

Review

- What are two sides of authority?
 - The right or power to rule or command
 - Acting by the instruction and/or approval of the rightful ruler
- When we are concerned with God's authority, we are concerned with what?
 - God's rule, His instruction, His Law
 - What I must do and what I can do
- Does God's silence give consent?
 - No
- Following the inductive method, what two things are required?
 - Gather all the facts
 - Harmonize them

Review

- Name four things included in gathering all the facts.
 - Statements
 - Commands
 - Approved Examples
 - Necessary Conclusions
- When God's word is specific, do we have the right to make it generic?
 - No.
- When God's word is generic, does it authorize the specifics of that generic?
 - Yes.
- What does expedient mean?
 - Helpful or profitable in expediting or carrying out a command
- An expedient must first be what?
 - Lawful

Review

- What are some principles of logic to determine the applicability of New Testament accounts of activity (“examples”):
 - Uniformity
 - Harmony
 - Universality
 - Materiality
 - Competence
 - Recognizing limited applications
- Does the NT teach that the apostle’s doctrine is a pattern? If so, where?

Roadmap

- ✓ What is authority, and how is the word used in the Scriptures?
- ✓ We need authority in our lives
- ✓ God is the ultimate authority
- ✓ What our source and standard of authority is not
- ✓ How is God's authority expressed to man
- ✓ Respecting God's silence
- ✓ Using the inductive method to determine the will of God
- ✓ Determining God's will through commands, statements, examples, and necessary conclusions
- ✓ Generic and Specific authority
- ✓ Expediency
- ✓ When is an Example Binding?
- ✓ The Scriptures give us a pattern
- **The church and the individual**
- Improper attitudes and assaults upon authority



Lesson 13: The Church and the Individual

❑ **Objective of this lesson:**

- ❑ The failure to make a distinction between what the individual Christian is authorized to do and what the local church is authorized to do has led in the past to a corruption of the church's work. In this lesson, we want to recognize the distinction made in the New Testament so that we are sure the church of which we are a member is doing what is authorized.

What Some Have Said

- “The church is composed of Christians; what the church does, Christians do; what Christians do, the church does, generally speaking. We cannot separate the Christian’s work from the work of the church....Actually, we may say that whatever is the duty of a Christian is the duty of a congregation of Christians” (V.E. Howard, “Institutionalism, Orphan Homes, and Church Cooperation”, 1958, pp.6-7)
- Does the Bible teach this?

What Some Have Said

- “Any good work which the individual, as a Christian, is obligated to support financially, the church is equally obligated to support financially.” (Batsell Barrett Baxter, “Question and Issues of the Day”, 1963, p.23)
- Does the Bible teach this?

What Some Have Said

- “They make a difference between Christian duties and church duties, Christian responsibilities and church responsibilities, Christian work and church work, all of which is absurd on its face.” (G.C. Brewer, The Harding College Lectures, 1948, p.113)
- Does the Bible teach this?

What Some Have Said

- “The gospel teaches Christians how to properly behave themselves in every relation to life. It teaches how they should conduct themselves at home. Husbands and wives, and parents and children are taught their respective duties in the home, but the home is not the local church and the local church is not the home. They were established at different times and for different purposes, and the duties of one are not duties of the other....The gospel teaches Christians how to properly conduct their “affairs” as citizens in their relation to the civil power, but their duties in this area of life are not local church functions....Whether in civil affairs, home relations, business activities, or social and recreational functions, a Christians duties in these relations are not local church duties or fulfilled through local church action...To turn the church into a kind of social club and recreational gymnasium is a perversion of the divine pattern and for it there is no excuse...Local church duty and action has to do with the function of the local church, as Christ has specified in the scriptures. May we all think of these things.” (Franklin T. Puckett, “Individual vs. Church Action”, The Arlington Meeting, 1968, pp. 157-158,160)
- Does the Bible teach this?



The New Testament Teaches a Distinction

- Matthew 18:15-17
- 1 Timothy 5:3-16
- 1 Corinthians 11:20-22, 33-34
- Acts 5:4

The New Testament Teaches a Distinction

- Is one member acting the church acting?
 - Matthew 18:15-18
 - 3 John 10

- Is two or three members acting the same as the church acting?
 - Matthew 18:15-18
 - Acts 13:1-3; 14:23

The New Testament Teaches a Distinction

- Is all members acting the same as the church acting?
 - 1 Timothy 5:16
 - 1 Corinthians 11:34
 - 1 Thessalonians 1:1...4:11
- Is all members acting collectively the same as the church acting?
 - Acts 19:39 – ...if the whole town were Christians

What the church did collectively...

- Assembled on the first day of the week to eat the Lord's Supper – Acts 20:7
- Assembled on the first day of the week to collect funds for apostolically-directed work – 1 Corinthians 16:1-2
- Assembled to sing, pray, teach & learn the will of God – 1 Corinthians 14
- Assembled to hear a report from preachers they had sent – Acts 14:27
- Withdrew from the impenitent when they were assembled – 1 Corinthians 5:4-5
- Paid wages to a preacher preaching elsewhere – 2 Corinthians 11:8
- Could have paid wages to a preacher preaching among them – 2 Corinthians 12:13
- Relieved needy saints – Acts 4:34-35; 11:29-30
- Are there any other collective actions?



- The New Testament makes distinctions between the individual and the church.
- As part of our concern for authority, we need to be concerned with the duties and responsibilities God has assigned to the church collectively and what duties and responsibilities God has assigned to Christians individually.
- We need to recognize the distinction so that the responsibilities in each realm will be fulfilled within that realm to which they are assigned.