

God's Word - Authority

INTRO:

Lotus Riverside Apartments – Shanghai, China

Nearly completed apartment toppled on its side intact. Poor building standards in China were blamed. The South China Morning Post noted that the pilings used in the Lotus Riverside development, made of prestressed, precast concrete piles, are outlawed in Hong Kong because they aren't strong enough to support the kind of ultra-high buildings that are common in Hong Kong. The fact that they were digging out under the building for a parking garage also contributed to the collapse

Leaning Tower of Pisa – Pisa, Italy

In 1172, A widow named Berta di Bernardo left 60 cents in her will to purchase stones and construct a bell tower. It took almost 200 years to complete.

179-foot tower began leaning almost immediately and was moving about one-twentieth of an inch a year, and is now 4 meters out of plumb. Many methods were proposed to stabilize the tower including the addition of 800 metric tons of lead counterweights to the raised end of the base. The final solution to correcting the lean was to remove 70 tons of soil from underneath the raised end. The tower has been declared stable for at least another 200 years.

Quite significantly, the word "pisa" means "marshy land," which gives some clue as to why the tower began to lean even before it was completed. Also--its foundation is only 10 feet deep!

Wexner Art Center – Ohio State University

Ravi Zacharias, a Christian apologist, tells of an experience he had in Columbus, Ohio. He writes, "A few weeks ago, I did a lectureship at Ohio State University. As I was being driven to the lecture, we passed the new Wexner Art Center. The driver said, 'This is a new art building for the university. It is a fascinating building designed in the post-modernist view of reality.' The building has no pattern. Staircases go nowhere. Pillars support nothing. The architect designed the building to reflect life. It went nowhere and was mindless and senseless. I turned to the man describing it and asked, 'Did they do the same thing with the foundation?' He laughed. You can't do that with a foundation. You can get away with the infrastructure. You can get away with random thoughts that sound good in defense of a world view that ultimately doesn't make sense. Once you start tampering with the foundations, you begin to see the serious effects." [What About the Foundation?, Citation: Ravi Zacharias, "If the Foundations Be Destroyed," Preaching Today, Tape #142.]

Our faith is built on the foundation of what we learn about God in Scripture.

It makes sense...God inspired the Bible to be written, he's the author...and since God is perfect, it's inerrant...and if God's word is inspired and inerrant, it's also authoritative in our lives.

IBC's Statement of Faith

*We believe that the Bible, consisting of both the Old and New Testament, is the inspired Word of God, without error in the original writings. It is the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of man and is the **final authority for Christian faith and life.***

Final authority...nothing higher...the Bible settles all disputes about what I believe and how I live.

Pretty exclusive language. What does it mean?

God's Word on the Importance of God's Word

It is not required of Scripture to have a statement to the effect, "The Bible alone is to be used for all spiritual truth," in order for sola scriptura to be true. Many doctrines in the Bible are not clearly stated, yet they are believed and taught by the church. For example, there is no statement in the Bible that says there is a Trinity, or that Jesus has two natures (God and man), or that the Holy Spirit is the third person in the Godhead. Yet, each of the statements is considered true doctrine within Christianity, being derived from biblical references.

Many references in Scripture emphasize the importance of Scripture:

- **2 Tim 16-17** - All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.
- **Heb. 4:12** - For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.
- **Psa. 119:105** - Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.
- **John 8:31** If you continue in My Word, then you are My disciples indeed
- **Acts 4:19** But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God."
- **Acts 17:11** Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.
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The Teaching of Jesus - House Built on Sand and Rock –

Matt 7:24-26 – The point is that a strong foundation is built on the teaching of Jesus

The Example of Jesus

Matt. 4:1-11 – In each case of temptation, Jesus relied on the authority of Scripture
In Fact, Jesus quotes Scripture a lot...over 30 times in Matthew alone he quotes or references specific passages in the OT...

NOTE: The method of Jesus, as well as the New Testament authors when dealing with spiritual truth was to appeal to the Scriptures as the final rule of authority.

- 295 separate direct quotes/citations/references to the Old Testament in the New Testament

- If clear allusions are taken into consideration, the figures are much higher: C. H. Toy lists 613 such instances, Wilhelm Dittmar goes as high as 1640, while Eugen Huehn indicates 4105 passages reminiscent of Old Testament Scripture. It can therefore be asserted, without exaggeration, that more than 10 per cent of the New Testament text is made up of citations or direct allusions to the Old Testament.
- SOURCE: <http://www.bible-researcher.com/nicole.html>

Matthew:

4:4 Deut 8:3 (Luke 4:4)
 4:7 Deut 6:16 (Luke 4:12)
 4:10 Deut 6:13 (Luke 4:8)
5:21 Exodus 20:13
5:27 Exodus 20:14
 5:31 Deut 24:1
 5:38 Exodus 21:24, Lev 24:20, Deut 19:21
5:43 Lev 19:18
9:13 Hosea 6:6
 10:36 Micah 7:6
 11:10 Mal 3:1 (Luke 7:27)
12:7 Hosea 6:6
 13:15 Isaiah 6:9-10 (Mark 4:12) (Luke 8:10 v9)
 15:4 **Exodus 20:12, Deut 5:16** (Mark 7:10)
 15:4 Exodus 21:17, Lev 20:9 (Mark 7:10)
 15:9 *Isaiah 29:13* (Mark 7:7)
 18:16 Deut 19:15
 19:4 Gen 1:27 (Mark 10:6)
 19:5 Gen 2:24 (Mark 10:8)
19:19 Exodus 20:12-16, Deut 5:16-20 (Mark 10:19) (Luke 18:20)
 21:13 Isaiah 56:7 (Mark 11:17) (Luke 19:46)
 21:13 Jer 7:11 (Mark 11:17) (Luke 19:46)
 21:16 Psalm 8:2
 22:42 Psalm 118:22-23 (Mark 12:11) (Luke 20:17)
 22:32 Exodus 3:6 (Mark 12:26) (Luke 20:37)
 22:37 Deut 6:5 (v 4-5 Mark) (Mark 12:30)
22:39: Lev 19:18 (Mark 12:31)
 22:44 Psalm 110:1 (Mark 12:36) (Luke 20:43)
 23:39 Psalm 118:26 (Luke 13:35)
 24:15 Daniel 9:27, 11:31, 12:11 (Mark 13:14)
 24:29 Isaiah 13:10, 34:4 (Mark 13:24)
 26:31 Zech 13:7 (Mark 14:27)
 27:46 Psalm 22:1 (Mark 15:34)

Love for Jesus – Jesus defines our love for him in terms of obedience to the Word

John 14:15 “If you **love** me, you will **obey** what I command.

John 14:23 Jesus replied, “If anyone **loves** me, he will **obey** my teaching.

John 15:10 If you **obey** my commands, you will remain in my **love**, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his **love**.

1John 5:3 This is **love** for God: to **obey** his commands. And his commands are not burdensome,

CONSIDER - If God’s Word is inspired, inerrant, trustworthy, and our “only authority in matters of faith and practice,” what happens when something God’s Word says conflicts with what our culture says?

Example: **Money** – In what ways does what God’s Word says about money conflict with the culture around us?

1. God owns everything. I’m his money manager. How we manage God’s stuff affects our relationship with Him (Pr. 21:13; Is. 58:6-10; Jer. 22:16)
2. My heart goes where I put God’s money (Matt. 6:19-21)
3. Heaven, not earth, is my home (2 Cor. 5:20; Phil 3:20; Heb. 11:13, 16)
4. Giving is the only antidote to materialism (1Tim. 6:17-19)
5. God prospers me not to raise my standard of living, but to raise my standard of giving (2 Cor. 9:10,11).

Source: Randy Alcorn in The Treasure Principle

TAKE AWAY...

Big Idea: God’s Word is our supreme authority in matters of faith and living

Key Phrase: Authority

Homework: Read Psalm 119

Q-Time Discussion Questions:

1. Why do people bristle so much at the idea of someone being in authority over them?

2. In what other areas (besides money) does the Bible say things that are different than what our culture says?
3. What are some things the Bible says that you struggle to accept and submit to?