

THE BIBLE'S AUTHORITY ASSUMES GOD'S AUTHORITY

On Father's Day this past summer, some friends of ours came to church for a surprise visit, then came to our home after church so we could spend some time "catching up." One of the many things we talked about that afternoon was Dan's experiences while hiking the Appalachian Trail with his brother-in-law. The Appalachian Trail winds through the Appalachian Mountains, starting in Springer Mountain, GA. From there, it goes north, winding its way for roughly 2200 miles—through 14 states—where it ends in Mt Kat-ah-din in ME.

Their hike took place over the course of several months. The two men would hike and camp and their wives—who were sisters—would stay in a motor home at campgrounds along the way. Although I don't remember how often they did this, the women would meet the men at pre-arranged stop-points and replenish their food supply. On Sundays, they made it a point to go to church. Our friend Sue would research on-line ahead of time what church to go to, depending on where they would be on the route when Sunday came around. One particular week, she was having difficulty finding a church on-line, so they decided to attend a church that was not too far down the road they had just traveled.

Both Dan and Sue said it was one of the most "interesting"—for lack of a better word—"sermons" that they had ever heard! I'm not going to try to impersonate their impersonation, but apparently the Pastor started his sermon by pounding on the pulpit and yelling—"We need revival!" Then he jumped off the platform, went to the front row of pews, stood on one of them, and yelled again, "We need revival!" He then jumped off, ran to the other side of the aisle, stood on a pew on that side, and yelled, "We need revival!"

Apparently, he did that over and over again—and really didn't say much of anything else other than "We need revival!" And then—jokingly, of course—they said, "We think you should do that at **your church** some time!" **Why** am I telling you this? To **prepare you** for next week's sermon!

On a more serious note, I obviously **wouldn't do that** because that's not me! For me to do that, I would be putting on an act—and I don't believe a preacher should be "putting on an act" in the pulpit. Besides, our pews aren't secured to the floor, and I'd probably tip them over 😊!

So why bring this up? Because if there was one sentence that **I would want to repeat** over and over and over again, it would be this: "This is God's Word!" And all God's people said? Amen!

--**This**—what I am holding in my hand and what you have in your hand—is God's Word!

--This **is**—actually, really, truly is—God's Word!

--This is **God's**—not mine; not man's—Word!

--And this is God's **Word**—what He has revealed to us to know and love and obey!

Why would I want to repeat "This is God's Word" over and over again? Because if we really **took to heart** the truth that this was **the Word of God**, it would become **the authority** in our life for our doctrine—**what we believe**; and our practice—**how we live**.

But in order for us to submit to the Bible being **the authority** in our life for what we believe and how we live, there are some beliefs **about God** we need to have. An obvious one is that we need to believe in the **existence of God**. I'm going to skip that one, though, because it's pretty safe to say that you wouldn't be in church today if you didn't believe that God exists!

Another foundational belief we need to have is this: *The Bible's authority assumes God's authority.*

What does that mean? It means if I'm going to submit to being **ruled by the Bible**, I need to believe God has the **right to rule over me**! **Does God** have the right to rule over us?

Of course, He does! **But why?** I came up with 5 reasons why God has the right to rule over us and that is what we are going to be looking at this morning.

I've shared with you before how God impresses things upon my mind while working on a sermon. At first, I was going to have **God's right to rule over** us as one point in my sermon—and not spend a lot of time on it because it is “common knowledge.”

Then, I was going to **leave it out altogether** and preach on the **doctrine of inspiration!** But God wouldn't let me go that way and brought me **back to where I started**—that God has the right to rule over us!

And even though it is “common knowledge,” I was reminded of this truth: believers...children of God...those who have been born again and have the Holy Spirit living inside of them, **still** have a sin nature that fights against God! We still have—deep-rooted within us—an attitude found in Luke 19:14 that says, “We will not have this man reign over us!”

Enough of my second introduction....

Why does God have the right to rule over us? **1. Because God created us**

Not exactly a news flash, is it? Notice on your outline...

Gen 1:27 “So **God created man** in His own image, in the image of **God created He** him; male and female **created He** them.”

Psalms 100:3 “Know ye that the Lord He is God: it is He that **hath made us**, and not we ourselves; we are **His people**, and the sheep of His pasture.”

Psalms 139:14 “I will praise thee; for I am **fearfully and wonderfully made**: marvellous are thy works...”

Jeremiah 1:5 “Before **I formed thee** in the belly I knew thee...”

Please take your Bibles and turn to Isaiah 42:5. Last week, I had you in one spot; this morning I'm going to have you moving around a bit! And some of you were **starting to wonder** if I was even going to have you **open** your Bibles!

Notice Is 42:5. God is the one who gives us breath—meaning life!

God has the right to rule over us because He created us! He made us—we did not make ourselves! And He made us for **a purpose!** Some of you are builders... “creators” ...engineers. You like to make stuff—but not just for the sake of making stuff! You have a purpose for “creating” it—you make it to perform some kind of function.

On Thursday, Paula sent me a link with an article and video from WEAU News out of Eau Claire. The news article was about a **memorial built** in remembrance of 3 girls scouts—and one of their mothers—who were all killed while picking up trash on November 3rd, 2018, in the village of Lake Hallie. Why did Paula send me that? Because the memorial—nearly 20 feet tall and weighing close to 1500 pounds—was built at the Stanley Correctional Institution. Guess who had a hand in the cutting, and welding, and painting of that memorial? Jim and Paula's son, Ray! Paula wrote in the message that she sent with the link that Ray was excited that she finally got to **see something he had made!**

The point, of course, is this: just like **people** create things with a purpose in mind, God does, too!

So what is God's purpose in creating **man**?

--Is it so man can merely scrape out a living and survive—until they succumb to death?

--Is it so man can multiply...and replenish the earth...and keep the economy going?

--Is it so man can accumulate as much pleasure...and things...and wealth in this life as possible?

--Is it so man can just eat, drink, and be merry—until they die?

God didn't create us for any of those reasons! So why **did God create man**?

The reason God created us—and a second reason God has the right to rule over us—is...

2. Because God created us for His glory

Look at Is 43:7. Three times we see God as the Creator: “I have created him...I have formed him...I have made him.” The “I's,” of course, all refer to God; the “him's” all refer to mankind. God unmistakably created us!

But we also see **why** God created us: “for I have created him for **my** glory.” What does that mean? We have the answer, I believe, in vs 21 of the same chapter. We are created **for God**—not for ourselves!

We are created to show forth **His praise**—to honor Him...and praise Him...and serve Him...and worship Him!

It is **about Him**—and not about us! **Rev 4:11** “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and **for thy pleasure** they are and were created.”

Oswald Chambers in his book *My Utmost for His Highest* put it like this: “The entire human race was created to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.”

I Cor 6:19-20 “What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? ²⁰ For ye are bought with a price: therefore **glorify God** in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.”

I Cor 10:31 “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, **do all** to the **glory of God.**”

Too many born-again Christians are **practicing deists**. **What** is a **deist**? A deist believes that God exists—and that He created the universe and everything in it. What’s wrong with believing that? Nothing! But the deist also believes that God is like a great “clockmaker” who created the clock, wound it up, and let it go. In other words, the deist believes that God no longer **cares with** or **interacts with** His creation. He believes God **created** man, then freed man—meaning mankind—to do whatever they want to do.

And far too many Christians live their lives that way! They live **independently** of God. They don’t praise Him... or seek Him...or serve Him...or think about Him...or worship Him!

What about you? Do you live your life striving to glorify God—or do you treat Him like the clockmaker?

Why does God have the right to rule over us? Why can God tell us what to do?

Reason #1—Because He created us. Reason #2—Because He created us for a purpose—to glorify Him.

Reason #3... **3. Because God is Sovereign over all**

What does that mean? Simply put, God has the right to rule us because God is the ruler **over everyone!**

He is “King of Kings—and Lord of lords” (I Tim 6:15; Rev 17:14 and 19:16). Again, not “new” news—but a good reminder!

Deut 32:39-40 “See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can **deliver out of my hand**. ⁴⁰ For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever.”

Is 43:10 (“before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me.”)

--vs 11 “I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no Saviour.”

--end of vs 12 “I am God.”

--vs 13 “Yea, before the day was I am He; and there is **none that can deliver out of my hand**: I will work, and who shall let it?”

Is 44:6 (end) “I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.”

Is 46:9-10.

Dan 4:35 “...and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou?”

Numerous other verses, but I think you get the point: God is God and can do **what** He wants...**when** He wants...**however** He wants...**to whomever** He wants! He is the first and last—and beside Him there is no God!

Reason #4 that God has the right to rule over us? **4. Because God is the Judge of all**

The truth that God is the judge of all mankind is a thread that is woven throughout the Bible.

We see it in the **first book** of the Bible. The context of Gen 18 is Abraham pleading with God about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and asking God if He would destroy the city if righteous people were in it. **Gen 18:25** “That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the **Judge of all the earth** do right?”

Yes; the Judge of all the earth **will do** right—and **did do** right! Lot, his wife, and 2 daughters were removed before the city was destroyed.

God as Judge is also seen in the last book of the Bible.

Rev 20:12 “And I saw the dead, small and great, **stand before God**; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and **the dead were judged** out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.”

Solomon ended the book of Ecclesiastes with it: **Eccl 12:13-14** “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. ¹⁴ For God shall **bring every work into judgment**, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”

And Paul reminded us that **the believer** will have his works judged by Christ! **II Cor 5:10** “For we must all appear before the **judgment seat of Christ**; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.”

Let me be very clear—the believer will not be judged for **their sins** at this judgment. The sins of the believer were paid for by Christ—and have been removed as far as the east is from the west! But what we do for Christ **after we are saved** will be rewarded—or burned up like wood, hay, and stubble. (I Cor 3:13-15).

I think it is also important to be reminded of **Heb 12:6** “For whom the Lord loveth **He chasteneth**, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth.” Verse 11 goes on to say, “Now **no chastening** for the present seemeth to be joyous, but **grievous...**” We can choose to disobey—but we can’t choose the consequences! They will hurt—that’s what “grievous” means—and God promises that what **we sow, we shall reap!**

Reason #5 that God has authority over us, the right to tell us what to do?

5. Because Christ redeemed us

As mentioned last week—and probably the week before—our relationship with God should grow from obeying God **out of fear** to obeying Him because **we love Him!**

We’re still in Isaiah; look at Is 43:25.

“I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.”

Isn’t that great! God is the blotter out of our transgressions; our sins—and chooses to remember them no more!

God makes a similar statement in Is 44:22. Notice the difference, though. ‘Because I have blotted out your transgressions, you need to return unto me.’

--I redeemed you...I paid the sin debt you could never pay. How did He do that? By having Jesus die in our place, right? **I Peter 1:18-19** “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; ¹⁹ But with the **precious blood of Christ**, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:”

--We are not redeemed—meaning we are not forgiven of our sins and rescued from the penalty of eternal judgment—by anything we bring (like money or good deeds).

--What are we redeemed by? The precious blood of Christ!

And because we are redeemed by Christ’s death for us, our lives should be lived for Him—not us!

--So basic...so common sense...so logical—and yet so rarely practiced!

So many other verses we could look at; I want to take you to just one more. Please take your Bibles & turn to **II Cor 5:14-15** “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: ¹⁵ And that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again.”

D.L. Moody wrote: “I used to preach that God was behind the sinner with a double-edged sword ready to hew him down. I have got done with that. I preach now that God is behind him with love, and he is running away from the God of love.” (The Life of D.L. Moody by His Son; pg 139).

What about you? Are you running from the God of love? Stop running—and return to Him!

So what does God want you to do with what you heard this morning? How does He want you to respond?

1. First, evaluate your attitude. What is the first thing you think when you hear the words “God has the right to tell you what to do?”

--Does that make you bristle? Does that put you on the defensive?

If so, you are proud—and the Bible says that “God resisteth the proud!”

--And if that’s you, you need to humble yourself!

2. Second, you need to evaluate what you are counting on to get you to heaven.

--If you are counting on **what you do**—baptism, trying to be a good person, even reading your Bible and praying—you are saying “No” to God’s way to be saved!

God’s way to be forgiven is Jesus—plus nothing! John 14:6