



Wrong Attitudes About Bible Authority

Like most sinful practices, a rejection of Biblical authority begins in the heart. It begins with an attitude that disregards God's word and standards. This attitude is found in denominations and among many of God's people.

Many who profess to be members of the Lord's church have adopted ungodly attitudes about Bible authority. Consider a few examples where this attitude manifests itself.

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- *"We do many things without authority."*
 - This thinking rejects the need for authority. It argues that since we do some things without authority, we can do other things without authority.
 - It is similar to someone saying, "Since I have taken something without authority before, then it is okay for me to take something else without authority." How would you combat this kind of thinking?
- *"We don't want to be legalistic."*
 - The Bible describes legalism as making up rules and traditions and binding them on others. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for doing this throughout His ministry (Matthew 15:1-9).
 - Today, people often use the word "legalism" to suggest that God doesn't care if we obey His word. That is false! Jesus demands careful and diligent obedience (Matthew 7:21-23; John 14:15; Luke 6:46).
 - Why does Jesus rebuke the Pharisees in Matthew 23:23?
- *"What we are doing is working and helping us grow!"*
 - This argument suggests that the ends justify the means.
 - While we need to strive for growth, not all growth is pleasing to God. Can you think of some Bible examples where this argument falls flat?

- *"There is no difference between the local church and individual action."*
 - This statement argues that whatever the individual is allowed to do, the local church is as well (particularly in the arena of food and recreation).
 - This mindset is rooted in a misunderstanding of how the Bible uses the word "fellowship." How does the Bible define this word?
 - The Bible makes a clear distinction between the local church and individual action (1 Timothy 5:16). List some examples where this distinction needs to be made.

- *"Authority is not really a big deal."*
 - Was it a big deal in the case of Cain (Genesis 3:3-5)?
 - Was it a big deal in the case of Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1-2)?
 - Was it a big deal in the case of Moses (Numbers 20:8-13)?
 - Was it a big deal in the case of Uzziah (2 Samuel 6:1-11)?
 - Will it be a big deal on the Judgement Day (Matthew 7:21-23)?

- *"God did not give us a pattern in all things."*
 - This view generally acknowledges that God gave us a pattern in the plan of salvation, but it seems unclear whether God gave us a pattern for the work and organization of the church. As a result, many churches find themselves in an arrangement that involves centralized control of the work and funds. This pattern is much closer to Roman Catholicism than New Testament Christianity.
 - Just as God gave a pattern for the tabernacle in the Old Testament, there is a pattern for the church in the New Testament (Hebrews 8:5; 2 Timothy 1:13).