of the Lord. **(II Sam. 6:1-7)**
  - 5. The Apostle Paul many times throughout the New Testament wrote rebuking works to Christians who were not respecting God's authority and commandments in what they were doing. **(Lord's Supper in I Cor. 11)**
- B. Therefore, we should see the seriousness of respecting God's authority in all that He has commanded.
  - 1. Again, Solomon in all of his wisdom had this figured out! **(Eccl. 12:13)**
  - 2. Jesus sought to always glorify His Father through obedience to His will and God was well pleased with His efforts. **(Matt. 3:13-17)**
  - 3. We should always seek to follow the perfect example of Jesus by seeking to follow God's authority in all we do in our personal lives, in our worship, and in the working of the church. Only those who follow the will of the Father in all they do will be able to enter into the eternal reward. **(Matt. 7:21,22)**

It should be abundantly clear that God's authority is real and it must be respected. If we are a type of people that want to glorify God, a people who want to praise, honor, and revere Him in all that we do then we must respect His authority to direct us in the way that He desires for us to go. We cannot honestly say that we love God, respect God, and honor God while repeatedly going against the commands and instructions He has set forth for us in His Word. May He help us to always do whatever He asked for us to do, knowing that those who humble themselves before Him will receive much more than they could ever imagine in the next life. May God be glorified in all that we do.