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Learning To Please God – Lesson #3

**** RESPECTING BIBLE AUTHORITY ****

by Charles Box

We are familiar with standards of authority. When an inch, foot, yard or mile is mentioned our mind sees a certain distance. With a ruler or yardstick an accurate measurement can be taken. If several use the same ruler correctly, the measurements will be identical. Confusion exists in the religious world because of the lack of a common standard. But someone asks, "Doesn't everyone believe and preach the Bible?" I am sorry to tell you that all do not preach the same gospel. Our plea is for all to come back to the New Testament and to the authority of Christ.

God given authority is simple. All religious authority begins with God. He is its source. There is, "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Ephesians 4:6) God has revealed Himself through Jesus who has given us His message, the New Testament. "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;" (Hebrews 1:1-2) Jesus has all authority and by that authority He sent the Holy Spirit to guide the apostles into all truth. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." (John 16:13) The Spirit of truth guided the apostles into all truth as they wrote scripture. Jesus does not speak to us audibly, but He speaks through His word revealed in the New Testament. Paul wrote, "Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." (Ephesians 3:4) I understand the will of God as I read the Bible with an honest heart.

The Bible is God's unchanging standard. Man is not left to "do his own thing" religiously. He has the Bible, God's unchanging standard upon which to build his life. Confusion comes when "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes." (Judges 17:6) When man becomes a law to himself and tries to direct his own affairs religiously he always makes a mess. "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." (Jeremiah 10:23) Man left to himself does not manage his life well. The Bible is God's spiritual ruler or measuring stick. It is Heaven's unchanging standard. God has warned us about false prophets. He said there are many of them. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1) Everything and everyone must be measured by the Bible. Only the truth will set you free spiritually. "And

ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)

The teachings in the Bible are for our good. Keeping God's commandments is always best. True happiness comes from doing as God commands. What He says is for our good. God told the Jews "To keep the commandments of the Lord, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?" (Deuteronomy 10:13) It is still true today that God's commandments are for our good. The Bible is God's light to direct us. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psalm 119:105) Without the Bible we walk in darkness. Those who walk in darkness are sure to stumble. Those who love God will keep His commandments. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." (1 John 5:3) Following the Bible will bring joy now and eternal happiness hereafter. The Bible is for our good to guide and direct us.

Today is the day of salvation. "For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Corinthians 6:2) Jesus said that to be saved we must be taught the gospel (John 6:44-45), believe in Jesus (John 8:24), repent of sins (Luke 13:3), confess Jesus before others (Matthew 10:32) and be baptized to be saved. (Mark 16:16) He also said Christians must stay faithful. (Matthew 10:22) Be saved while you can.

True or False:

1. _____ You may choose the God you wish to worship. (Ephesians 4:6)
2. _____ Reading the word of God is not so important. (Ephesians 3:4)
3. _____ Man left to himself does not manage his life well. (Jeremiah 10:23)
4. _____ Keeping God's commandments is not good. (Deuteronomy 10:13)
5. _____ Christians must stay faithful to God. (Matthew 10:22)