

THE NEED FOR BIBLE AUTHORITY

By Keith Greer

“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” {Colossians 3:17} While Jesus was here, His enemies understood the need for authority and they questioned Him about it. The questions asked of Him were good questions that still need to be answered in our own time. *“Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, ‘By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?’” {Matthew 21:23}* Dear friends, all religious people today must answer these questions concerning the things they do in service to God. Many believe that as long as they do a thing **“in the name of the Lord,”** it’s acceptable to God. But, is that true? Let us look to God’s word for an answer.

Must do the will of the Father. *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’” {Matthew 7:21-23}* In this context, the word lawlessness means to “act without law” (authority). We understand this in every other part of our lives but believe it is different when it involves religion. Christ commanded us to do His Father’s will. How can we know what that will is unless we have a standard to follow? Why do you suppose there are so many different religions, all claiming to be following and serving the Lord? If this is true, shouldn’t we all be doing the same things? Most religious people claim to be following the Bible. If they are ALL following the same book, why are they acting differently? Let’s look at one illustration.

Water Baptism. Does baptism have anything to do with salvation? Why do some religions practice baptism, while others don’t? Why do some immerse and others sprinkle? Why do some baptize babies and others don’t? Honesty compels us to admit that these differences do exist. Why, if we are all following the Bible? We practice baptism – immersion in water – as one of God’s requirements for salvation. Is this our own doctrine? Observe where we got it:

“He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.” {Mark 16:16}

“Then Peter said to them, repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” {Acts 2:38}

“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” {Romans 6:3,4}

We don’t sprinkle. We don’t baptize (not really baptism, but sprinkling) babies. God’s word contains no authority – **no book, chapter or verse** – for doing so. We derive our practice from the

Scriptures. Why others fail to follow God's clear pattern in the Scriptures, you must ask them. How can one be wrong by simply following what is found in the pages of God's book? This we strive to do in all that we do for Him. God's people will not practice, teach, or ask others to do anything unless we find authority in God's word. To put it in a nutshell – Bible authority or lack of Bible authority are the reasons why churches practice different things. Every religious difference we have with other religions always comes back to this subject. What think ye? ***