



Generic and Specific Authority

Can you define generic and specific authority? While you may struggle to express it in words, you certainly can recognize the difference. The difference is so simple that even a small child can understand it!

Now that we have covered the various ways God authorizes a particular practice, we will consider the two kinds of authority in this study. These kinds of authority are not limited to the Bible. They are part of everyday communication!

The Two Kinds of Communication

- Generic Authority (General Authority) — This is where something is authorized by the methods studied in the previous lesson, but the means, methods, or persons for carrying it out have not been specified. Where God has not specified, there is liberty to use whatever means are lawful and expedient.
 - Jesus commands us to “Go” in Matthew 28:19. Does He tell us how to go? What does this give us the liberty to do?
 - Jesus also tells us to “baptize” in Matthew 28:19. Does He tell us where to baptize? What does this give us the liberty to do?
- Specific Authority (Special Authority) — This is where something is authorized by the methods studied in the previous lesson, but the means, methods, or persons for carrying it out have been specified. When God specifies something, there is no liberty.
 - Jesus commands us to preach “the gospel” in Mark 16:15. What does Jesus specify? What does this command eliminate?
 - Naaman was told to go and dip seven times in the Jordan River in 2 Kings 5:10. What does God specify to Naaman? What does this command eliminate?

Everyday Communication

In each command below, describe which parts are generic and specific.

- *"Shawn Michael, get me a soda out of the fridge."*
- *"Faith, pick up a toy."*
- *"Eli, hand me a crayon."*

These Principles Are Found in All Means of Authority

In each passage below, describe which parts are generic and specific.

- Genesis 6:14
- Numbers 19:2
- Acts 20:7
- Colossians 3:16
- Hebrews 10:25