



God's Authority

By Michael Pickford

FOREWORD

With so much of the religious world ignoring what God has to say on matters, there is present an alarming need for studies on the subject of Bible authority. Below, I have outlined the course this class will follow. The lessons will be divided into three main themes:

- Acknowledging Bible Authority
- Avoiding Bible Authority
- Acquiring & Applying Bible Authority

As you will readily see, the last theme will take up the bulk of the lessons. This in no way diminishes the importance of the topics studied under the first two themes. Following is the outline for the class.

- ❖ Acknowledging Bible Authority
 - Lesson One: Our need to recognize authority
 - Lesson Two: Our source of religious authority
- ❖ Avoiding Bible Authority
 - Lesson Three: False Standards Of Authority
 - Lesson Four: Bible Examples Of Avoiding Authority
- ❖ Acquiring & Applying Bible Authority
 - Lesson Five: Direct Commands/Statements
 - Lesson Six: Approved Apostolic Examples
 - Lesson Seven: Necessary Inferences
 - Lesson Eight: Generic/Specific Authority
 - Lesson Nine: Expedients
 - Lesson Ten: Silence Of The Scriptures
 - Lesson Eleven: Work Of The Church
 - Lesson Twelve: Perverting The Work Of The Church

Each lesson will take one week (Sunday & Wednesday) to complete. In the first class, we will cover the lesson itself. In the second class, we will answer the study questions. I have chosen this design for a couple of reasons.

- Repetition is the key to memorization. With this procedure, you will go over each lesson at least four times. Once, when you study the lesson on your own. Again, when we study the lesson in class. Again, when you answer the questions on your own. Again, when we answer the questions in class. This should help you remember the material better.
- To clear up difficult concepts. If some of the concepts in some of the lessons are difficult to grasp at first, going over them a few times will help clear them up in your mind.

Please feel free to participate in the class. Your comments, questions and answers will be greatly appreciated and very helpful to this study. Thank you.

Lesson One

Acknowledging Bible Authority

OUR NEED TO RECOGNIZE AUTHORITY

Introduction:

- A. It is imperative that we recognize the need for authority in religion.
 - 1. For years Denominations have ignored a need for Bible authority.
 - 2. Many “churches of Christ” have denied the need for Bible authority.
 - 3. Man sees the need to recognize and respect the source of authority in other realms of life. The home. The work place. The school system. The government.
 - 4. Why do men ignore authority when it comes to serving God?
- B. When I speak of Bible authority, I am speaking about the authority God has given us in His revealed word.
 - 1. Peter wrote, “If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God” (1 Peter 4:11).
 - 2. John wrote, “Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son” (2 John 9).
 - 3. From these two verses, we can readily see the necessity of having a “thus sayeth the Lord,” and a “book, chapter, and verse” for everything we believe and practice in religion.

I. Defining Authority: What is it?

- A. Our word for authority comes from the Greek word *EXOUSIA*.
- B. Notice how two Greek scholars define this word:
 - 1. W.E. Vine. A noted Greek scholar...“EXOUSIA denotes authority (from the impersonal verb exesiti, (it is lawful”). From the meaning of leave or permission, or liberty of doing as one pleases, it passed to that of the ability or strength which one is endowed, then to that of the power of authority, the right to exercise power, e.g., Matt.9:6; 21:23; 2 Cor. 10:8; or the power of rule or government, the power of one whose will and commands must be obeyed by others, e.t., Matt. 28:18; John 17:2; Jude 25; (An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words).
 - 2. Another renowned Greek scholar, Joseph Thayer, defines EXOUSIA in this way: “The power of rule or government (the power of him whose will and commands must be submitted to

by others and obeyed, generally translated authority Matt. 28:18).” (Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon, p.225)

- C. To these two definitions, let’s add a couple of dictionary definitions.
 - 1. The World Book Dictionary: “1. the power to enforce obedience; right to command or act; 2. a person who has such power or right. 3. an influence that creates respect and confidence.”
 - 2. Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary: “Legal rightful power; a right to command or to act; dominion; jurisdiction.”
- D. In summarizing these definitions of authority, both the Greek and English words, we can understand that one who possesses authority is one who is in the rightful position to command, rule, and execute judgment. It is one who has the right to tell others what to do, when to do it, and how to do it.

II. Divine Authority: Who has it?

- A. After understanding just what authority is, the question naturally arises: “Who has this type of authority over man, and what gives Him the right to it?”
- B. The simple answer to the question is God. God has supreme authority over all the heavens and the earth.
 - 1. There are two reasons why God has the right to exercise absolute authority over man-kind.
 - a. He is the one Who has created us (Psalm 149:5,6; Revelation 4:11).
 - b. He is the One who sustains us (Psalm 149:5,6; Revelation 4:11; Acts 17:28,29).
- C. From the beginning of time, God has exercised this authority over man, by commanding man what He wants done and not done. (Genesis 1:28; 2:16,17).
- D. Man has always recognized the need for God’s authority.
 - 1. When Jesus was teaching and healing, the chief priests and elders of the Jews approached Him and asked him a question, “By what authority are you doing these things? And who gave you this authority? (Matthew 21:23).
 - 2. Their question shows that they recognized the need for authority in things which are practiced, and that it must come from one who has the rightful power to grant it.
 - 3. Paul recognized the need for divine authority in the things which he taught when he wrote, “If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord” (1 Corinthians 14:37).
- E. Men today need to recognize the need for authority in religion. We must acknowledge that whatever we practice must be done so within the divine authority of God.

III. Delegated Authority: To whom Has God given authority?

- A. God has all authority in all realms, but, although this study is primarily for the purpose of understanding authority in religion, we might just point out other realms in which God has delegated authority to others.
 - 1. God has delegated authority to the government.
 - a. Romans 13:1-7.
 - b. Titus 3:1.
 - c. 1 Peter 2:13-17.
 - 2. God has delegated authority to husbands.
 - a. Ephesians 5:22-33.
 - b. Colossians 3:18-25.
 - 3. God has delegated authority to elders in the church.
 - a. Hebrews 13:17
 - b. 1 Thessalonians 5:12,13
 - c. 1 Peter 5:1-4
 - d. Acts 20:28
 - 4. God has delegated authority to masters/employers.
 - a. Ephesians 6:5-9.
 - b. Colossians 3:22-4:1.
 - c. 1 Peter 2:18-25.
 - 5. God has delegated authority to parents.
 - a. Ephesians 6:1,2.
 - b. Colossians 3:20.
- B. Remember, although God has delegated authority to these individuals or groups of individuals, He has not given to any of them absolute authority. They must answer to Him, and fulfill their responsibilities according to his will. Any time they enforce any law or command that would require one to go against the will of God in any way, they have over-stepped their rule, and are not to be obeyed (Acts 5:29).
- C. God's word tells us that the Father has delegated all authority to His Son.
 - 1. Matthew 28:18,19
 - 2. 1 Corinthians 15:24-28
 - 3. Ephesians 1:20-23
 - 4. Colossians 1:18-20
- D. We learn from the above passages that God has given Christ all authority in heaven and on earth. The one restriction placed upon this authority is the Father Himself. The Father has not given the Son authority over Him.
 - 1. This means that God has revealed His will to us through His Son. Hebrews 1:1,2. We are to respect that will or be condemned. Matthew 21-23.
 - 2. God has told us to hear Christ instead of the Law and the prophets. Matthew 17:5; 2 John 9.
 - 3. Whatever we do must be done by the authority of Christ. Colossians 3:17.

4. We are to obey Christ. Hebrews 5:8,9.
- E. Many religions today seem to think they can practice anything in religion they want. But, These passages make it clear that Christ's authority must be recognized and heeded.

Conclusion:

- A. In this lesson we have seen the following things:
 1. How authority is defined.
 2. The Possessor of absolute authority.
 3. To whom God has delegated certain amounts of authority.
 4. Christ has been given all authority today.
- B. In the next lesson, we are going to see how God, through Christ, revealed His will to us by way of the Holy Spirit.
- C. Please answer all of the study questions which follow.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Lesson One

1. What are some other areas in life where men recognize the need to respect authority?
2. Give at least two verses which show the need to recognize religious authority.
 - 1.
 - 2.
3. How would you summarize the definition of the words used in the Bible which are defined "authority?"
4. Who possesses supreme authority over man, and what gives Him the right to this authority?
5. Give two Bible examples of people who recognized the need for religious authority.
 - 1.
 - 2.
6. List five realms in which God has delegated authority to others.
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
7. What must we do when anyone God has placed in authority commands us to do something that goes against the will of God? (Give verse)
8. Who has all authority today? Who gave Him this authority? Who is excepted?
9. To Whom must we appeal for anything we practice in religion?
10. How did God reveal His will to us living in the "Christian Era?"

Lesson Two

Acknowledging Bible Authority

OUR SOURCE OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY

Introduction:

- C. Just as it is essential for us to recognize the existence of religious authority, it is just as essential that we recognize the true source of authority.
 - 1. God has spoken to us through His Son (Hebrews 1:1,2).
 - 2. God has revealed His will to us through the Holy Spirit (John. 14:26; John 16:12, 13;).
- D. When Jesus was on earth as a man, He revealed much of His doctrine. He did not, however, reveal it all. The Holy Spirit came, after Jesus had ascending, to reveal the remainder of what we needed to know (John 16:12, 13).
 - 1. 2 Timothy 3:16,17 tells us that the Scripture supplies everything the man of God needs to be complete, thoroughly equipped. Therefore, we need no other source of authority.
 - 2. Peter tells us in 2 Peter 1:3 that God has revealed to us all things that pertain to life and godliness. This eliminates the need for any other source of religious authority.
 - 3. Jude 3 informs us that the faith (the Gospel) has been revealed once and for all. Therefore, those who claim to receive modern day revelations from God are lying.

I. Confirming What Was Revealed

- E. Not only did God reveal to us all we need to know religiously, but He also confirmed what He revealed by the works of the Holy Spirit. This has been His practice in all times of divine revelation.
- F. Notice the different instances where God confirmed His word by way of miracles:
 - 1. When Elijah raised the widow's son back to life, this confirmed to her that his words were from God (1 Kings 17:24).
 - 2. With Miracles, God confirmed to the children of Israel that He had spoken His words to Moses (Exodus 4:1-17).
 - 3. With a miracle, God confirmed that He was delivering the Law of Moses through Moses (Exodus 19:9).
- G. God also used signs and wonders (miracles) to show that what He revealed in the New Testament was from Him.
 - 1. He used miracles to confirm that Jesus was the Christ, thereby authenticating everything Christ spoke as being the revealed

word of God (Matthew 11:2-5; John 5:36; John 10:38; John 14:10,11; Acts 2:22).

2. With miracles, God has confirmed what the apostles taught to be the word of God (Mark 16:17,18; Romans 15:18-20; Hebrews 2:3,4).
- D. Without question, God has confirmed the Gospel to us through signs and wonders. Anyone who doubts this source of authority as coming from God doubts God Himself.
- E. Since God has told us His revelation was completed in the first century, as we have seen above, then anyone claiming to work miracles today to confirm a revelation from God must be lying. They are false prophets (1 John 4:1).
- F. Since miracles have ceased, we must conclude that God's word has been completely revealed (1 Corinthians 13:8-13).

II. Comprehending What Was Revealed

- F. There are many today in the religious world claiming that God's word can't really be understood.
1. Some claim most of it cannot be understood.
 2. Some claim portions of it cannot be understood.
 3. This leaves the door open for one to practice anything he wants religiously. He only needs to claim that any passage which contradicts his practice is one of those passages that cannot be understood. This eliminates any appeal whatsoever to the Bible as a source of authority.
 4. Some claim that only those with "spiritual enlightenment" can understand and interpret the scriptures.
- B. The Bible claims that it can be understood.
1. In Ephesians 3:1-7, Paul writes as if anyone can read and understand the will of God which was revealed through him.
 2. Not only is it possible for us to understand God's word, but we are actually commanded to understand it (Ephesians 5:17).
 3. What kind of a God would reveal His will to us for us to believe and obey, and then make it too hard for us to understand?
- C. This does not mean that all parts of the Bible are easily understood. Some parts are simple to understand from one reading. Other parts are more difficult, and need to be studied closely. They require that we read them many times, look up word definitions, compare them with other passages, ask Bible teachers for comments, read commentaries, look at Bible charts and maps, etc..
1. Peter mentions that certain parts of scripture are "difficult," or "hard" to understand, and that ignorant and unlearned men twist them to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:15,16).
 2. The phrase "hard to understand" comes from the Greek word *dusnoata* which is defined by Greek scholars as meaning hard or difficult to understand.

3. This word cannot and never does mean “impossible.” The Greek word for “Impossible” is *adunatos*. As you can see, it is a totally different word and has a totally different meaning.
 4. Peter did not claim here that some parts of God’s word were impossible to understand. He said that some were difficult to understand.
 5. If we could not understand all of God’s will for us, then we would be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. This is just what God does not want to happen (Ephesians 4:14). We are to become full grown in “all things” (Ephesians 4:15). The “all things” would certainly include doctrine. How could we become full grown in knowledge of God’s will if parts of it cannot be understood?
- D. Two things are necessary for one to understand the will of God.
1. Diligent study (2 Timothy 2:15). One can not understand all of God’s will unless he puts forth the time and effort to study it on his own time, and under the direction of preachers and teachers (Ephesians 4:11-16). Many fail to understand parts of God’s word simply because they do not attend worship services, or they do not study the Bible on their own. Or both!
 2. Willingness to do God’s will (John 7:17). If one really wants to do God’s will, he will do what it takes to understand what God’s word says. Many misunderstand certain passages simply because they do not want to understand them properly. If they understood them properly, it would mean they would have to make some sacrifices in their lives.
 - a. Those who do not want to submit to God in Baptism fail to understand what His word teaches on baptism for the remission of sins (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21, etc.).
 - b. Those who want to practice homosexuality, while also claiming to be God’s child, misunderstand the passages that condemn homosexuality (Romans 1:26,27; 1 Corinthians 6:9,10).
 - c. Those who wish to put away their spouse for a reason other than fornication twist the meaning of Matthew 19:1-10.
 3. The reason these folks fail to understand God’s will is simply because His will contradicts what they want to do.
- E. God’s word can be understood with diligent study, and with a frame of mind that is willing to do God’s will regardless of the cost of self sacrifice.
- D. Some believe that since there are so many different churches with conflicting beliefs, the Bible cannot really be understood. Many religious disagreements come, not over what the Bible has said, but over what it has not said. I point this out because many claim

the Bible cannot be understood since we all seem to understand it differently. Consider the following examples:

1. John 3:2 tells us that Nicodemus came to Jesus by night.
 - a. There's no disagreement about the fact that Nicodemus came to Jesus by night, for this is what the verse says!
 - b. However, some argue about why he came to Jesus by night.
 - c. Some say perhaps it was because he couldn't get to Jesus during the day because of the crowds that surrounded Him. Others say that Nicodemus didn't want any of his Jewish buddies to see him talking to Jesus. Others believe it was because Nicodemus has a busy schedule during the day, and was only free at night to come see Jesus.
 - d. All of this disagreement resulted over what the Bible never even said. The Bible simply does not tell us why the man came to Jesus by night.
 2. Romans 5:1 tells us that we are justified by faith.
 - a. Everyone agrees that faith saves, for this is exactly what the verse says.
 - b. The disagreement comes when men add something the text never said, that is, the word "only."
 - c. The verse never said we are saved by faith "only." It just says "faith" not "faith only!"
 3. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 tells us that Paul had a thorn in the flesh.
 - a. We can all agree Paul had a thorn in the flesh because this is what the text says!
 - b. The disagreement comes when some try to claim they know what the thorn in the flesh was.
 - c. Some say it was bad eyesight. Others believe it was the persecution he endured. Others think it to be something else.
 - d. The fact is, the Bible never tells us what the thorn in the flesh was. Therefore, all these disagreements are not over what the Bible has said, but over what it never mentioned.
- E. We have seen the ideas of...
- a. Confirming what was revealed
 - b. Comprehending what was revealed.
 - c. Notice now the idea of...

III. Consulting What Was Revealed

- A. When I speak of consulting God's word, I'm speaking of something most of the religious world today does not do.
 1. I'm speaking of consulting God's word for authority for everything we believe and practice religiously.

2. We use phrases such as...
 - a. "Speak where the Bible speaks, and be silent where the Bible is silent."
 - b. "Give book, chapter, and verse for everything you believe and practice."
- B. These two phrases are not found worded the exact same way in the Bible. The Bible does, however, teach the concepts they express.
1. 1 Peter 4:11, "If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God." The word "oracles" simply means "words," or "sacred writings." This verse teaches the same concept the above two phrases teach. That is, speak the word of God, His word, and only His word! This verse authorizes man to teach only the word of God. 2 Timothy 4:2 teaches the same thing when Paul told Timothy to "Preach the word." Not man-made doctrines. Not opinions. Not what the human devised creed books say. Not thinks so's or maybes. But, only God's word!
 2. 2 John 9 says, "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son." The Greek word for "transgresses" literally means "goes beyond," or "goes ahead." The phrase "doctrine of Christ" refers to the teachings of Christ. (Some contend that the phrase is speaking of the doctrine about Christ rather than the doctrine of Christ. The original language simply will not support such a view. The same Greek construction is found in Revelation 2:15 where the Lord speaks of those who hold "the doctrine of the Nicolaitans." Just as this phrase refers to the teaching the Nicolaitans did, so the phrase "doctrine of Christ" refers to the teachings of Christ.) The main drive of 2 John 9 is that if anyone practices or teaches anything not authorized by the doctrine of Christ, he loses his fellowship with both the Father and the Son. Hence, he loses his soul.
 3. In Matthew 7:21-23, Jesus condemned some folks who were very active doing religious works. They were doing works which they thought were accepted by God. Jesus condemned them because the works they did were works of "lawlessness." The ends do not justify the means. If a work is not authorized by Christ's doctrine, it is "lawlessness" and therefore condemned.
 4. The Pharisees were considered the religious elite of the first Century. Yet, Jesus condemned them because they took man-made doctrines and traditions and taught them as if they were the very words of God (Matthew 15:7-9).
- C. Regardless of how good a work may appear to be, or how satisfying it is to man, or how much good it appears to do, if it is not authorized by the doctrine of Christ, it is sin. We must consult the doctrine of Christ for everything we do religiously, or we stand to be condemned in the last day when we'll hear those words, "Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness" (Matthew 7:23).

STUDY QUESTIONS

Lesson Two

1. Did Jesus, while living on earth as a man, reveal ALL of His will to us? (Explain)
2. Name and read some verses which show that God's will has now been completely revealed.
3. When God revealed truths to man, how did He confirm that they were from Him? (Give examples from Old and New Testaments)
4. What passage shows that Miracles can not be performed by man today? (Read and Explain)
5. What are some of the beliefs people hold regarding the idea of understanding God's will for man.
6. Can we understand God's will for man in it's entirety? (Give verses and explain)
7. What did Peter write concerning some of Paul's writings as well as other Scripture?

8. For one to understand God's will, what two things are essential (necessary)?

9. What is the cause of many religious disagreements? (Give Bible examples)

10. What do I mean when I say we must consult what was revealed?

11. Give two man-made phrases whose concepts are taught in 1 Peter 4:11.
 - 1.
 - 2.

12. What does the phrase "doctrine of Christ" mean from 2 John 9?

13. What does the phrase "transgresses" mean from 2 John 9?

14. What happens to one who teaches something not found in the doctrine of Christ?

15. Answer the following questions regarding those Jesus speaks of in Matthew 7:21-23.
 1. Were they religious?
 2. Do you think they believed in God?
 3. Were they active in spiritual works.
 4. Do you think they were sincere in doing the works they did? (explain)

 5. Why did Jesus condemn them?

Lesson Three
Avoiding Bible Authority
False Standards of Authority

Introduction:

- E. In avoiding Bible authority, many have resorted to appealing to standards of authority which are not adequate. In fact, as we have already seen, there is no other standard of authority in religion except for the Gospel of Jesus Christ as Recorded in the New Testament.
 - 1. 2 John 9.
 - 2. Colossians 3:17.
 - 3. Galatians 1:6-9
- F. In this lesson, *False Standards of Authority*, I want us to identify several different sources which folks appeal to in order to justify the things they practice in religion. We will categorize these into three different types:
 - 1. Laws of the Mind.
 - 2. Laws of Man.
 - 3. Law of Moses.

I. Laws of the Mind

- H. The Laws which I identify as the laws of the mind are those in which man appeals to his own mind, or his own rationale, in order to justify the things he practices in religion. Following, are some of those “laws.”
 - I. ***“I Think”***
 - 1. Often, we will hear someone say things like:
 - a. “I think it’s alright for us to do this.”
 - b. “I think God wouldn’t mind if we practiced this.”
 - c. “I think we have the right to practice this.”
 - d. “I don’t think that sounds fair.” Etc..
 - 2. Remember, God has not given us the right to “think beyond that which is written” (1 Corinthians 4:6).
 - 3. We must clearly understand that we are not in a position to think for God. God can think for Himself, and He doesn’t need our help.
 - 4. Also, sometimes things which don’t make sense to us make perfect sense to God. Things which don’t seem fair to us are perfectly fair and rational to our Creator. Remember the passage from Isaiah 55:8,9 which says, “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are My ways your ways,” says the Lord. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.’”

5. If Anyone practices something in religion for which there is no Bible authority simply because he “thinks” it is nice, this person has taken it upon himself to think for God, to advise God, to counsel God!
6. Remember, too, “There is a way that seems right to a man, but it’s end is the way of death” (Proverbs 14:12).

J. **“I Feel.”**

1. This source is very similar to the one about “I think.” We will often hear folks telling us that they “feel” this is the right thing to do. They feel God would be pleased with this action or that. They feel they are pleasing God. They Feel in their heart they have been saved.
2. The difference between this standard and the previous one is, “I think” is an appeal to intellect, while “I Feel” is an appeal to self emotions.
3. It is a very dangerous thing to rely on emotions as a guide in religious matters.
4. I can find no passage of scripture which justifies an appeal to emotions for authority to practice a thing.

D. **“Conscience”**

1. Often, we’ll hear people say that we should just let our conscience be our guide in religion.
2. This is very much related to the “I feel” and the “I think” mentality.
3. The conscience can be a good thing if it is taught correctly. Taught correctly, the conscience can be a safeguard, but is never to be relied upon as a safe guide.
4. The apostle Paul, before he became an apostle, went about killing Christians, persecuting them relentlessly, causing many of them to blaspheme their Lord. Read about some of the things he did:
 - a. Acts 26:9 "Indeed, I myself thought I must do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.
10 "This I also did in Jerusalem, and many of the saints I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them.
11 "And I punished them often in every synagogue and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly enraged against them, I persecuted them even to foreign cities. (NKJV)
5. I wonder how Paul’s conscience was. He gives us the answer. Even while Paul was killing Christians, he had a clean conscience. He thought within himself, the above verse says, that he “Must” do those horrible things. He thought He was serving God!

6. Paul said this in Acts 23:1, “Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.”
7. We can surely see the conscience is not a safe guide, nor is it an acceptable authority in religious matters.

II. Laws of Men

G. It is foolish to appeal to any type of man for religious authority. Paul made it clear that not even the angels of heaven are to be appealed to as a source of religious authority (Galatians 1:6-9). Certainly men, who are a little lower than the angels are not to be appealed to.

1. “O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps” (Jeremiah 10:23).
2. “That your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God” (1 Corinthians 2:5).
3. Following are some false sources of authority which fall under “Laws of Men.”

B. “Preachers”

1. The only authority vested in preachers is when they preach or teach the word of God with all authority (Titus 2:15).
2. Preachers are not to be regarded as the final source of authority. Whenever a preacher’s teaching contradicts God’s word, he should be regarded as having taught error.
3. Many religions believe that preachers have been mysteriously “Called by the Lord” to preach. It’s amazing how so many who have been “called by the Lord” contradict one another on many points. Does this mean the Lord contradicts himself?
4. Preachers are only to preach the word (2 Timothy 4:2). Not “their word.”
5. The teaching of the preacher should be tested, just as those in Berea tested the preaching of Paul and Silas (Acts 17:11).

C. “Elders”

1. The elders have been vested with a certain measure of authority to rule over the flock among them. They have not, however, been given absolute authority. Anything they practice or teach must be authorized by the doctrine of Christ.
2. Elders have no legislative power. They are only to enforce the Laws of Christ revealed in His Gospel.

D. “Parents”

1. Many times over the years, when studying with someone about the Gospel, people will appeal to their parents as their source of authority. They want to be part of a certain religion simply because their parents were a part of that religion.
2. People simply want to follow the traditional religious practices handed down by their parents and grandparents. This is a false standard of authority.
3. For many years, Paul lived in religious error because he wanted

to follow the traditions of his fathers, rather than the teaching of Christ (Galatians 1:13,14).

4. Jesus said, "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me" (Matthew 10:37).

E. **"Creeds of Men"**

1. "Practically every denomination has its manual, discipline, prayer book or book of minutes that contains its doctrines and procedures for organizing a church of that kind.
2. There was a time when these creeds were much more highly respected than they are today. At one time rejection of the creed resulted in expulsion from that religious order.
3. We cannot please God by accepting the creeds of men (Matthew 15:9; Colossians 2:21-22)." (A Study of Authority – by Billy W. Moore

III. **Law Of Moses**

- A. Many fail to realize that the Law of Moses is not our authority in religion today. It served its purpose and has been done away with.
- B. Galatians 3:19, "What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come..." (NKJV).
 1. Who is identified as the seed? (Galatians 3:16)
- C. Colossians 2:14, "having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross." (NKJV)
- D. Galatians 3:23, "But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor." (NKJV)
- E.. See also Ephesians 2:15; Hebrews 8:7-9.
- F. This is the reason we do not keep the Sabbath, burn incense, offer animal sacrifices, and do other things they did under the Old Law.
- G. It was the death of Christ that took the Law of Moses away and put into force the New Testament (Hebrews 9: 16-17) .
- F. The Old Testament is still beneficial for us today. We learn how God deals with people and receive many moral lessons from it (Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10: 11). It is inspired of God and we believe what it says. We just do not live under the same specific laws they did.

Conclusion:

- A. People try to avoid Bible authority by appealing to these false standards of authority for their religious practices.
 1. Laws of the **Mind**
 2. Laws of **Man**
 3. Law of **Moses**
- B. Let us appeal only to Christ's doctrine for all we practice in religion.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Lesson Three

1. Is a certain practice in religion acceptable based on the fact that I think it pleases God?
2. According to what Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 4:6, what should men learn to do?
3. According to Isaiah 55:8,9, how do the thoughts of man and the thoughts of God compare?
4. If I feel something to be acceptable in religion, does this make it right?
5. Is the conscience a safe guide in religion? Taught correctly, what can the conscience do for us?
6. Is it possible for one to be in the wrong, while doing something he honestly thinks to be a service to God? (Give Bible example of a man in this position)
7. If an angel from heaven were to appear to us and tell us to practice a certain thing in religion not revealed in the New Testament, should we do as the angel instructs? (Give Verse)
8. Is a religious “good work” acceptable simply because a preacher says it is?
9. What are preachers commanded to preach? How should we treat all preaching?

10. If the elders have no power to make laws, what is it they are supposed to do?

11. Besides preachers and elders, name two other false standards of authority to which folks sometimes appeal. Show from the Bible why these are false standards of authority.

12. According to the apostle Paul, what was the purpose of the Old Testament?

13. Do we live under the Old Testament Law today? If not, when did man cease to live under that law? Who does the Bible identify as “the Seed?”

14. List at least five verses which show that we no longer live under the direction of the Old Law.

15. In what ways is the Old Law still beneficial to us today? What two New Testament verses tell us what the benefits of the Old Law are?

Lesson Four

Avoiding Bible Authority

Bible Examples of Avoiding Authority

Introduction:

G. In Lesson three, we saw how religious people today avoid Bible Authority by appealing to various false standards of authority. In this lesson, we will take a look at some people who lived in Old Testament times who avoided Bible authority. As you will see, these People did not get away with it!

1. God had told them what to do and they did more.
2. Many times, they no doubt rationalized their actions with some of the same false standards of authority we discussed in our last lesson.

H. In thinking about Bible examples of avoiding authority, I want us to see three things:

1. Mandate for the People.
2. Misbehavior of the People.
3. Message to the People.

I. Mandate for the People

K. We have already discussed how serious God is when He tells His people what to do.

L. God expects man to obey exactly the things He has commanded.

1. Man is to preach the word, nothing more, nothing less (1 Peter 4:11; 2 Timothy 4:2).
2. Man is not to transgress the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9) .
3. Those who teach anything more or less than the Gospel will be accursed (Galatians 1:6-9).

M. As we go to the Old Testament, we see that God has always felt this way about His revelation to Man. Those in Old Testament times who did not do things exactly as God had prescribed paid the price.

1. God commanded, "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you." (Deuteronomy 4:2).
2. Proverbs 30:6 says, "Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar."
3. The famous Blessings and Cursings found in Deuteronomy 28 have their basis upon careful obedience to God's commandments, Deuteronomy 28:1 "Now it shall come to pass,

if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth." Deuteronomy 28:15 "But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:"

4. When God was commanding Joshua to take over leadership of the people of Israel after the death of Moses, He told him this about the law, Joshua 1:7 "Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go.
- D. Without question, God expected the children of Israel to do exactly what He had said, and according to the way He told them to do it.
- E. Sadly, there were many instances where people under the Old Law thought they could get away with doing things their own way. Indeed, they even thought they were pleasing God with these innovations.
- F. This brings us to our next point. We have seen the ***Mandate for The people***, now let us consider the...

II. Misbehavior of the People

H. Whenever one chooses to do something in a different way than God told them to, there are very serious consequences. God says what He means and means what he says. Consider some examples from the Old Testament of people who chose to have it their own way.

B. Adam and Eve

1. Genesis 2:16,17 tells us, "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." (NKJV)
2. A close reading of Genesis chapter three reveals Adam and Eve doing exactly what God told them not to do. They ate the forbidden fruit!
3. One may say, "So what, they ate a piece of fruit. Big Deal!" It was a big deal to God. It became a big deal to Adam and Eve. God cast them out of their beautiful garden. They died spiritually. They began to die physically. All of this from eating one piece of fruit that Eve decided was harmless. Also, her reasoning was similar to the idea of "look at all the good it will do" (see Genesis 3:6).
4. Although Eve thought eating the fruit would do a lot of good, God thought differently. She transgressed the command, and she paid the price.

C. Nadab and Abihu

1. Leviticus 10:1,2 says, "Then Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, each took his censer and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them. So fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD." (NKJV)
2. The literal translation for the word "profane" is "unauthorized." Nadab and Abihu offered fire to the Lord, but they did not use the kind of fire God had commanded, for the fire they used was "unauthorized." They did it differently than the exact way God had specified.
3. Did Nadab and Abihu worship the Lord? Yes. Do you think they were sincere when they offered this worship? There's no reason to think otherwise. Was their worship acceptable to God? Certainly not!
4. It is possible to worship God, even sincerely, and still be wrong. Dead wrong! God struck these two men dead on the spot.

D. Moses

1. Numbers 20:8 says, "Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals." (NKJV)
2. As you can see, God gave Moses exact directions as to what He wanted Moses to do in supplying water for the people of Israel. He was told specifically to "speak to the rock."
3. Sadly, this is not what Moses did. Verse 11 tells us that Moses, "Struck the rock twice with his rod." Was there anything about striking the rock in the directions God had given Moses? No!
4. We all know Moses didn't get to enter the promised land with the children of Israel. Do you remember why? It's this very incident! Moses missed out on the land flowing with milk and honey because he disobeyed God on this occasion (Vs. 12).
5. You may be thinking the punishment was rather harsh. Listen, God takes what He says very seriously. Moses should have just been content to do it the way God said, rather than the way he felt was the best.

N. Uzzah

1. 2 Samuel 6:6,7 tells us, "And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzzah, and God struck him there for his error; and he died there by the ark of God." (NKJV)
2. Does it seem odd to you that God would kill Uzzah for this? After all, this was the Holy sacred ark of the covenant! Had Uzzah not reached out and caught it with his hand, this holy vessel would have hit the dirty, filthy ground. All of this could

have caused Uzzah to actually think he was doing God a favor. And, to be honest, from man's point of view, it seems Uzzah did a very good, noble thing.

3. So, why did God kill him? Here's the answer. It's very simple. God had said in Numbers 4:15, "And when Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the furnishings of the sanctuary, when the camp is set to go, then the sons of Kohath shall come to carry them; **but they shall not touch any holy thing, lest they die.** These are the things in the tabernacle of meeting which the sons of Kohath are to carry. (NKJV)
 4. Uzzah had no authority to touch that Ark, not even if it seemed to have a good outcome. The ends do not justify the means!
- O. Already, we've seen two important things regarding Bible examples of avoiding authority. We've seen the...
1. **Mandate for the People**
 2. **Misbehavior of the People**
 3. Now, let us consider the...

III. Message To The People

- A. In each of these examples God gave a very important lesson to all of His children, yeah, all of His Creation! The Message? Obey Him exactly, or perish.
- B. Also found in these examples is a very strong and powerful lesson for us today.
 1. Romans 15:4, "For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." (NKJV)
 2. 1 Corinthians 10:11, "Now all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. (NKJV)
 3. These two verses make it abundantly clear that, although we no longer are to appeal to the Old Testament for authority in religion, we can and must learn from the examples of the disobedience of these men and women.
- C. The message to the people is the same. The lesson is timeless. From the beginning of creation to the end of the ages, God expects man to obey His exact directions. Nothing more, nothing less! Those who choose to have it their own way will perish. Those who choose to add to or take away from the word of God to suit their own taste or to satisfy their own fanciful whims will suffer greatly.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Lesson Four

1. How has God always felt about His revelation to man?
2. What is the basis of the blessings and cursings of Deuteronomy 28?
3. What was the result of Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit?
4. What does the Hebrew word translated “profane” (Lev. 10:1,2) literally mean?
5. Nadab and Abihu worshipped God. So, why did God strike them dead?
6. How did God direct Moses to get water from the rock?
7. How did Moses choose to get water from the rock?
8. What was the result of Moses’ action?

9. It seems Uzzah did a good thing by keeping the ark of the Covenant from hitting the ground. Why did God strike him dead?

10. What is the message we learn from these Old Testament examples?

11. "From the _____ of creation to the _____ of the _____, God expects man to _____ His _____ directions."

Lesson Five

Acquiring & Applying Bible Authority

Direct Commands / Statements

Introduction:

- A. In previous lessons, we have pointed out what our source of authority is in religion today – Christ’s Gospel. We have also seen a great need to recognize this source of authority, and have shown Bible examples of people who paid a great price for either adding to or taking away from what God has said. Also, we have taken a brief look at some of the false standards of authority to which people will sometimes appeal to try and override what God has said.
- B. In this lesson, and those which follow, we are going to take a look at the process by which we determine what God expects of us and what He does not expect of us.
- C. The process by which we determine what God has taught us is threefold. That is, God communicates His will to us by one of three processes, or in some cases, by all three processes. These are listed below.
 - 1. Precept (Direct command/statement).
 - 2. Approved example.
 - 3. Necessary inference/Inescapable conclusion.
- D. In this lesson, we will deal with the process – Direct statement/command. This lesson is divided into three sections:
 - 1. **Explanation.**
 - 2. **Examples.**
 - 3. **Execution.**
- E. In considering the idea of direct commands/statements, Let’s first have an...

I. Explanation

- A. When push comes to shove, we have to admit that in any realm (not just in religion) we learn things by way of direct statements or by direct commands.
 - 1. When my mother tells me I was born on a certain date, I have learned a fact from her (direct statement).
 - 2. When my mother tells me to take out the trash, I have learned from her what I am to do (direct command).
 - 3. When my teacher tells me to do my homework, I have learned from her what I am to do (direct statement/command).
- B. Some have contended there is no certain pattern or method in interpreting the word of God. The bible, on the other hand, has made

it clear that God is a God of method and pattern.

1. To Noah, God gave an exact pattern to follow in building the Ark.
 2. When He told Moses to construct the Tabernacle, He gave Him an exact pattern (Hebrews 8:5).
 3. In the New Testament, there is most certainly a pattern, or method, by which we understand God's will for man. If not, God would be a God of confusion, something Paul said He was certainly not! (1 Cor. 14:33). Without a pattern, there would be total chaos in the religious world. For example, most in the religious world have denied that there is a pattern in religion, accusing those who affirm the existence of a pattern of practicing "pattern theology." However, look at all the division and contention which exists among the different denominations since they have denied the existence of a pattern.
- C. Yes, there is a pattern by which we learn God's will for us, and the idea of direct command/statement is part of this pattern.
1. 1 Corinthians 14:37, "If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord." (NKJV)
 2. 1 Timothy 4:11, "These things command and teach." (NKJV)
 3. 2 Thessalonians 3:10, "For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat." (NKJV)
- D. Direct statements and direct commands can both be understood in the idea of one word – Precepts. Therefore, I will simply use the word precept in the rest of this lesson to refer to these.
- E. Now that we have had an **Explanation**, let's consider some...

II. Examples

- A. From the Bible, we can find numerous examples of how God communicates His will to us by way of divine precept.
- B. Following, are some of these examples:
1. We observe the Lord's supper for the purpose of remembering Christ's death, burial and resurrection because we have a divine precept to do so.
 - b. Please read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.
 2. We understand that Baptism saves because of divine precept, both direct statements and commands.
 - b. The Lord stated that he who believes and is baptized shall be saved (Mark 16:16)
 - c. Saul (Paul) was commanded to arise and be baptized to wash away his sins (Acts 22:16).
 - d. Those in Acts 2 were commanded to repent and be baptized to wash away their sins (Acts 2:38).
 - e. The household of Cornelius was commanded to be

- baptized (Acts 10:48).
- f. Peter clearly stated that Baptism saves (1 Peter 3:21).
 3. By divine precept, we know that we are to love.
 - b. Jesus said we are to love our enemies (Matt. 5:44)
 - c. Jesus stated we are to love God and our neighbors (Matthew 22:37-39).
 - d. We are commanded to love one another (John 13:34,35).
 4. By divine precept, we know we are to lay by in store.
 - a. Please read 1 Corinthians 16:1,2.
 5. By divine precept, we know we are to repent before receiving salvation.
 - a. Acts 17:30, "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent," (NKJV)
 - b. Luke 13:3, "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." (NKJV)
 6. By divine precept, we know we are not to lie.
 - a. Colossians 3:9, "Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds," (NKJV)
 - b. Ephesians 4:25, "Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another." (NKJV)
 7. By Divine Precept, we know we are to assemble with the saints.
 - a. Hebrews 10:25, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching." (NKJV)
 8. By divine Precept, we know we are to work in honest employment.
 - a. Ephesians 4:28, "Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need." (NKJV)
 - b. 2Thessalonians 3:10, "For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat." (NKJV)
- C. From these examples, it is clear that God teaches us by way of precept, either by a direct statement, or a positive command.
- D. As far as Precept go, we have seen...
1. An **Explanation**...
 2. Some **Examples**.
 3. Now, let us see the...

III. Execution

- A. It is crucial for us to execute the commands found in the Gospel of

Christ in our own lives in order to be pleasing to God.

1. To fail to obey Christ is the same as not loving Him.
 2. One may claim to love Christ, but his love is not genuine if he does not do the things found in Christ's doctrine.
 3. The Lord said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15).
 4. Also, "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him." (John 14:21 NKJV).
 5. There are many in the religious world today who claim to love and follow Jesus, but they fail to apply all of His precepts in their lives. For example, Jesus said, "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). However, most of the religious world denies that one must be baptized to be saved, while they claim to love Jesus.
 6. Failure to obey Christ will also result in the lose of salvation.
 - a. "Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him," (Hebrews 5:8,9 NKJV)
- B. We also must understand that rightly dividing the word of God (2 Timothy 2:15) includes understand the context of each command.
1. Clearly, many commands in the Bible pertain to us today, but there are many commands in the Bible which do not pertain to anyone living today.
 2. For example, the commands given in the Law of Moses were for a specific people for a specific time.
 3. Today, we no longer live under the Old Law (See Lesson 3, point III).
 4. God gave Noah the command, "Make yourself an ark..." (Genesis 6:14). Does this command apply to us today? Are we each to go make an ark? Certainly not! In the context, this command applied only to Noah and God said after the flood that He would no longer destroy the world with a flood.
 5. One must consider the context in which each precept is found, use a little God given common sense, and rightly divide the word of God to determine which precepts apply to us and which don't.

Conclusion:

- A. In this lesson we have learned that one of the ways God makes His will know to man is by divine precept. In order to understand what this means, we have seen...
1. An **Explanation...**
 2. Some **Examples...**
 3. The importance of **Executing** these commands.

8. When one who claims to love Christ fails to obey all He has commanded, what is the result?

9. Are we to obey every command found in the word of God? Give an example.

10. How do we determine which precepts apply to us today?

Lesson Six

Acquiring & Applying Bible Authority

Apostolic Examples

Introduction:

- A. In the introduction to our last lesson, we learned that the process by which God makes His will known to us is threefold:
 - 1. Precept (Direct Statement/Command)
 - 2. Precedent (Approved Apostolic Example)
 - 3. Necessary Inference (Inescapable Conclusion).
- B. In the previous lesson, we discussed the idea of Precepts. In this lesson, we want to take a closer look at how God teaches us His will using Approved Apostolic examples.
- C. As in the previous lesson, this lesson is divided into three sections:
 - 1. **Explanation.**
 - 2. **Examples.**
 - 3. **Execution.**
- E. In considering the idea of approved apostolic examples, Let's first have an...

I. Explanation

- A. Just as with precepts, examples are another way that we learn things in any realm of life. Ever since man first began to communicate, he has interpreted communications from other men by listening to the things they say, and paying attention to the things they do.
- B. F. Legard Smith stated in his book, "whenever we want to understand someone, we generally look at two things: What a person says and what a person does. What could correspond more to our everyday, automatic, built-in hermeneutic than "commands" (sayings) and "examples" (doings)? When we instinctively look to precept and precedent, we're simply doing what comes naturally" (*The Cultural Church. P. 44*).
- C. The basic essential idea behind learning what God wants us to do from examples is this: God's word sometimes does not just come out and tell us what to do (Precept=direct statement/positive command), but it shows us what we must do by recording instances of Christians doing it with God's approval. In fact, the Bible tells us that we are to learn God's will in this way.
 - 1. Jesus left us an example, and we are to follow in His steps (1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 2:6).
 - 2. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 11:1, "Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ." (NKJV)
 - 3. Paul also wrote in Philippians 3:17, "Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a

- pattern.” (NKJV)
4. Again, Paul wrote in Philippians 4:9, “The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.” (NKJV)
 5. All of these passages teach us that we learn what God expects us to do by looking to what Christians were recording as doing with God’s approval. We are to follow their example.
- D. Just as the ideas of Direct Statements and Positive Commands can be captured in the word “Precepts,” Approved Apostolic Examples can be captured in the word “Precedents.”
- E. Now that we have had an ***Explanation*** of why we are to learn God’s will for us by divine precedents, let’s see some...

II. Examples

- A. There are several things that we practice in religion today which we practice simply because we have examples in the word of God of Christians practicing them with God’s approval.
- B. The Lord’s Supper.
1. In the previous chapter, we learned that we are to partake of the Lord’s supper for the purpose of remembering what the Lord has done for us. We learned this by precept (direct statement/ command).
 2. However, from precedent, we learn the time we are to partake (upon the first day of the week).
 3. In Acts 20:7 we read, “Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.” (NKJV)
 4. We have here an example recorded in God’s word of Christians observing the Lord’s supper upon the first day of the week. This is why Sunday is the day we observe it. We have no example in the Bible of anyone observing the Lord’s supper on any other day than the first day of the week. Therefore, those who observe it on any other day are practicing something not found in the word of God.
- C. Plurality of Elders in one congregation.
1. By precedent, we learn that when a church appoints elders, it must be elders in the plural.
 2. “For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you” (Titus 1:5, NKJV)
 3. “So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.” (Acts 14:23, NKJV)
 4. ” Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:” (Philippians 1:1, ESV) (Notice “overseers” is in the

plural. Overseers and elders are one and the same thing, Acts 20:17,18).

5. "Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood." (Acts, 20:28, NKJV)
 6. In each of these verses, we have examples of each church having a plurality (more than one) of elders. To these we could add 1 Thessalonians 5:12,13; 1 Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:17.
 7. There is no example recorded in the New Testament of a single church having only one elder serving there. Those churches who choose to have only one elder serving over them must go outside of the authority of the doctrine of Christ for their practice.
- D. These are just two examples to illustrate how we learn God's will for us by way of examples of Christians who practiced them with God's divine approval.
- E. Concerning precedents (approved apostolic examples), we have...
1. Had an **Explanation**...
 2. Seen some **Examples**...
 3. Now, Let us think about the...

III. Execution

- A. Just as with the divine precepts discussed in the previous lesson, the things God teaches us through divine precedents must be executed in our religion. To see the importance of following these examples, read again the passages listed under Roman Numeral I, in the C section of this lesson.
- B. There are some essential truths which must be pointed out in regards to executing these apostolic examples. These are lessons which are crucial to understanding which examples are binding and which are not.
1. Look for the command behind the example
 - a. This point cannot be stressed enough. Often, we'll hear people say something like, "The disciples in Acts chapter 20:1-12 met in an upper room. Since we don't meet in an upper room, then examples aren't really binding."
 - b. People who use this reasoning often ask why it is that the example to take the Lord's supper on the first day of the week is binding, when the example of meeting in the upper room is not binding.
 - c. This kind of misunderstanding will come about if one doesn't understand that many times, an example of Christians practicing something is just an incidence of them laboring under the generic authority of a command or statement which has already been given in another verse.
 - d. These Christians had authority to meet in an upper room

because they really had the authority to meet anywhere. Jesus had already taught that during the Christian dispensation, God's children would not be confound to any particular place to worship as the Jews were confined to worship at Jerusalem (Read John 4:19-24). Also, the command to assemble in Hebrews 10:25 was a generic command. No specifics were given regarding where we should meet. Therefore, these disciples in Acts 20 were simply using this upper room as a mean of expediting the command to assemble. Just as those in Acts 5:12 met at Solomon's Porch to expedite the general command to assemble.

- e. Whenever we see an example of Christians practicing something in religion, we need to study and make sure that there's not another verse which gives a command or statement which qualifies the example.
2. Pay attention to the context
 - a. Sometimes, the context in which the example is found will tell us whether or not the example is binding.
 - b. For example, in John 13:7,12, Jesus was not instituting an act of worship (foot washing). The context tells us that he was simply washing the feet of the disciples to illustrate to them the importance of humility and service (read verses 7, 16, 17).
 3. Study other passages which may shed light on the example.
 - a. Sometimes, as one writer put it, examples are "fenced off by the teaching of another passage.
 - b. For example, the Latter Day Saints (Mormons) contend that since the first century church had apostles, the modern day church must have them.
 - c. However, other passages tell us the qualifications one must meet in order to be an apostle (Acts 1:21,22).
 - d. Since Paul was the last of all people to see the resurrected Lord (1 Corinthians 15:8), then it must follow that no one today could possibly meet the necessary qualifications to serve as an apostle.
 - e. The logical conclusion to this is simply that we should not follow the example in the Bible of having apostles in the church today.

Conclusion:

- A. In this lesson we have learned that God sometimes makes His will known to us through divine precedents (apostolic examples). In order to understand this principle, we have seen...
 1. An **Explanation**..
 2. Some **Examples**...and...
 3. The importance of properly **Executing** the precedents.

5. In Acts 20:1-12, explain why the example of partaking upon the first day of the week is binding upon us, while the example of meeting in an upper room is not.

6. Jesus washed the feet of the disciples (John 13). Explain Why we today are not bound to follow this example and wash one another's feet?

7. The Bible gives us examples of the first century church having apostles. Why are we not bound to follow this example in the church today?

Lesson Seven

Acquiring & Applying Bible Authority

Necessary Inferences

Introduction:

- A. In our previous two lessons, we have studied how God makes His will known to us by Precepts and by Precedents.
- B. In this lesson, we want to study more about the idea of Necessary Inferences.
 - 1. This method can also be referred to as logical conclusions or inescapable conclusions, as well as Proof by implication.
- C. As with our previous two lessons, this lesson will be divided up into the three sections...
 - 1. **Explanation**
 - 2. **Examples**
 - 3. **Execution**
- D. In studying necessary inferences, it is important for us to have an...

I. Explanation

- A. Wayne Jackson made this statement, “The word “inference” is derived from Latin roots that signify “to gather in.” In logic (the science of critical thinking), it suggests the idea of gathering in data from various sources, and then drawing such deductions as are demanded by the evidence.” (What Is A Necessary Inference, by Wayne Jackson, Christian Courier: Questions, www.christiancourier.com/questions/necessaryinferencequestion.htm)
- B. Just as with precepts and precedents, necessary inference is a process by which we learn things in all realms of life. As we go to the Bible, we find that both Jesus and His apostles taught with this method.
- C. Jesus expected people to learn biblical truths from necessary inferences.
 - 1. Consider Matthew 22:23-33. In this text, the Sadducees, who denied the resurrection and the eternal nature of the soul, approached Jesus with a question aimed at trying to trick Him.
 - a. Notice especially verse 31,32.
 - b. In verse 32, Jesus quoted from Exodus 3:6, “I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob...” He then made the statement, “God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”
 - c. Now, Jesus expected the Sadducees, after reading a passage like Exodus 3:6, to necessarily infer that people live beyond the grave. If God is not the God of the dead,

then why would He state in Exodus 3:6 that He was the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, since they were long dead when He made that statement? Jesus meant for the Sadducees to necessarily infer that these three Patriarchs were indeed alive in heaven. They were then to necessarily infer that there is life after death – that the soul does continue to exist beyond the grave.

2. Consider Matthew 22:41-45.
 - a. The Jews completely misunderstood the nature of the Messiah. In fact, at times, they considered Jesus guilty of blasphemy because He claimed to be eternal, just as the Father is eternal.
 - b. Jesus, in our text, asked them a question (vs. 42) for the purpose of teaching them that the Old Testament taught that the Messiah was to be the eternal God – God the Son.
 - c. In the verse Jesus referred to Psalm 110:1, where David referred to His Son (the Messiah) as his Lord. “The Lord (God) said to my (David’s) Lord (The Messiah-the son of David).”
 - d. From this verse (Psalm 110:1), Jesus expected them to necessarily conclude that this son of David, whom David called Lord, must be superior to David, and that He must have pre-existed David, and that since David called Him Lord, that He must be God, the Son of God.
 - e. This was the only logical conclusion they could come to.
3. Consider now Matthew 16:5-12.
 - a. In this passage, Jesus warned His apostles of the leaven of the scribes and Pharisees. Notice how they drew an illogical conclusion. They thought he was upset because they hadn’t brought any bread for them to eat.
 - b. Jesus then showed them how illogical this conclusion of theirs was based on the fact that if He had the power to miraculously feed 5,000 on one occasion, and four thousand on another occasion, then He could certainly provide food for them if necessary.
 - c. They then came to the only logical conclusion possible – that Jesus was referring to the teachings of the scribes and Pharisees (vs. 12).

D. Notice other occasions where God made His will known using Necessary inferences.

1. In Peter’s sermon in Acts chapter two, Peter used a necessary inference to make a very crucial point.
 - a. In verses 25-28, Peter made reference to David’s words in Psalm 16:8-11. David spoke of one whose soul was not left in Hades, and whose flesh did not stay in the

- grave long enough to decay.
 - b. The necessary conclusion was that David was speaking of someone other than himself, since his body was still in his tomb (see verse 29).
 - c. Peter referred to yet another necessary inference in verse 31 when he said that since Jesus is the one whose flesh did not see corruption, since He arose on the third day after His death, that David must have been referring to Jesus. Therefore, this Jesus must be the Christ, the Son of God (vss. 32-36).
 - d. Peter got all of these points across using this technique of necessary inference. And it worked! (vs 37).
2. Using a necessary inference, God taught Peter that salvation was for Gentiles as well as Jews.
- a. Peter stated in Acts 10:28 that God had shown him this.
 - b. Acts 10:10-16 tells us how God taught him this. He did so by causing Peter to go into a trance and see a vision of a sheet which contained all types of unclean animals. God told Peter to rise and eat. God's point had to be necessarily inferred. God didn't come right out and tell Peter that Gentiles were now accepted, but Peter learned the lesson by drawing a logical conclusion.
- E. Now that we've had an **explanation** about how God teaches using Necessary Inferences, let's see some **examples** of things we practice today which we learned by necessary inference.

II. Examples

A. The Lord's Supper.

1. From our previous lessons, we have learned that we are to partake of the Lord's supper because of a direct command.
2. We learned that we are to observe it on the first day of the week by apostolic example (Acts 20:7).
3. Now, we learn by necessary inference that we are to partake of the Lord's supper **every** first day of the week. Consider the following logic:
 - a. We know the disciples were commanded to assemble (Hebrews 10:25).
 - b. We know they assembled every first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:1,2). Note: The Greek text of 1 Corinthians 16:2 says, "On the first day of every week." The preposition *kata* in the original text means "every." This verse is properly translated in the RSV, NASB, NIV, CEV, and the ESV.
 - c. We also learn that the disciples partook of the Lord's supper when they met on the first day of the week.
 - d. Therefore, we are to partake of the Lord's supper each

first day of the week.

4. Also consider the fact that God commanded the Jews to remember the Sabbath to keep it holy. God expected them to remember every Sabbath, although He only said “remember the Sabbath.” Since every week has a Sabbath, the Jews necessarily concluded that they were to remember every Sabbath. And they were exactly right. By this same reasoning, when we read of the disciples partaking of the Lord’s supper upon the first day of the week, this must mean every Sunday since every week has a first day.
5. From Acts 20:7, how could we logically conclude, like some have, that the verse means the first day of the first week of the month, or of the first week of the quarter, or the first week of the year. There’s no way to logically come to those conclusions. The only logical conclusion is that the disciples met every first day of every week to break bread.

B. Church Buildings

1. I always get a bit frustrated when people say things like, “since we don’t have authority for a church building, then we can do this or that.” They always use this reasoning whenever they want to practice something there is clearly no authority for. For if they really had respect for God’s word, they would burn their building down and never use it again since they believe they have no authority for it. A logic which states that supposed disobedience in one area of religion justifies further disobedience in other areas is neither an impressive nor accurate logic.
2. The simple fact is, however, that we do indeed have authority for the church building.
3. We are commanded to assemble with the saints (Hebrews 10:25).
4. Notice that the command is simply to assemble. God said nothing in this verse about where we are to assemble.
5. Therefore we must necessarily conclude that any location would suffice. After all, if we must assemble, then it logically follows that we must have a place at which to assemble – to fulfill this command.
6. Furthermore, since Jesus taught that under the Christian age any place was an acceptable place to worship (John 4:21-25), then we certainly have authority for a church building.
7. A church may choose to worship in a rented building, a purchased building, a field, a public building, or a member’s house and still be within the authority of the command to assemble.

- C. These are just a couple of examples of things we practice in religion today because we learned to do so by necessary inference.
- D. Regarding Necessary inferences, we have seen...
 - 1. An **Explanation...**
 - 2. Some **Examples...**
 - 3. Now, let us consider the idea of...

III. Execution

- A. Just as it is essential to properly execute the things we learn by precept and precedent, it is just as essential for us to do so with necessary inferences.
 - 1. The Sadducees denied the eternal nature of the soul because they did not learn the lesson taught by necessary inference.
 - 2. The Jews misunderstood the true nature of the Messiah because they did not learn by necessary inference.
 - 3. If the Jews had not learned by necessary inference that they were to remember every Sabbath, they would have suffered the consequences.
- B. As I said, not only is it essential to learn the spiritual truths taught to us by way of necessary inference, but it is extremely essential to make sure that the inference is a necessary one.
 - 1. With a little bit of perversion, and a lot of creative imagination, one may infer anything from anything.
 - 2. For example, consider the practice of baptizing infants.
 - a. We learn by necessary inference that baptism is not for infants (babies).
 - b. Baptism is for those who are capable of believing and repenting (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38).
 - c. Since babies are not capable of believing or repenting, we must necessarily conclude that they are not to be baptized.
 - d. Some in the religious world, however, contend that infant baptism is taught by necessary implication in the story of Lydia's conversion in Acts 16:11-15.
 - e. They come to this faulty conclusion based on the statement made in verse 15, "And when she and her household were baptized." Their reasoning from this statement runs something like this:
 - (1) Lydia's entire household was baptized.
 - (2) She may have had children in her household.
 - (3) She probably even had babies in her household.
 - (4) Since the verse says her household was baptized, those babies must have been baptized.
 - (5) Therefore, we can and even should baptize babies.
 - f. Now, the fault of this reasoning quickly comes to any

reasonable, logical mind. Their conclusion is not a necessary, inescapable one since it is based on “maybe’s,” “may haves” and “probablys”.

- C. For an inference or conclusion to be binding it must be the only one possible from the passage of scripture. And many times, it can be drawn from the text based on facts we have learned from other passages of scripture.
- D. We must study the word of God with an open, honest, and logical mind in order to understand and see the necessary conclusions God meant for us to see. We must then learn the lesson and direct our lives based on those conclusions.

Conclusion:

- A. In this lesson, we have learned how God makes His will known to us by using necessary inferences.
- B. In discussing this concept of necessary inferences, we have seen...
 - 1. An **Explanation** of how God uses this method.
 - 2. Some **Examples** of things we practice in religion today which we learned from this method.
 - 3. How we are to properly understand and **Execute** necessary inferences in our lives today.

Lesson Eight
Acquiring & Applying Bible Authority
Generic/Specific Authority

Introduction:

- A. In the three previous lessons, we have learned how to acquire Bible authority for any religious practice.
 - 1. Precepts (Direct Statement or Positive command).
 - 2. Precedents (Approved Example).
 - 3. Proof by Implication (Necessary inference/Logical Conclusion).
- B. In this lesson and the following, we want to explore more details on how we obtain biblical authority using these three methods.
- C. This lesson will focus on the idea of Generic and specific Authority.
- D. The Bible warns us about those who would promise Christian liberty, when in reality they were leading themselves and others into bondage to the master of corruption (2 Peter 2:19).
 - 1. We are not free to practice anything we wish in religion.
 - 2. We must practice only those things which are lawful, or stand condemned before the Lord. (Matthew 7:21-23).
- E. Many are teaching that we can't all understand the Bible alike.
 - 1. Some are saying things like, "Does it really matter whether someone believes in premillennialism or not?" "Does it really matter whether someone uses mechanical instruments of music in worship or not?"
 - 2. These people are beginning to view the Bible as simply a love letter and nothing more. They are telling us the Bible is not a "law book."
 - 3. As a result, these "brethren" are just as confused about women preachers, capitol punishment, and authority for the church building, etc. as the denominational people are.
- F. In spite of what these people are saying, the Bible is a law book.
 - 1. The faith is a body of teaching to be obeyed, "obedient to the faith" (Acts 6:7).
 - 2. Jeremiah 31:33, "I will put my law in their minds, and write it on their hearts." This is a prophecy concerning the And "Christian Age."
 - 3. James 1:25 specifically refers to the doctrine of Christ as The "The perfect law of liberty."
 - 4. Furthermore, in 1 Corinthians 1:10, Paul made it clear that Christians are to understand God's word alike.

- G. The confusion comes when people fail to recognize the proper **way** to understand the will of God.
1. We understand it the same way we understand any other book or writing; Using the three methods we've already studied.
 2. It is when these methods are undermined and ignored that people all of a sudden become very confused about religious matters.
- H. Does the following statement make sense to you?
1. "Some things are authorized, though not specifically mentioned in the Bible. Some things are NOT authorized, though not specifically condemned in the Bible."
 2. You will understand how this can be true once we finish studying this lesson.
- I. It is imperative for us to study and understand the way generic and specific authority functions in order to properly apply these three methods. This is the purpose of this lesson. In studying this important topic, we want to see three things.
1. The **Basic Idea**.
 2. The **Biblical Examples**.
 3. The **Blatant Ignoring**.

I. The Basic Idea of Generic/ Specific Authority

- A. We have Already learned how God makes His will known to us using direct statements or positive commands. However, we now need to point out that some commands are generic commands, while others are specific. In fact, within one certain statement or command, some aspects of it are specific, while others are generic.
- B. Let's define Generic and Specific:
1. **Specific Commands**: Sometimes, when God gives a command, He is very specific about who is to carry out the command, how it is to be done, and sometimes even when it is to be done. This is a very restrictive type of command, for it leaves us no choice insofar as the particulars of carrying out the command.
 2. **Generic Commands**: A general command is when God simply commands us to do something, but He says nothing about how we are to do it, when, or where. This gives us the freedom to decide how a certain command is going to be carried out. The methods we decide upon in carrying out a generic command is also known as an expedient. So called because this is how we have chosen to expedite (carry out) the command.
- C. For example, Let's look at a command given by Jesus and see how some points of it are specific, while others are generic.
1. The command states, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, "teaching them to observe all things

that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen." (Matthew 28:19,20, NKJV)

2. Notice that the method of going is generic. This is true because Jesus did not specifically say how the going was to be done. He simply said "Go." Therefore, one could go by car train, bicycle, feet, horse and buggy, etc.. Any and all of these methods of going would be expedients because that is the way one chose to expedite the general command to "Go."
3. Notice also that the method of teaching is generic. This is so because Jesus simply said "teaching them." He did not specify a certain way to go about doing the teaching. Therefore one could teach by mouth, written lessons, radio, newspaper, separate Bible classes (normally divided by age groups in most churches), etc.. Now, if Jesus had said that the teaching was to be done by mouth, the command would now be specific, and those who taught in any of the other ways mentioned above would stand condemned. The so-called "No-Classers" believe that a church sins when they divide up into separate classes in order to teach the gospel. They clearly misunderstand the idea of generic and specific authority.
4. On the other hand, the "what" is specific. They were not to teach Math, English, Calvinism, etc. They were to teach "all things that I have commanded you." They were to teach the doctrine of Christ. Other verses back this up (1 Peter 4:11; 2 John 9).

D. With these definitions and examples, hopefully we now have a better understanding of the **basic idea** behind generic and specific authority. Now, let's consider some...

II. **Bible Examples** of Generic/Specific Authority

- A. The Bible is teeming with examples of generic and specific commands and statements. In this section, we want to consider some of these examples so that we can learn how to make practical applications of how this concept operates. And also that we may learn why it is that we practice certain things in religion, while we do not practice others things which some religious organizations do practice.
- B. **Lord's Supper**
 1. As pointed out in previous lessons, we are commanded to partake of the Lord's supper. However, inherent within this command are certain things which are specific and other things which are generic.
 2. The fact that we are to use unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine (grape juice) is specific (Luke 18:1,18). Therefore, whenever we observe the supper, we can use only these two elements. Those who want to use cake, ice cream, red punch or any other element, are going beyond what the Bible specifies.

3. The day we are to observe the Lord's supper is specific (Acts 20:7). Therefore, we do not have the liberty to choose which day we will observe the supper. Those who observe it on a Saturday, Monday, or Wednesday have went beyond what the Bible teaches.
4. The purpose for eating the supper is specific. "Do this in remembrance of Me" (1 Corinthians 11:24,25). Therefore, those who turn the Lord's supper into a banquet or feast are going beyond what the Bible has revealed (i.e. 1 Corinthians 11:17-22).
5. On the other hand, the hour of the day we observe is no where specified in the Bible. Only the day is specified. Therefore, we may observe it at 11:00 in the morning, or a 10:00 at night if we so desire. Just as long as it is observed upon the first day of the week. When we come together at 10:30 to partake, that time frame is simply an expedient. It is the time we have chose to expedite the command to observe.
6. The number of containers we use from which to drink the fruit of the vine are also not specified. Therefore, we may all choose to drink from one cup, or we may choose to use individual containers. These containers may be made of clay, glass, or plastic. It makes no difference since God didn't specify on the matter

C. Another example is **music in worship**.

1. Anyone with a simple basic knowledge of the matter understands that singing and playing produce two different **KINDS** of music. God has commanded that we sing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16),
2. Therefore, the specific aspect of this command is that we sing. God specifically said, "sing." He has nowhere said that we should or that we may play. Therefore, those who use mechanical instruments of music in the worship services are going beyond what God has authorized.
3. Another specific in this command is that the songs be of a spiritual nature. "Psalms, Hymns, spiritual songs." Therefore, those who sing songs in services of a "secular" nature are going beyond what God has authorized.
4. The command that everyone sing is also specific. "One another." Therefore, we may not have a choir do all of the singing for us. Nor is there authority for someone to sing a solo. Everyone is to sing!
5. There are, however, some general things involved in expediting this command. For example, God did not give a specific number of songs to sing during a worship service. We may sing two, five, or seven and still be fulfilling the command to sing without adding to or taking away from it. God did not specify how we

may sing, therefore, we may sing in chants or by using the chromatic scale as we generally do today. We may sing bass, tenor, or soprano and still be fulfilling the command to sing. We may obtain the words from memory, songbooks, overhead projectors, or handouts and still just be singing therefore fulfilling the command God gave without going beyond. All of these things are aids or expedients by which we carry out the command.

D. Consider the Old Testament example of **Noah**.

1. God told Noah to “Make yourself an ark of Gopher wood” (Genesis 6:14). Inherent within this command are some general things as well as some specific things.
2. Specifically, Noah was to make an ARK. No other vessel would have worked. He was even told specifically what dimensions to use in making the ark (vss. 15,16). No other dimensions would have worked.
3. He was told specifically to cover the ark in “pitch.” No other coating would have worked (i.e. paint, etc.). He also was told to specifically to use “gopher” wood. Therefore, any other type of wood would not have sufficed.
4. However, there were some general things which God never specified, leaving Noah the freedom of choice as to how to expedite this command.
5. God did not specify what kind of tools Noah was to use. He just said “make” (build). Noah could use a hammer (short on long handled), scaffolding (oak or walnut, etc.), nails, glue, etc, etc. He could choose what kind of resources to use while making the ark because God never specified. Therefore, he would still be operating within the command to “make.”

E. Consider next the command to **Lay by in Store**.

1. The who, when and how was specified. The who was “everyone of you.” The how was “As God has prospered you.” The when was “upon the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:1,2). These were the specifics that God gave in relation to the command.
2. However, there are also some generalities in this command. For example, We are not specifically told what time of the day to give. Therefore, it may be within any hour of the first day of the week. We are not told exactly how much, or what percentage to give, only to give cheerfully and liberally as God has prospered (2 Cor. 6,7). Therefore, those who bind the idea of giving ten percent are going beyond what God specified.
3. We are not told what form the money is to be in. Therefore we can choose how to expedite this command – Cash, check, etc..
4. The method of collecting is not specified. Therefore, we may collect the money using a hat, basket, jar, etc, etc.. Those who

bind any one of these things are binding an expedient. This is condemned under the idea of teaching traditions of men as if God has bound them (Matt. 15:8,9).

- F. We have now seen two things in relation to generic/specific authority.
 - 1. The **Basic Idea**...
 - 2. Some **Biblical Examples**.
 - 3. Now, let us consider the...

III. **Blatant Ignoring** of Generic/ Specific Authority.

- A. There are some who blatantly ignore the idea of generic/ specific authority. By failing to understand the plain concept, they are justifying the practice of many unauthorized things in religion by “explaining” that we may practice them because we practice other things which God does not authorize.
 - 1. For example, they will say something like, “I can’t read one word about an overhead projector in the Bible, therefore, we don’t have authority for it.”
 - 2. Or, “I can’t find one word about the church owning a ‘church building’ in the Bible, therefore, we don’t have authority for it.”
- B. Sadly, these people fail to apply a natural process of understanding which is inherent in understanding anything.
 - 1. For example, if my mom specifically tells me, “buy a loaf of wonder bread.” I know that I am to buy wonder bread. Do you think she would be upset if I came home with Wonder bread, plus 20 other different loaves of bread of varying brands? Of course she would! I understood her to mean that I was only to buy a loaf of Wonder bread. But However, do you think that if I paid for the bread with cash instead of a check, she would be upset at me? Of course not! I still did what she told me to do (buy the wonder bread). She never specified that I should buy it with cash, credit or check. Also, do you think she would be upset if I bought it at Wal-Mart instead of a local grocery store? No! She never mentioned where I was to buy it.
 - 2. This is a common way everyone understands commands or statements in any realm. Why do some want to throw this reasoning out the window when it comes to understanding the Bible? The reason is simple, because they want to do what THEY want to do. They are not content with doing ONLY the things that pleases God.
- C. Actually, this concept of generic/specific is one of the things which allows man to stay within the will of God, while still taking advantage of modern conveniences. Therefore the church can still be the church of the New Testament, while also remaining current.
 - 1. Again back to our example. When Jesus commanded that we “Go” to the world to teach, that Generic command allows for us to use cars, trucks, airplanes, trains, etc.. and still be within God’s authority.

2. God commanded that we assemble. That's a generic command which leaves us with the liberty to choose where to assemble, and at what time of the day or night. This gives us the freedom to buy a building, use electric lighting (which is nowhere mentioned in the Bible) and a host of other things which people need when they assemble to carry out the command to worship.
- D. When one understands and applies the concept of generic/specific authority, several questions are easily answered:
1. "How could God write the Bible in such a way as to give us everything we need (2 Peter 1:3; 2 Timothy 3:16,17), without being so cumbersome and massive that it would be impractical?" Answer: By specific commands which would naturally exclude every other option. And by giving generic commands which would allow options not specifically mentioned.
 2. "How could God let us know what ARE options, without having to detail every possible option?" Answer: By Generic commands.
 3. "How could God let us know that our options are greatly limited or excluded to one choice, without having to forbid every possible option?" Answer: By giving a specific command which would exclude every other option. (Example: When God told Noah to use Gopher wood, He did not have to then say, "Thou shalt not use oak, Elm, Poplar, Cherry, etc, etc, etc, etc.." See the point? When He specified Gopher, that naturally excluded all other types of wood. The same is true when He commanded singing. He did not have to say, "Thou shalt not use mechanical instruments." because it was excluded when He specified singing. Many say, "God never came right out and said not to use mechanical instruments." He didn't have to! Another example. God told Moses to talk to the rock (Numbers 20:8). But Moses struck the rock and was severely punished for doing so (Numbers 20:9,10,12). Moses could have said something like, "But God never said, 'Thou shalt not strike the rock'." And Moses would have been exactly right. God never did say that. But, He didn't have to! By telling him to *speak* to the rock, He gave a specific command which excluded any other action toward the rock.
- E. With the generic and specific nature of the commands God gave us, He, in His infinite wisdom, has made the Bible practical for all ages.

Conclusion:

- A. To properly understand the concept of generic/specific commands, it is essential that we understand...
 1. The **Basic Concept** of generic/specific commands.
 2. The **Biblical Illustrations** of generic/specific commands.
 3. The **Blatant Ignoring** of generic/specific commands.

5. List some specifics and generalities about the command to lay by in store.

6. Ironically, how do some people try to justify the practice of things for which there is no scriptural authority?

7. By a natural reasoning process, we understand the generics and specifics of statements or commands in any realm. Why do you think some want to throw this process out the window when it comes to understanding the Bible?

8. Briefly explain how the concept of generic/ specific allows us to stay within the authority of God, while still taking advantage of modern conveniences?

9. God told Moses to speak to the rock (Numbers 20:9). However, Moses struck the rock. God never specifically told Moses *not* to strike the rock. Why, therefore, was Moses punished for striking the rock?

10. Read the statement I made under **H. 1.** of the **Introduction**. Can you explain how this statement is true?

Lesson Nine
Acquiring & Applying Bible Authority
Expedients

Introduction:

- A. In our previous lesson, we studied the idea behind generic and specific authority. In this lesson, we are going to study the idea of expedients.
- B. You will quickly see the relationship between the ideas of generic/specific authority and expedients.
- C. In studying expedients, we want to examine three things:
 - 1. ***Expedients Explained***
 - 2. ***Expedients Excluded***
 - 3. ***Expedients Exemplified.***
- D. To begin our study, let's look at...

I. Expedients Explained

- A. Before understanding all the Bible has to say about expedients, we must first define and explain what an expedient is.
- B. Following, are a few definitions:
 - 1. **1 CORINTHIANS 6:12 “ALL THINGS ARE LAWFUL FOR ME, BUT NOT ALL THINGS ARE PROFITABLE”**
 - 2. The KJV translates the word “profitable” as “expedient.”
 - 3. **“PROFITABLE”**-From this word we get the idea of expediency, that is something advantageous, useful, good, and worthwhile. “Signifies contributing to someone's benefit” (*Gr. Ex. N.T. p. 818*).
 - 4. Vine says, “lit., to bring together, to be an advantage, profitable, expedient (not merely ‘convenient’)” (p. 62).
 - 5. “*adj.* 1. Suitable for a particular purpose. *n.* a means of achieving something, a means to and end.” (Oxford American Dictionary; Heald Colleges Edition, pg. 302)
- C. Simply put, an expedient is a profitable means by which a certain thing is expedited (carried out).
 - 1. Right here, we begin to see the connection between the idea of expedients and generic/specific authority.
 - 2. If you will remember from the last lesson, when God gives us a command to carry out without specifying the ways in which to carry it out, we have the freedom to choose how to carry it out. For example, God commanded us to assemble with the saints. However, He did not specify the place in which to carry out this command. Therefore, we have the freedom to choose where we are going to assemble. Wherever we choose

to assemble is an expedient. If we choose to assemble in a purchased building, then that building is an expedient. It is a means by which we are carrying out the generic command to assemble.

3. As one writer put it, “Thus for something to be claimed as an expedient, an option, or an aid, that realm or category that it would fall into must first be authorized. Or, in other words, expedients are simply the profitable options of generic authority.” (<http://www.ch-of-christ.beaverton.or.us/Auth7.html>)
- D. Now that we have had an explanation of expedients, let’s observe the idea of...

II. Expedients Excluded

- A. Roy Cogdill once made this statement, ““Men have sought to justify a multitude of things by the claim that they can be practiced as expediencies. The common conception seems to be that the end justifies the means and anything that will accomplish what WE SEEM to think to be good, whether it is authorized or not, is permissible” (*Walking By Faith. p. 18*).
 1. By looking at the above definitions of expedients (including the one in 1 Corinthians 6:12), we will quickly understand that all options are not expediencies.
 2. Expedients have no right to lay aside the authority of the scriptures. Therefore, there are some things which have been falsely labeled “expedients.”
- B. To help us understand what things can not be scriptural expedients, we will notice some things under this point, Expedients Excluded, which cannot truly be expedients. Something is NOT an expedient if...
 1. It is not Lawful
 - a. For a thing to be truly an expedient, it must first be lawful (authorized under generic authority).
 - b. For example, we are commanded to sing. An expedient we use to expedite (carry out) that command is a song book which provides us to words and music we are to sing. This is an aid, or expedient, because even though we use a song book, we are still JUST singing. We have not added another action to the command to sing. Therefore, we are within the authority of the scriptures. On the other hand, if we were to use a piano with our singing. We have added another action. The piano would therefore become an ADDITION rather than an AID. We have went beyond the authority of scriptures. The Bible says “sing,” but to that we have added “play.” Whereas, by using a song book, we have not added anything, for we are still ONLY singing.
 - c. Paul wrote, ““**ALL THINGS ARE LAWFUL FOR ME,**

BUT NOT ALL THINGS ARE PROFITABLE” (1 Cor. 6:12).

- 1) Paul stated that “all things are lawful for me,” but he was not teaching that he had the authority to practice anything sinful(see the context here 1 Cor. 6:9,10, 13).
 - 2) He was teaching that in the realm of things that were authorized (lawful), there were some things that could be practiced that were not specifically stated or condemned in the Bible. (He taught the same thing in 1 Corinthians 10:23 and Romans 14:14-20).
 - 3) For example, when Jesus commanded in the great commission to “Go,” He left it up to us to decide how to go. Therefore, we have the liberty to choose to go by train, plane, boat, bicycle, car, etc, etc. These things are lawful as expedients although none of them are specifically mentioned in the Bible.
- d. Uzzah no doubt thought it was profitable (expedient) to reach out and stop the ark from falling to the ground when the oxen stumbled (2 Samuel 6:3-7). The end result was good, that is, the sacred ark didn’t hit the dirty ground. Uzzah could have argued that the ends justifies the means. However, God didn’t see it that way, so Uzzah was struck dead for his transgression.
 - e. A certain practice is not justified by the things which it accomplishes; it is justified based on the fact that the Bible authorizes it. An expedient is not really an expedient at all if it does not fall within the realm of an authorized generic command.
2. Something is NOT expedient if...It causes another to stumble.
- a. Paul wrote, “Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God” (1 Corinthians 10:32) Please understand here that the word for “offense” means “to cause another to stumble.”
 - b. Again, Paul wrote, “lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak” (1 Corinthians 8:9).
 - c. I’ve heard of instances in which elders in a church had decided upon certain ways to do things (using scriptural expedients), and someone snuffed it out by saying, “If you do that I’ll be offended.” Does he mean by “offended” that his feelings will be hurt? If so, this is no reason for those elders to back down from their plan. If, on the other hand, the plan of the elders would hurt the

conscience of the brother, now there's good reason to hold off on the plans. I say "hold off" because there needs to be time to educate the brother on the fact that the actions planned are authorized. The church cannot be made to bow down to the weak minds of certain brethren. These weak brethren must be educated!

- d. For a biblical example of abstaining from something lawful for the sake of someone else's conscience is found in 1 Corinthians 10:23-33.

C. So far, in our lesson, we have seen...

1. ***Expedients Explained...***
2. ***Expedients Excluded.***
3. Finally, let's consider....

III. Expedients Exemplified

A. Considering our previous point, expedients are exemplified when they are lawful, and when they do not cause another to stumble (sin).

B. Before considering other things which exemplify expedients, it would be good to note that an expedient is NOT specified. If an expedient were specified, it would cease to be an expedient.

1. Expedients are simply an option of a generic command (As noted earlier). Paul wrote, "All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything" (1 Corinthians 6:12). Again, "Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble" (1 Corinthians 8:13). Paul's point is that eating meat was perfectly lawful. But, it was not expedient in all cases, although lawful. Again, expedients are options, not commands. And sometimes, there are options which are, although lawful, not helpful. For example, some brethren have divided the church over the number of cups the fruit of the vine is to be served in. One option is one cup. Another option is many cups. The problem came when brethren decided to press one option (one cup) as a command, thus splitting brethren.
2. Again, expedients are not specified. Remember, when God gets specific, it means our options are limited. For example, sprinkling and pouring are not options (expedients) for baptism. The Greek word for baptism means "immersion." Therefore, by sprinkling and pouring, folks are adding another KIND of action. Expedients for baptism would be what it took to expedite (carry out) the immersion. A man-made baptistery, a swimming pool, a lake, a pond, a river, a creek are all options, aids, or expedients for carrying out the command of baptism. Using any one of these, the action is not changed, only baptism is taking place.

C. An expedient is further exemplified when it edifies. I can't explain this any better than another brother has. So, I quote him here:

1. **“1 CORINTHIANS 10:23 “ALL THINGS ARE LAWFUL, BUT NOT ALL THINGS EDIFY”**. Remember, if something is truly an option, then: (a) We can do without it and still please God. (b) There are other options that might be more accepted by the congregation. (c) It is a sin to press an option to the point where it divides brethren. Unnecessary and selfish division is something that God hates (Proverbs 6:19; 1 Corinthians 1:10; Titus 3:10; Galatians 5:20). If God commands something, then that is what we must do, even if it causes division (Acts 5:29; Matthew 10:34-36). But, If something is just an aid or an option, then it is wrong to force it upon brethren and let it lead to a break in fellowship.” (<http://www.ch-of-christ.beaverton.or.us/Auth7.html>).

Conclusion:

- A. Remember, an expedient is something that must in the first place be lawful. It is simply an unspecified option of a generic command. Expedients must edify. It is a sin to press an option upon brethren to the point of causing them to stumble, or to split the church. An expedient is not something which promotes the idea of, “The ends justify the means.” An expedient must be lawful! This being so, if the means are not authorized, then the results of the action (the ends), regardless of how good they appear to be to man, are not good to God.
- B. In studying about expedients, we have seen...
 1. ***Expedients Explained...***
 2. ***Expedients Excluded...***
 3. ***Expedients Exemplified.***

STUDY QUESTIONS

Lesson Nine

1. Give a simple statement explaining what an expedient is.
2. Explain how expedients are connected with generic commands.
3. For an option to truly be an expedient, it must first be what?
4. When Paul wrote, “all things are lawful for me,” was he saying that even unauthorized practices were lawful? How do we know this? What was he teaching?
5. What does the word “offense” in 1 Corinthians 10:32 mean?
6. It seems that Uzzah did a “good” thing by keeping the sacred Ark of God from hitting the dirty ground. Why, then, did God strike him dead? (Read 2 Samuel 6:3-7 in connection with Numbers 4:15 for the answer)

7. Why are sprinkling and pouring not legitimate options (expedients) for carrying out the command of baptism? What would be some legitimate options (expedients) for carrying out this command?

8. The Bible does not teach that the ends justify the means, but that the means justify the ends. Explain this.

Lesson Ten

Acquiring & Applying Bible Authority

Silence of the Scriptures

Introduction:

- A. In our previous lesson, we studied the issue of expedients. We demonstrated that expedients are directly connected to generic commands. That is, an expedient is a profitable option of a generic command.
- B. We noticed in lesson eight that there are generic **and** specific commands in the Bible. Just as expedients are connected to generic commands, the *Silence of the Scriptures*, as we shall see in this lesson, has to do with specific commands.
- C. This lesson will consider the *Silence of the Scriptures*...
 1. **Defined...**
 2. **Demonstrated...**
 3. **Denied.**

I. Defining the Silence of the Scriptures

- A. On September 7, 1809, Thomas Campbell made the very controversial statement, "We speak where the Bible speaks, and are silent when the Bible is silent."
 1. Mr. Campbell wasn't expressing a new idea of his own invention.
 2. This idea had been expressed several centuries before he stated it.
 3. In fact, this idea, as we shall see, is clearly taught in the Bible.
- B. This statement, in a way, defines what we mean when we speak of the *Silence of the Scriptures*.
 1. Another way to define the silence of the scriptures is to illustrate it.
 2. If I have in my billfold a four bills; a twenty, a ten, a five, and a one, and I tell my son that he may go to my billfold and take the ten, does he understand me to mean that he is free to take the twenty and the five also? Of course not! Even though I did not specifically say, "you shall not take the twenty," or, "You shall not take the five," he understands that my silence restricts him from taking any bill other than the one I have specified.
 3. We use this type of reasoning every day of our lives. It is an intricate concept in our law books, our schools, our homes, and our work places.
 4. We recognize many books as being authoritative, but they would not be authoritative at all if we did not understand that silence on

a matter is restrictive!

- C. We can explain and define the idea behind the silence of the scriptures with this simple statement: When God specifies a thing, all other options are prohibited and therefore condemned.
 - 1. You can now see the direct connection between the silence of the scriptures and specific commands.
 - 2. The concept of the silence of the scriptures is clearly taught in the statement, “If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God” (1 Peter 4:11).
- D. Now that we have seen the *Silence of the Scriptures* **defined**, let’s consider the idea of...

II. Demonstrating the Silence of the Scriptures

- A. Many times in the Bible, the fact that God demands that we understand His silence on a matter to be prohibitive is demonstrated again and again.
- B. Jesus and His apostles made it clear that the scriptures were complete and that adding to them resulted in a break of fellowship between God and the one doing the adding.
 - 1. The New testament would be a complete and final revelation which contained “all truth” (John 16:13).
 - 2. The New Testament would provide “all things that pertain to life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3).
 - 3. The Bible claims that “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16,17).
 - 4. The Bible is a complete revelation. Therefore, we are forbidden to add to it, or take away from it (Revelation 22:18,19).
 - 5. These passages plainly teach that God’s silence on any matter is prohibitive, since He has given us all that we need to please Him.
 - 6. While these passages teach the concept of the silence of the scriptures, other passages demonstrate the concept.
- C. Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10:1-4) (Please read)
 - 1. We have referred to this incident already to teach a number of lessons about authority, but it also clearly demonstrates the concept of the silence of the scriptures.
 - 2. God had specified the source from which the fire was to be taken: From the altar (Numbers 16:46).
 - 3. These two priests clearly took the fire from another source, since it was “unauthorized fire” (English Standard Version).
 - 4. We are not told why they did this, nor are we told where they got their fire. They may have reasoned within themselves, “God did not specifically say ‘Thou shalt not take fire from another

source’.”

5. However, when God specified that the fire be taken from the altar, He did not have to give a thousands “Thou shalt nots.” When He told them were to get the fire, that prohibited any other source.
6. These two priests failure to respect God’s silence on the matter resulted in their violent execution!

D. Moses strikes the rock (Numbers 20:1-12) (Please read).

1. We come again to the incident of Moses striking the rock.
2. God had specifically told Moses to “Speak to the rock” (verse 8).
3. But, Moses struck the rock. Twice! (Verse 11).
4. Moses could have reasoned, “God never said “Thou shalt not strike the rock.” But, God didn’t have to! When he specified for Moses to speak to the rock, He didn’t have to give a thousand thou shalt nots in order to prohibit every other option. His silence on the matter of striking the rock was sufficient.
5. Moses’ failure to recognize the restrictive concept of the silence of God resulted in him being forbidden to enter into the promised land (verse 12).

(Note: It is interesting that on a previous occasion, under similar circumstances, Moses was commanded by God to strike a rock in order to get water for the people (Exodus 17:1-7). Some today reason that since God commanded mechanical instruments under Old Testament law, He wouldn’t mind us having it today although the New Testament nowhere mentions it. “If God wanted it then, He would want it now,” they reason. Could Moses not have used the same reasoning in Numbers 20? No! God said nothing on this occasion about striking the rock, and Moses was punished for doing so. Also notice here in Numbers 20 that when Moses struck the rock, the results were good. The rock gave forth water. However, the ends did not justify the means. Moses was still punished!).

E. Hebrews 7:11-14 (Please read).

1. The writer of Hebrews is arguing here that the Old Law had ended. His reasoning is that Christ is our High Priest. However, according to the old law, only those from the tribe of Levi could serve as priests. Therefore, since Christ is our high priest, and He was from the tribe of Judah, then the old law must no longer be in effect.
2. Notice the terminology he used in verse 14, “For it is evident that our Lord arose from Judah, of which tribe Moses spoke nothing concerning priesthood.”
3. Underscore the phrase, “Moses spoke nothing.” This speaks of the silence of the scriptures. God (through Moses) never said a word about the tribe of Judah in relation to the priesthood. He never said “Those from the tribe of Judah shall not serve as

priests.” However, the Jews understood God’s silence on the matter as being prohibitive. They understood that when God specified that the priests were to come from the tribe of Levi, no one from any other tribe may serve as a priest.

4. Because of its phraseology, this passage may be the clearest statement of the fact that when God specifies something, that is the only option, even though He didn’t give a thousand thou shalt not.
- F. Regarding the concept of the silence of the scriptures, we have seen it...
1. ***Defined...***
 2. ***Demonstrated...***
 3. Finally, let’s consider the idea of...

III. Denying the Silence of the Scriptures

- A. As we have seen above, the scriptures teach that the idea of the silence of the scriptures is: Where the Bible is silent we must be silent. We can only practice those things which the Lord authorized.
- B. Some, however, have perverted the true idea behind the silence of the scriptures. Their view states something like this: Where the Bible is silent, where God has not spoken, we are at liberty to act as we think best. That is, when God has not specifically condemned a thing, we are free to practice that thing.
- C. These two attitudes were involved in the division that occurred in the church in the 19th century.
 1. Those who went on calling themselves the church of Christ contended for the biblical concept of the silence of the scriptures. That is, when God specified a certain thing, all other options were prohibited even though He did not specifically give us a “Thou shalt not.”
 2. Those who became known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) contended for the other understanding of the silence of the scriptures mentioned above.
 3. They contended that since God did not specifically say “Thou shalt not use the mechanical instrument of music,” then we can use it. When God specified singing, this did not forbid the instrument (according to them). Again, Moses, Nadab and Abihu, and a host of other biblical characters could have made this same argument. But they were still punished!
- D. People clearly understand the concept that silence doesn’t give permission in all other realms of life. Yet they ignore it when it comes to the scriptures.
 1. Suppose I went to pick up my prescription for Previcid. The doctor had specifically prescribed Previcid. I noticed, however, upon receiving my medicine from the pharmacists, that he had added arsenic to the Previcid. I then protest by saying that the

doctor prescribed Previcid. Would it be sensible for the pharmacist to inform me that the doctor no-where stated specifically not to add arsenic to the prescription? How foolish! I would not go along with that reasoning, the doctor would not go along with that reasoning, and no court of law would go along with that reasoning should I take the arsenic and die! The doctor's specific instructions for Previcid prohibited any other type of drug, although he never specifically stated prohibitions for all other medicines.

2. If an average person purchases a certain product, and the warranty specifically states that should the product become defective he should take it to an authorized repairman. Does this "average" person understand the nature of silence being restrictive in this case? Of course! He understands that should he take the product to a repairman who is not authorized by the company to work on it, the warranty would be voided even though the warranty never specifically said, "Thou shalt not take this to an unauthorized repairmen."
 3. If an average person placed an order for a lawnmower from a catalogue, would he be upset if he also received a weed eater, a shovel, a rake, and a plow? Would he be upset if he were given a bill for these additional products? Yes! His order only gave the company permission to send the lawn mower. Even though he didn't tell them not to send the other items, they were expected to understand that his silence did not give them the authority to send them.
- E. All of these illustrations are common, everyday situations which occur on a regular basis in the lives of millions of people. And everyone gets it! Everyone understands that when someone specifies something, they don't have to ramble on endlessly about all the things their specific instructions excludes.
1. So, why is it that when some approach the Bible, they want to change the rules and ignore this common sense concept of the silence of the scriptures being restrictive?
 2. The answer is simple: They want to practice in religion the things which pleases themselves, because they are not satisfied with practicing only the things God has said pleases Him.
- F. Even those religions who have denied the proper concept of the silence of the scriptures turn right around and apply it in many of their beliefs and practices.
1. Those who practice baptism are still using water because the Bible said water. As far as I know, no one is baptizing anyone in fruit punch while arguing, "But God never said, 'Thou shalt not baptize in fruit punch'."
 2. Most religions (excluding some) who still partake of the Lord's Supper are still using unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine

because they recognized these as the emblems the Lord used when He instituted the Supper. They're not using hamburgers and Kool-Aid while arguing, "God never said 'Thou shalt not use hamburgers and Kool-Aid'."

3. Why can't they be consistent regarding other matters?
- G. In ending this section, let me share with you what I consider to be a wonderful statement regarding this matter, "*We need to realize that God doesn't need any advice, that the Bible, including the church, worship, and so on, doesn't need to be improved. Most importantly, we need to let God be God and tell us what He wants and how He wants to be worshipped, rather than wanting to do what makes us feel good and important.*" (Mark Dunagan/ Beaverton Church of Christ/ <http://www.ch-of-christ.beaverton.or.us/Auth4.html>).

Conclusion:

- A. In this lesson we have learned the true concept behind the silence of the scriptures. We have learned that in all other realms of life people realize that when someone gives specific instructions, all other options are forbidden even though not specifically mentioned as such. We have also learned that when it comes to God's word, the prohibitive nature of the silence of the scriptures is thrown out the window by the majority of religions. We have learned that they do this simply because they are not satisfied with God's way of doing things, so they do things which please them.
- B. In this lesson, we have seen the *Silence of the Scriptures*...
1. ***Defined...***
 2. ***Demonstrated...***
 3. ***Denied.***

6. Give and discuss at least two common, everyday situations which illustrates the fact that everyone understands the restrictive nature of silence.

1)

2)

7. Since God never specifically said, “Thou shalt not use the mechanical instrument of music to worship Me,” does this mean we are free to use them? If not, why?

8. If people clearly understand the prohibitive nature of silence in other realms of life, why do you suppose they ignore it when it comes to the Bible?

Lesson Eleven
Acquiring & Applying Bible Authority
Work of the Church

Introduction:

- A. Throughout this study, we have emphasized the essential need to recognize God's authority in anything and everything we practice in religion (Colossians 3:17). We have seen that being religious and worshipping isn't enough, but that it must be according to God's direction, or else it is vain and condemned (Matthew 7:21-23; Matthew 15:8,9). We have also studied the ways by which we obtain authority for our practices.
- B. In this lesson, and the next, we are going to learn briefly about the work of the church. We will learn from God's word the things God has authorized and enjoined the church to practice. In lesson 12, we will identify some of the ways in which the work of the church has been perverted; that is, some innovations which have been brought into the work of the church which are foreign to the New Testament scriptures.
- C. Before we learn about what the work of the church is, it would be good for us to understand what it is not.
 - 1. The work of the church is to be spiritual in nature, not sensual (Physical, gratifying to the body).
 - 2. The nature of the work of the church is to cater to the spiritual needs of one's soul. The work of the church is NOT to strive to appeal to the physical senses of man.
 - 3. It is a common practice among the mass majority of religions and "churches" to use devices such as "Family Life Centers," sports and recreation, dramatic performances, and even money in some cases, to attract people to their religion.
 - 4. But, was this God's intent and purpose for the Lord's church? As we shall see in this lesson and the next, It was Not!
 - 5. On one occasion, Jesus actually rebuked some crowds for following Him for the purpose of fulfilling their sensual needs and desires (John 6:26,27).
- D. Understanding that the work of the church is to be primarily spiritual in nature, lets go to the Bible, and see what work God has authorized and commanded the church to do. We will find that the work of the church involves...
 - 1. ***Fervently Evangelizing the Sinful.***
 - 2. ***Faithfully Edifying the Saved.***
 - 3. ***Financially Easing the Saints.***
- E. Lets study each of these responsibilities of the church in detail.
[The work of the church includes...]

I. Fervently Evangelizing the Sinful

- A. That is, the church is to be very active and diligent in trying to take the Gospel to the lost souls of the world.
- B. We can see this work enjoined upon the church.
- C. The Church is actually spoken of in two different ways in the New testament.

1. The **Universal** sense.
 2. The **Local** sense.
- D. Consider the following comparisons to see these two ways the church exists.
1. The **Universal** church is composed of all Christians everywhere, even those who have died (Hebrews 12:22-24, while the **Local** church is made up of Christians in one geographical location (e.g. The church at Corinth, The church of the Thessalonians, 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1).
 2. There is only one **universal** church (The church is called the body, Eph. 1:22,23. There is only one body, Eph, 4:4. Therefore, there is only one church). However, the Bible speaks of several different churches in the **local** sense. (e.g. “the churches of Christ, Rom. 16:16; the churches of Galatia, Gal. 1:2; The church at Corinth, 1 Cor. 1:2; the seven churches named in the Revelation, Rev. 1:20-3:22).
 3. One can enter the **universal** church only by being added by the Lord (Acts 2:41,47), whereas, one must join himself to a **local** church (Acts 9:26-28).
 4. The **universal** church has no earthly organization. The bible speaks nothing about an earthly headquarters for the church universal. Nor does it anywhere speak of the church being organized and active in the universal sense. On the other hand, the **Local** church is spoken of as having organization, as well as having work to do (Phil. 1:1; work to be discussed in this lesson).
 5. It isn't biblical to understand the universal church as being comprised of all local churches. It is biblical to understand the universal church as being comprised of all individual Christians. This is so because those in heaven are spoken of as being part of the church (in the universal sense). But, if they are in heaven, they can't be members of an earthly local church.
 6. There are many other things recorded in the Bible which differentiate between the universal church and the local church. I point these out only to demonstrate that there is a difference.
 7. It is important to remember that when one acts as an individual, he is acting as a part of the universal church. The universal church is not acting as a whole, only he is acting as a part of it. This means that he is acting on his own personal responsibilities to the Lord, without acting as a church in the local sense. For example, one may give money to a needy family from his own pocket and be acting individually as a part of the universal church. However, when the local church of which he is a member gives money from the treasury to help a needy brother, that is the local church in action. These are two different things! As we will see later on, the local church is not authorized to do everything the individual is authorized to do.
- E. As far as fervently evangelizing the sinful is concerned, both the local church, and the individual are authorized and commanded to do so.
1. “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints **for the work of ministry**, for the edifying of the body of Christ,” (Ephesians 4:11,12, NKJV, emphasis mine, MP).
 2. The “word of the Lord” (Gospel) is to be “sounded forth” by all local churches (1 Thessalonians 1:8).

3. Paul uses the term “sounded forth” to indicate that the church at Thessalonica had been communicating the Gospel in “every place.”
 4. This set forth an example for all churches to do the same (verse 7).
 5. Churches may sound forth the Gospel from the pulpit, tracts, bulletins, newspaper articles, radio programs, television, etc., etc.. Just as long as they are fulfilling their responsibility as a local church to communicate the gospel to the sinful who are lost.
 6. If the mission of Jesus was to “seek and to save that which is lost” (Luke 19:10), then this certainly should be the mission of His church.
- F. Although the purpose of this lesson is to focus on the work of the local church, we may quickly point out that Individuals, to one degree or another, are also to fervently evangelize the sinful lost of their community (e.g. friends, family, neighbors, co-workers, etc) (Acts 8:1-4; Hebrews 5:12).
- G. Churches which fail to fervently evangelize the sinful of the world are failing to do the work God gave the church to do.
- H. The work of the church includes...

1. ***Fervently Evangelizing the Sinful***

[The work of the church also includes...]

II. Faithfully Edifying the Saved

- A. Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:11,12, “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ***for the equipping of the saints*** for the work of ministry, for the ***edifying of the body of Christ,***” (NKJV, emphasis mine, MP).
1. The Greek word for “edifying” literally means to construct or to build up. It is used here in a figurative sense to indicate the spiritual building up of the saints, those saved members of the local church.
 2. Those who were set in the church to do this work are listed in verse eleven:
 - a) Apostles: These were present in the first century, but there are no apostles in the church today since no one could possibly meet the qualifications to serve as one (Acts 1:20-26; 1 Cor. 15:8).
 - b) Prophets: In the first century church, it’s members could not open up and read their nicely bound New Testaments like we can today, simply because the New Testament had not been fully revealed, recorded and confirmed. However, once the Gospel was completely revealed, confirmed and recorded, the need for the prophets was no longer present. Therefore, prophecies ceased when the perfect (complete) Gospel was revealed and recorded (1 Cor. 13:8-13).
 - c) Evangelists: An evangelist is simply one who preaches or spreads the Gospel. He can be biblically referred to as an evangelist (Acts 21:8), a preacher (1 Timothy 2:7; 2 Timothy 4:2, “Preach the word.”), or a minister (2 Timothy 4:5 where Paul told Timothy to “do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ***ministry***”, emphasis mine MP). The church is authorized to pay an evangelist to work among them in preaching and teaching the word for the purpose of edifying them (that local church) (1 Corinthians 9:1-18). Although there are no apostles or prophets today, there should certainly be evangelists.

- d) Pastors: The Greek word translated “pastor” is also translated “shepherd.” They are one and the same. The word means “To feed.” Pastors (shepherds), elders, and bishops (overseers) are all words which refer to the same office in the Lord’s church (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1,2). Although there are no apostles or prophets today, men can certainly serve as elders so long as they first meet the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. As this passage does, other passages teach that part of the responsibility of being a pastor is to build up the church by teaching them the truth (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2).
 - e) Teachers: A teacher is anyone who teaches the Gospel, either from the pulpit or in an organized Bible class, or house to house. Obviously, elders and evangelist are to be able to teach the word(1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9; 2 Timothy 2:24; 4:2). Often, men who are not serving as evangelists or elders teach Bible classes and preach on occasion. This is certainly acceptable and should even be encouraged, so long as they preach and teach nothing but the oracles(Sacred Writings) of God (1 Peter 4:11).
- B. Ephesians 4:11,12 make it clear that part of the work of the local church is to faithfully edify the saved among it’s own members. Those churches which fail to carry out this work will stand condemned before God as an unfaithful church.
- C. The work of the church is to...
1. ***Fervently Evangelize the Sinful.***
 2. ***Faithfully Edify the Saved.***
 3. Note that in fulfilling these two categories of work, the church is fulfilling it’s responsibility to be the “Pillar and ground of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15).
- [The work of the church can also include...]

III. Financially Easing the Saints

- A. I say that the work of the church **CAN** include financially easing the saints, because this seems to be a secondary work in which the church is authorized to be involved. As we have pointed out above, the church, or the kingdom, was to be spiritual in nature (John 18:36). It’s primary work, therefore, is to be spiritual in nature (i.e. edifying the saints, seeking the lost). However, in the Bible, emergency situations arose where saints were suffering from severe famine and needed assistance in acquiring basic physical needs. Local churches were clearly authorized, and encouraged many times to help with these needs.
- B. Notice some passages where local churches aided saints in other places with acquiring physical needs.
1. Acts 11:29, “Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief **to the brethren** dwelling in Judea.” (NKJV)
 - a) This work seemed to be done by the church at Antioch (vs. 27-30).
 2. Romans 15:25-28, “But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to the **saints**. For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain ***contribution for the poor among the saints*** who are in Jerusalem. It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if

the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things. Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain.” (NKJV)

3. 1 Corinthians 16:1-4, “Now concerning the **collection for the saints**, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem. But if it is fitting that I go also, they will go with me.” (NKJV).
 4. Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-5. Verse 4 says, “Imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the **ministering to the saints**.” (NKJV)
 5. Read 2 Corinthians 9:1-5. Verse 1 says, “Now concerning the **ministering to the saints**, it is superfluous for me to write to you;” (NKJV)
- C. All of the emphasis in the passages above were added by me. From all of these passages we learn two important lessons:
1. Churches are authorized to help needy brethren in other locations meet their physical needs.
 2. The gifts were only for the saints. The passages above make it clear that the gifts were for the “brethren,” “saints,” “saints,” “saints,” “saints,” “saints.”
- D. This provides the authority for a local church to work in aiding needy SAINTS during emergency situations. 1 Timothy 5:3-16 clearly authorizes the church to provide regular assistance to needy widows. The passage, however, places two prerequisites upon this type of aid:
1. They must be widows indeed, meeting specific qualifications (Verses 5-14). (Notice that a widow indeed, who can be helped by the church, must be one who is a child of God. Verse 5).
 2. They(the widows) must be in a situation where they have no relatives who can aid them. (Verses 4, 8, 16).

Conclusion:

- A. From this lesson, we have learned about the work the church is authorized to do. This work involves...
 1. **Fervently Evangelizing the Sinful.**
 2. **Faithfully Edifying the Saved.**
 3. **Financially Easing the Saints.**
- B. If one wants to categorize the worship of the church among part of the work it is to do, then this, too, would be authorized under the heading of the work of the church. This would include only those acts authorized by God’s word:
 1. **SINGING:** Ephesians 5:18,19; Colossians 3:16
 2. **PREACHING/TEACHING:** Acts 2:42; Ephesians 4:11,12
 3. **PRAYING:** Acts 2:42; Acts 12:5
 4. **LORD’S SUPPER:** 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Acts 20:7
 5. **GIVING:** 1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 9:6,7
- C. In our next lesson, we will study briefly some of the ways in which man has perverted the work God has authorized the church to do.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Lesson Eleven

1. Briefly explain what the nature of the work of the church is and is not. (See John 18:36; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:5).

2. What do I mean when I say that the church is to be fervently evangelizing the sinful?

3. The church is spoken of in two senses in the New Testament. List the two senses, and briefly describe some differences between them.

4. Name and read a passage which clearly teaches that the church is to “sound forth” the Gospel.

5. What does the word “edify” literally mean, and how did Paul use it in Ephesians 4:11,12?

6. List and briefly describe those who were set up in the church for the purpose of faithfully edifying the saints.
 - 1)

 - 2)

 - 3)

- 4)
- 5)
7. Churches sometimes sent aid to other people. Besides being needy, those who were aided were always described as being what?
8. What does 1 Timothy 5:3-16 authorize churches to do?
9. Did 1 Timothy 5:3-16 authorize churches to aid widows who were not saints?
10. Among the passages studied in this lesson, does any of them authorize the church to use money from its treasury to aid anyone who is not a Christian? If not, can you think of a passage which authorizes a church to aid a non-Christian from its treasury?

Lesson Twelve
Acquiring & Applying Bible Authority
Perverting the Work of the Church

Introduction:

- A. In our last lesson, we briefly discussed the work God gave to the church to accomplish.
 - 1. We have been discussing the principle of authority in this study.
 - 2. We discussed the work which God has authorized the church to do, and how the church is to accomplish these things.
- B. In this lesson, we want to discuss some of the ways in which man has perverted the work which God has given the church to do.
- C. In studying the perversion of the work of the church, we want to discuss three things:
 - 1. ***The Ignorance of Man.***
 - 2. ***The Institutions of Man.***
 - 3. ***The Innovations of Man.***

[First, lets consider the Ignorance of Man...]

I. The Ignorance of Man

- A. The Bible teaches us that ignorance of God's word is destructive.
 - 1. "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children." Hosea 4:6 (NKJV)
 - 2. Sadly, there are many who, for one reason or another, has rejected the knowledge God has given us regarding the work of the church.
 - 3. They have become guilty of add to the scriptures by putting work upon the church which God spoke nothing about.
 - 4. They have spoken where God has not spoken (1 Peter 4:11).
 - 5. They have transgressed the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9).
 - 6. They are practicing what seems to them to be good, but they are doing so without a word from the law of Christ, therefore, they are engaging in lawlessness (Matthew 7:21-23).
 - 7. Again, the above passage condemns those who are ignorant about what God has authorized.
- B. Many of the things we hear from those who are trying to justify the innovations and institutions of men discussed in this lesson include:
 - 1. "Look at all of the good it does."
 - 2. "The ends justify the means."
 - 3. "We practice other things which we have no authority for."
 - 4. "Our parents and grandparents practiced these things, therefore,

they are condemned if these things are wrong.”

- C. Naturally, none of these things can nullify what God’s word has taught.
 - 1. There are many things which seem good to man, but they bring destruction simply because they are not authorized (Proverbs 14:12).
 - 2. We have seen in a previous lesson that the ends do not justify the means, the means justify the ends.
 - 3. If we practice other things for which we have no authority, the answer is not to practice even more authorized things, but to stop practicing the unauthorized things.
 - 4. If our parents and grandparents practiced unauthorized things, this is what condemned them. Whether or not we practice these things in no way affects their eternal destiny. If they are wrong, they are wrong. If our parents or grandparents are condemned for practicing unauthorized things, I can assure you that they are begging Abraham to send someone back to warn their children and grandchildren (Luke 16:27-31).
- C. We can see from Hosea 4:11 that ignorance of God’s word is no excuse. Especially the kind of ignorance which stems from intentional refusal to see it God’s way.
- D. In studying the perversion of the work of the church, we see...
 - 1. ***The Ignorance of Man.***

[Now, let us consider...]

II. The Institutions of Man

- A. In our last lesson, we learned that the church is to preach the Gospel, and to care for it’s own needy saints.
 - 1. The work of the church includes...
 - a) Fervently Evangelizing the Sinful...
 - b) Faithfully Edifying the Saints...
 - c) And, Financially Easing the Saints.
 - 2. Sadly, man, in his wisdom, has decided that the church is not capable of doing this work which God has commissioned it to do, therefore, man-made, human institutions have been established to do the work for the church.
- B. The church is to fervently evangelize the sinful. That is, the church is to “sound forth” the Gospel to the lost sinners of the world for the purpose of persuading them to obey the Gospel and be saved.
 - 1. This work can be done in various authorized ways.
 - a) Pulpit preaching.
 - b) Tracts and bulletins.
 - c) Radio and newspapers.
 - d) Door to door evangelizing, etc..
 - 2. Men through the ages, however, have established institutions known as missionary societies to supplement this work which the church is supposed to accomplish.

3. A missionary society is a human institution established for the purpose of spreading the gospel through religious tracts, printed materials and Gospel preachers which they pay and send out to various places. It receives its funds from various different churches. The money is then placed into the organization's treasury and used to run the society.
 4. The missionary society first established from the "restoration brethren" was the American Christian Missionary Society (1849). Its first president was Alexander Campbell who once opposed such institutions.
 5. The World Christian Broadcasting Corp. (1982) is a more recent missionary Society.
 6. Following is a list of things which make this institution an unauthorized venture.
 - a) The Bible nowhere authorizes such an institution. The Bible tells us that the church is to do this very work, not a man-made institution (See Lesson eleven). This should be enough to exclude the missionary society, but, consider some other violations...
 - b) The very existence of a missionary society speaks against the capability of God's institution (the church) to do the work God gave it to do. Those who send money to a missionary society are trying to counsel God.
 7. Some argue that the missionary society is just an expedient used to expedite the command to "sound forth" the Gospel. Remember, before something can be an expedient, it must first be lawful. Can someone please produce a scripture which authorizes the church to establish and financially support another institution to spread the gospel.
 8. The Bible clearly shows us that the church is perfectly capable of carrying out the work God gave it to do. We can not read of the apostles, or any first century Christians using a missionary society to spread the Gospel.
- C. We learned from lesson eleven that the church is to faithfully edify the saved. The church is perfectly capable of equipping and training its members in the Gospel, and in how to spread the Gospel. Sadly, however, men have impeached the church as not being able to do this work alone by "hiring" secular schools to do the work for them. Many churches send money from their treasuries to support colleges. In turn, these colleges educate their preachers in how to study, learn, teach, and preach the Gospel. The very work God gave the church to do (Ephesians 4:11,2).
1. The following schools are colleges used for the above purposes: Pepperdine College (now Pepperdine University), Abilene Christian College (now Abilene Christian University), Freed-Hardeman College (now Freed-Hardeman University), David

- Lipscomb College (now Lipscomb University), Harding College (now Harding University), Tennessee Bible College, and others.
2. Churches sending funds to these man-made institutions reason that the colleges teach the word of God, the word of God edifies, therefore, the college is a profitable means (expedient) of edifying the brethren.
 3. In lesson eleven, we showed how the church was to edify it's own members (Ephesians 4:11,12). Therefore, regardless of how much "good" these colleges appear to be doing, they are man-made institutions set up to do the work God gave the church to do?
 4. Ephesians 4:11 lists those God set up in the church to do the edifying (See lesson 11, Pg. 75,76). Guess what? Colleges are not in the list! Regarding colleges being paid to do this work for the church, God is silent!! Therefore, they can not be expedients.
- D. Another institution of man is the church supported orphan home. I cal this an institution of man simply because I can find no such institution on the pages of the New Testament.
1. In order to get the Orphan homes into the church budgets, many breaches of Scripture were necessary:
 - a) The church giving money, and supplying for the needs of those who are not Christians. We have already noted in the previous lesson that the only examples we have consist of churches helping only those who were, "saints." Therefore, we have no authority to give church funds to help non-Christian orphans.
 - b) Using passages which apply to the responsibility of the individual and applying them to the local church. Galatians 6:10 is often said to apply to the action of the local church. A simple reading of the context will make it clear that the verse is referring to what the individual is to do. Notice the language that precedes verse 10: (6:1 "yourself,you"; 6:2 "one another's"; 6:3 "anyone thinks he is.."; 6:4 "let each one"; 6:5 "each one shall bear his own load"; 6:6 "let the one"; 6:7 "whatever a man"; 6:8 "For the one". When verse 10 says "we," it's speaking of individuals rather than congregations. Considering the fact that Paul includes himself in verses 9 and 10, and that he was not part of the local church to which he was writing, we must conclude that Paul was speaking of individual responsibilities. James 1:27 is another passage said to apply to the church rather than the individual. All one has to do is read the verse and see that it refers to the individual's responsibility. Note the phrase, "and to keep oneself unspotted from the world."

2. Some recognize these passages to be referring to the individual rather than the work of the church. However, they then argue that the church is authorized to do anything the individual is authorized to do. The following thoughts show this to be invalid reasoning.
 - a) 1 Timothy 5:3-16 clearly teaches that whenever widows have relatives to care for them, the church is not to be charged (Verse 16). This clearly demonstrates that the church is not authorized to do anything the individual can do. Remember from our last lesson, there is a difference between individual action and church action.
 - b) If the church can do anything the individual can do, Can the church get married, run for political office, go into business, etc, etc..???
3. Often, those of us who do not believe it to be scriptural for the church to send funds to orphan homes have been called orphan haters. Naturally, this simply plays on human emotions and fails to show Bible authority for the homes. Whether I loved orphans or hated them, this would still not prove scriptural authority for the church funding of a man-made institution. I fail to understand how the loving thing to do to an orphan is to sentence him to be raised in a home under the supervision of “employees” who punch a time clock, rather than one of the members of the church adopting him into a real home with real loving parents. I have a personal friend who approached one of these homes and informed them that he had found enough families to adopt their orphan home empty. Each child would have a real home with a real Christian mommy and daddy. Guess what? He was refused! And we are said to be the orphan haters!
- E. These three institutions, the missionary society, the church funded college, and the church funded orphan home are all man-made institutions which have no biblical authority to exist! Therefore, those who support such things under the guise of doing good works will be condemned by the Lord for practicing “lawlessness” (Matthew 7:21-23).
- F. Concerning the Perversion of church work, we have seen...
 1. ***The Ignorance of Man...***
 2. ***The Institutions of Man...***

[Now, let us consider...]

III. The Innovations of Man

- A. There are several man-made innovations which have been added to the Lord's church over the last several decades. None of which have authority from God.
- B. Many of these innovations fall under the heading of the social Gospel. The social gospel is any means by which people are attracted to the

church by tactics which appeal to the senses of man. Entertainment, food, and sporting activities.

1. Softball and other sports teams have been popular for many years among “churches of Christ.”
 - a) It is argued that folks are drawn to the church because they want to play on the softball team. They are then exposed indirectly to the Gospel and converted. Therefore, the ends justify the means. This works fine until another church offers them a better position on their team. Or they want to go to a church who’s team has a better winning record. I have actually known people who change churches for these very reasons.
 - b) The Bible only authorizes the church to use the Gospel to save souls (Romans 1:16). Sports teams are foreign to the New testament church.
2. Fellowship halls, or Family Life Centers are very popular devices used by churches to attract the crowds.
 - a) It is not the responsibility of the church to fulfill peoples physical hunger. In fact, Paul said, “What! Have you not houses to eat and drink in (1 Corinthians 11:22)?
 - b) Again Paul wrote, “For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Romans 14:17).
 - c) For many years faithful preachers have said that if you hot dog them into the church, another church will hamburger them out. This statement has actually proven true in many cases.
- C. Another innovation of man is the sponsoring church arrangement. In this arrangement, many churches send funds to one church. This church then oversees these funds, and distributes them to different Gospel preachers in various places. In many cases, the elders of the sponsoring church even provides oversight of the church(es) they are sending funds to.
 1. This type of organization is foreign to the New testament.
 2. In the Bible, preachers who received money from other churches received the money directly from the church supporting them.
 3. Paul wrote, “I robbed other churches” (2 Corinthians 11:8). He did not say he robbed a sponsoring church.
 4. When the church at Philippi aided Paul, the money was sent directly to him, not through some sponsoring church (Phil. 4:16).
 5. The sponsoring church set-up violates the principle taught in 1 Peter 5:1-4 of elders being restricted to the oversight of only congregation among them. In the sponsoring church arrangement, the elders of the sponsoring church have oversight of the funds of other churches, as well as oversight

over the churches to which they are sending funds (in some cases).

6. The sponsoring is really nothing more than a missionary society in which one church receives funds from several other churches, then distributes those funds to various preachers in other places. The churches sending the money to the sponsoring generally have no control or input as to where the money is being sent, nor to whom.

Conclusion:

- A. This lesson has been a bit lengthier than the others in this study. Also, we have only touched the hem of the garment when it comes to the perversion of church work. This is a sad testimony to the fact that men insist upon trying to improve upon the things God has authorized in His word. Furthermore, the items we covered were only discussed briefly. Much more could be said on each issue.
- B. Regarding the perversion of the work of the church, we have seen...
 1. ***The Ignorance of Man.***
 2. ***The Institutions of Man.***
 3. ***The Innovations of Man.***
- C. May we always be a church that is content and thrilled to do only the things authorized in God's word, and in the ways which God has directed they be done.

STUDY QUESTIONS

Lesson Twelve

1. What are some of the phrases people use to try and justify the innovations and institutions of men?
2. What is a missionary society? Can we read anything in the Bible about a church funded missionary society preaching the Gospel to the world?
3. Some churches send money to help fund colleges. How do they justify this practice? In Ephesians 4:11, God gave a list of those He set in the church to edify it. Are man-made institutions such as colleges found in this list?
4. Is there a precept, a precedent, or a necessary inference in the New Testament which authorizes a church to give money out of it's treasury to aid those who are not Christians?
5. Are the two passages found in Galatians 6:10 and James 1:27 referring to individual or church responsibilities? Explain.
6. There are some who recognize that the above passages are referring to

SCRIPTURAL AUTHORITY

PRECEPT EXAMPLE NECESSARY INFERENCE

GENERIC	AIDS (EXPEDIENTS)	SPECIFIC	ADDITIONS
Build Ark (Gen. 6:14)	Tools required to do the work	“Gopher wood” Genesis 6:14	Different kinds of wood (Oak, Elm, Pine, Poplar)
Lord’s Supper (1 Cor. 11:23-26; Luke 22:19)	Time of day Containers (plastic, number, glass, etc.) Location (building, etc)	First day of week (Acts 20:7) Unleavened bread/fruit of the vine (Luke 22:1,18) “Do This in remembrance of me” (1 Cor. 11:23-26)	Another Day (Monday, Thursday) Other emblems (cake, Kool-aid, etc.)
Baptism (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16)	River, creek, Baptistry	Immersion, burial (Romans 6:4; Col. 2:12)	Any other kind of action (Sprinkling, pouring, etc.)
Singing (Ephesians 5:19)	Song Books, memorization, overhead projector	“Sing” (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16)	Another kind of music (Humming, Whistling, Mechanical Instrument)
Elders Oversee, feed (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4)	Business Meetings Organized classes Written Material	“Feed flock among you.” (1 Pet. 5:2,3)	Councils, Conventions, sponsoring churches, or any other kind of organizational arrangement.
Church funding Give (1 Corinthians 16:1,2)	Cash, Check, Money order	First Day of the week (1 Cor. 16:1,2)	Cake walks, pie sales, car washes, or any other means of funding the church
Teach “sound Forth” 1 Thess. 1:8	Bible classes, Tracts, Radio Programs, News Paper articles, Websites, Gospel Meetings, etc. .	“Word of the Lord”	Math, Science, English, Chemistry, etc..

