

WHERE'S THE AUTHORITY?





THE ULTIMATE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY

- While God has given us freedom to do as we choose, this does not mean He approves of everything we choose to do (Ecc. 7:29, Deut. 30:19–20). To be right with God, we must accept His authority (Mark 8:34). How we live must be in line with God's commandments if we want to avoid the inevitable penalty for rebellion (Gen. 2:16–17, Isaiah 55:6–7).
- We require guidance (Jeremiah 10:23). Self-derived authority rarely leads us to God (Deuteronomy 12:1–8).
- While many bristle at the idea of accepting God's authority, it is our duty as creatures to submit to our Creator (Romans 9:20–21, Acts 17:24, Ecclesiastes 12:13).

“ALL AUTHORITY” MEANS ALL AUTHORITY

Matthew 28:18, John 5:19-27



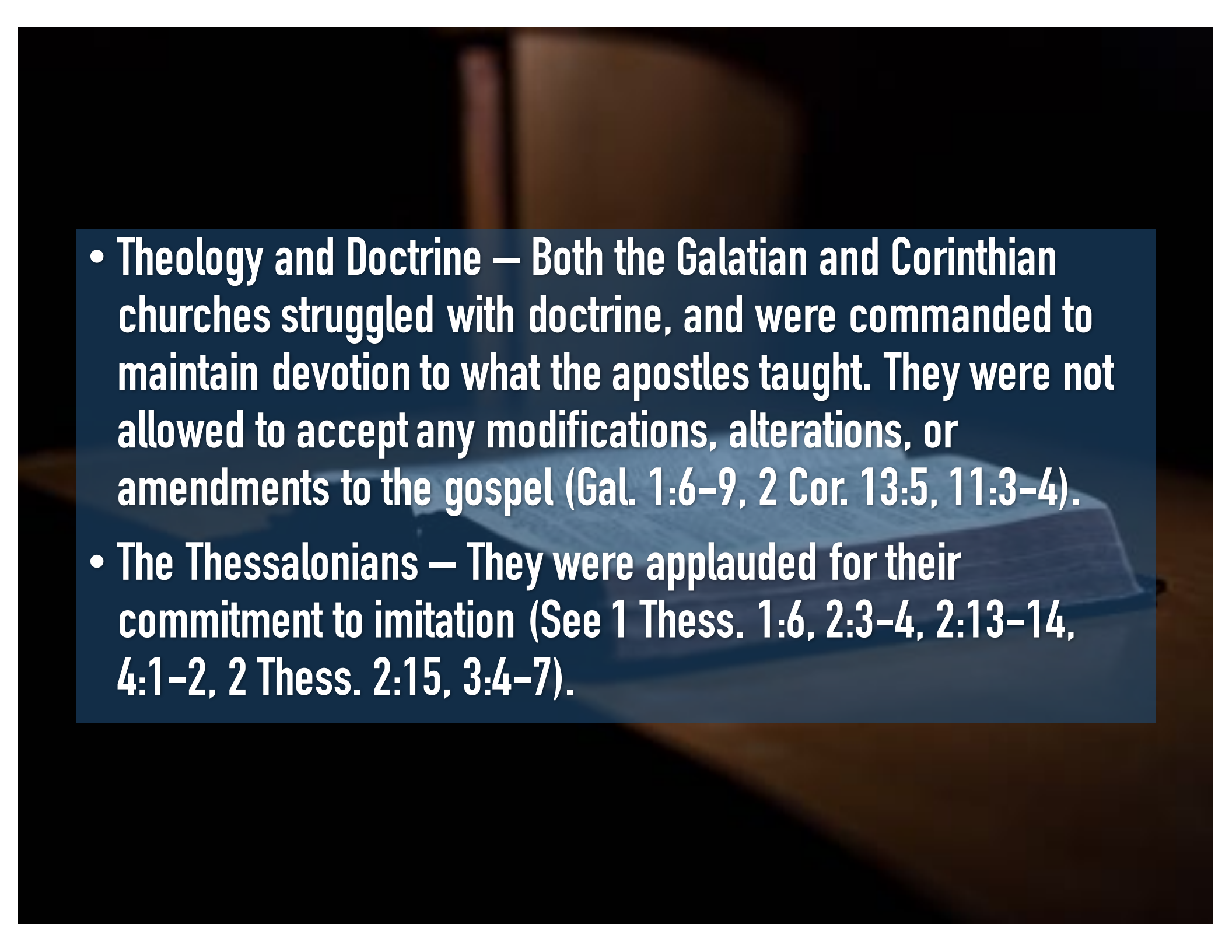
SO, WHERE'S THE AUTHORITY FOR THAT?

- Many professed believers will agree with most of what we've talked about so far. The issue comes when we start applying this to the specifics of the New Testament. Demanding authority for a practice or tradition makes many uncomfortable.
- So where does the New Testament actually require us to “have authority” for what we do, both as individuals and as a congregation?
- Key texts — 2 Peter 1:20–21, 2 Timothy 3:16–17, Colossians 3:17, 1 Thessalonians 2:13, 2 Timothy 1:13.

AUTHORITY IN FIRST CENTURY PRACTICE



- **Church leadership** — The apostles expected elders to be appointed in every congregation (Titus 1:5, Acts 14:23). There was a uniformity to the qualifications and their rule was on a local, limited basis (Titus 1:5ff, 1 Pet. 5:1ff).
- **Lord's Supper** — As is clear from 1 Corinthians 11:17ff and 10:16–17, the apostles had a clear expectation that every congregation participate in the Lord's Supper in the same manner (both the emblems and the motive, as delivered by the Lord via the apostles). Paul taught the L.S. in the same manner in every church (1 Cor. 4:17).

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- **Theology and Doctrine** — Both the Galatian and Corinthian churches struggled with doctrine, and were commanded to maintain devotion to what the apostles taught. They were not allowed to accept any modifications, alterations, or amendments to the gospel (Gal. 1:6–9, 2 Cor. 13:5, 11:3–4).
 - **The Thessalonians** — They were applauded for their commitment to imitation (See 1 Thess. 1:6, 2:3–4, 2:13–14, 4:1–2, 2 Thess. 2:15, 3:4–7).