

Answering Basic Questions (Part 8): What Is Bible Authority?

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: 1 Peter 3:15

In our text, Peter explained that each Christian needs to be ready to give an answer for what we believe. Giving a defense for the HOPE within us requires an ability to articulate the basics of our faith. In this series, we are going to discuss some basic questions that may arise. This is to help reinforce our own faith and help prepare us to teach others as opportunities arise.

What Is Bible Authority?

- When it comes to deciding what we will do in religion or our service to God, the only way we can know how to please the Lord is by looking to His word
- But how does His word help us discern His will? – that is a matter of Bible authority

This Is Based upon the Authority of Christ

- When Jesus gave the Great Commission, He said that He had “all authority” (Matthew 28:18) – this was the basis for His instruction to make and teach disciples (Matthew 28:19-20)
- Since He has “all authority,” everything we do in service to Him must be by His authority (Colossians 3:17)

The Word of God Is Understandable

- Many claim that we cannot understand the Bible – some parts are “hard to understand” (2 Peter 3:16), but not all of it; Paul expected brethren in Ephesus to understand his word as he did (Ephesians 3:4)
- We do not need to approach the Bible as something impossible to understand – study with an open mind

How We Can Know the Lord’s Will

- His will is communicated to us in His word – God communicates to us as we do to others (tell, show, imply); the Lord’s Supper can be used as an example...
 - TELLS us of the practice and the purpose (1 Corinthians 11:24-26) – command/ instruction
 - SHOWS us when and where this is observed (Acts 20:7) – approved example
 - IMPLIES certain details (Matthew 26:17; cf. Exodus 12:15) – divine implication / necessary inference

- God communicates His will by telling, showing, and implying – this is how we know what He authorizes

We Must Not Go Beyond What Is Authorized

- John warned about not abiding in the teaching of Christ (2 John 9) – we lose our fellowship with God; those who claim to do things in the Lord's name could be practicing lawlessness (Matthew 7:22-23)
- Rather than doing whatever seems good to us, we need to follow what His word tells, shows, and implies

Conclusion

- So what is Bible authority? – it is about using the word of God to determine what God wants us to do
- His word is authoritative and understandable – we must follow what it teaches without going beyond it