

Bible Authority: In a Nutshell – Part 1

By Michael Wright

I. Consider The Restoration Principle, which really has to do with one's spiritual attitude.

True people of God will desire to think, speak, practice, teach and worship as those followers of Christ did in the first century. Bible followers will have a reverential attitude toward God, as the Bible says:

- "God is **GREATLY** to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in **REVERENCE**, of all them that are about him." ([Psalm 89:7](#))
- "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may **SERVE** God acceptably with **REVERENCE** and godly **FEAR**:" ([Heb.12:28](#))
- "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them **REVERENCE**: shall we not much rather be in **SUBJECTION** unto the Father of spirits, and **LIVE**?" ([Heb.12:9](#))

Followers of Christ realize the importance of God's thought's or His printed Words, over and beyond the thought's or words of men, as the Bible says:

- "For **My Thoughts** are **not** your thoughts, **Neither** are your ways **My Ways**, saith 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." ([Isa.55:8-9](#))
- "If we yet **seek** to please men, **rather** than God, we should **not** be the servants of Christ" ([Gal.1:10](#))
- "We **OUGHT** to obey God, **RATHER** than men" ([Acts 5:29](#))

Christians need to remember that It is the Word of God

- that is a **LAMP** and **LIGHT** unto our feet and path ([Psalm 119:105](#)) ...not the words of men!
- It is the Word of God that one **REASONS** from ([Acts 17:2](#)) ...not the words of men!
- It is the Word of God where one gets **UNDERSTANDING** ([Psalm 119:104](#)) ...not the words of men!
- It is the "**Word** of God that is **QUICK** and **POWERFUL** and **SHARPER** than any two-edged sword" ([Heb.4:12](#)); ...not the words of men!
- It is the Word of God that **PRICKS** one in the heart ([Acts 2:37](#)); ...not the words of men!
- God's Word is "**God's POWER**" to save (Read [Rom.1:14-16](#); [1Cor.15:1-4](#); [Jms.1:21](#)). ...not the words of men!
- It is the **hearing** of the **Word** of God, that **Faith comes** ([Rom.10:17](#)); ...not the words of men!
- It is the Word of God that **ESTABLISHES** one in the faith ([Acts 16:5](#)); ...not the words of men!
- It is the Word of God that is **PROFITABLE** ([2Tim.3:16](#)) ...not the words of men!
- It is the Word of God that throughly or thoroughly **FURNISHES** ([2Tim.3:17](#)) ...not the words of men!
- It is the Word of God that **BUILDS** ([Jude 1:20](#); [Col.2:7](#)); ...not the words of men!
- It is the Word of God that causes one to **GROW** ([2Pet.3:18](#); [Col.1:10](#)); ...not the words of men!
- It is the Word of God that gives an **INHERITANCE** ([Acts 20:32](#)); ...not the words of men!
- "Man shall... **LIVE** by... every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" ([Matt.4:4](#)) ...not the words of men!
- When the word of God **INCREASED**; (not the words of men) the number of the disciples **MULTIPLIED** ([Acts 6:7](#)).

The Bible says,

- "According as his **DIVINE** power hath **GIVEN** unto us **ALL** things that **PERTAIN** unto life and godliness, **THROUGH** the knowledge of him that hath **CALLED** us to glory and virtue: Whereby are **GIVEN** unto us **EXCEEDING** great and **PRECIOUS** promises: that by these ye might be **PARTAKERS** of the **DIVINE** nature, having **ESCAPED** the corruption that is **IN** the world **THROUGH** lust." ([2Pet.1:3-4](#)) ...and so it is the Word of God that gives us all things, not the words of men! – "the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man... to direct his steps." ([Jer.10:23](#)).

The Bible teaches that,

- One can't follow after the great multitudes, as most will perish ([Matt.7:13-14](#));
- One can't follow after Mama, Daddy, son or daughter or the closest of family members ([Matt.10:37](#); [Lk.14:26-27](#));
- One can't follow what a preacher says, just because he says it ([Gal.1:6-9](#));
- One can't follow after their own thoughts or what one thinks ([Isa.55:8-9](#));
- One can't do that which seems right ([Prov.14:12](#));
- One can't add to nor take away from the Words of God ([Rev.22:18-19](#); [Deut.4:2](#); [Prov.30:6](#)).

One gospel preacher Richard Fox, very wisely stated something similar to this:

Good stewardship demands, that one choose that **Bible way**, that is **RIGHT** and can**NOT** be **wrong**.

- That is to say, one should choose that safe way,
- One should choose that way that is unquestionably and absolutely correct (scripturally speaking).
- One should **NOT** choose that way that **MIGHT** be right or that way that **MIGHT** be wrong, but rather, one should choose that way that **IS** Right and can**NOT** be wrong!
- One should **"PROVE all things, HOLD fast that which is GOOD"** ([1Thess.5:21](#)), and don't accept any and every wind of doctrine (or teaching), that comes along. ([Eph.4:14](#))

Every christian's attitude toward the gospel, **SHOULD** be:

- **"As the hart panteth AFTER the water brooks, so panteth my soul AFTER thee, O God. My soul THIRSTETH for GOD, for the LIVING God: when shall I COME and APPEAR before God"** ([Psalm 42:1-2](#)).
- **"How LOVE, I thy LAW! It is my meditation ALL the day"** ([Psalm 119:97](#)).
- **"How sweet are Thy WORDS unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than HONEY to my mouth!"** ([Psalm 119:103](#)).
- **"Thy WORDS were found, and I did EAT them; and thy WORD was unto me, the JOY and REJOICING of mine heart"** ([Jer.15:16](#)).
- **"O earth, earth, earth, HEAR the word of the LORD"** ([Jer.22:29](#)).

Like the attitude of Ezra, christians will:

- **"PREPARE... (their) heart to SEEK the law of the LORD, and to DO it, and to TEACH..."** ([Ezra 7:10](#)).

With a restoration and reverent attitude, christians need to go forward, by going back to the Bible.

- They will insist on speaking as the **BIBLE** speaks ([1Pet.4:11](#); [Rom.4:3](#)).
- They will insist on being silent where the **BIBLE** is silent ([Lev.10:1-2](#); [Deut.17:3](#); [Heb.7:14](#)).
- They will insist on doing **BIBLE** things in **BIBLE** ways ([Jer.6:16](#); [1Pet.2:21](#); [Jn.13:15](#); [Phil.4:9](#); [Heb.8:5](#)).
- They will insist on calling **BIBLE** things by **BIBLE** names ([Col.3:17](#); [Acts 4:12](#));
 - and christians are called by and through the teachings of the gospel ([2Thess.2:14](#))
 - and not by their own "think so's" ([Isa.55:8-9](#)) or by what "seems" right ([Prov.14:12](#)).
- In short, christians should believe in plain **BIBLE** teaching and preaching on all religious and moral matters ([2Tim.4:2](#)).
- True people of God must have Bible Authority for all things done in the name of religion ([Col.3:17](#); [2Jn.1:9](#)).

Patriotic, conservative constitutionalist or those that appreciate the heritage of the founding fathers for this country, can get bent out of shape when liberal politicians make or attempt to make laws that go beyond or are in total opposition of the U.S. Constitution and rightly so. When it comes to the spiritual things that belong to God ([Mark 12:17](#)), are we as concerned? Some of those same people that are interested and concerned about going beyond the U.S. Constitution, are not at all concerned about going beyond the Bible or being in total opposition of those things taught from the Word of God. Some of these same individuals care more about offending friends and family, than offending God. God clearly says we are to love Him and His Truth more than brethren, both physical and spiritual (Read [Matt.22:37-40](#); [Matt.10:37](#); [Lk.14:26,27,33](#); [Matt.6:33](#)). Without a doubt, one of the most important Bible subjects that anyone could ever consider, is understanding how principles of Bible Authority, are established. It is our hope and prayer that Bible believing folks would be interested in how they can and should have a restoration or grassroots, conservative attitude in handling or dealing with the Word of God, in all religious matters. It is also our hope that once a person learns that they are in opposition to God's Word, they will be honest enough to do something about it – they will repent, which is a change of mind that leads to a change in action ([Matt.21:28-30](#)) – they will change their religious practices to be in harmony with God's Word, so that they can have God ([2Jn.1:9](#)).

II. Consider The Authority Principle.

The kindred of the high priest at Jerusalem ([Acts 4:6](#)), once asked

- “By what **POWER** (or by what name) **have ye done this?**” ([Acts 4:7](#)).

In other words, “by what **AUTHORITY**”, have ye done this? All should ask this same question for everything done as individual christians and for any practice or activity engaged in by the collected assembled saints (that is the local church). One should realize and recognize that,

- “**All power** (or authority) **is given unto** (Christ) **in heaven and in earth.** ([Matt.28:18](#)).

The Bible teaches us to,

- “Let the **WORD** of Christ **DWELL** in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye DO in word (that is teaching) or deed, (that is practice) do **ALL** in the name of the Lord Jesus (that is, by the authority of the Lord Jesus), giving thanks to God and the Father by Him” ([Col.3:16-17](#)).

God the Father, in reference to Christ Jesus, gave **SPECIFIC instructions** for His children to “Hear ye HIM” ([Matt.17:5](#)), as opposed to Moses or Elijah ([Matt.17:4](#)).

- “God... hath in these last days (that is the era of Christ vs. the Mosaical era) spoken unto us BY His Son, whom He hath appointed HEIR of ALL things, BY whom also, He **MADE** the worlds;” ([Heb.1:1-2](#)).

Jesus is described in the Bible as our,

- **SHEPHERD** ([Jn.10:11](#)),
- **CAPTAIN** ([Heb.2:10](#)),
- **HEAD** ([Eph.5:23](#)),
- **KING & LORD** ([1Tim.6:15](#)),
- And our **CREATOR** ([1Pet.4:19](#); [Jn.1:1,14](#)).

So when God speaks, instructs or gives a direct statement or command, one **MUST** take heed or **DO** what he says. Because **He** has **ALL** authority ([Matt.28:18](#)) – We **MUST** obey ([Heb.5:9](#)).

III. Consider The Example Or Pattern Principle – Including God’s Silence

We must make **ALL** things according to the **PATTERN** ([Heb.8:5](#)).

The LORD saith,

- “**STAND** ye in the ways, and **SEE**, and **ASK** for the **OLD** paths, where is the **GOOD** way, and **WALK** therein, and ye shall **FIND** rest for your **SOULS**” ([Jer.6:16](#)).
- “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also **SUFFERED** for us, leaving us an **EXAMPLE**, that ye should **FOLLOW** His steps:” ([1Pet.2:21](#)).
- “Those things, which ye have both **LEARNED**, and **RECEIVED**, and **HEARD**, and **SEEN** in me, **DO**: and the **God** of peace shall be **WITH** you” ([Phil.4:9](#)).

Along with the pattern principle, we can learn a principle regarding God's silence.

In the past, some did what God did **NOT** specifically command them – that is, God was **SILENT** on the matter:

In [Leviticus 10:1](#) we read:

- “Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he **COMMANDED** them **NOT**.” That is, God was **SILENT** on the matter. As a result of doing what God “commanded them not”, The Bible says: “There went out **FIRE** from the LORD, and **DEVOURED** them, and they **DIED** before the LORD” ([Lev.10:2](#)).

The Bible reveals that some

- “hath gone and served **OTHER** gods, and **WORSHIPPED** them, either the sun, or moon, or any of the host of heaven, which **I have NOT commanded**” – that is, God was **SILENT** on the matter ([Deut.17:3](#)).

The Bible tells us that the Levite tribe was the priestly tribe. The Bible also said,

- “it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake **NOTHING** concerning priesthood.” ([Heb.7:14](#)) – So therefore, Jesus could not be a priest while on this earth. What did the Bible say about the tribe of Juda being a priestly tribe? The Bible “spake **NOTHING**” – that is God was **SILENT** on the matter.

Gospel preacher, Richard Fox said this, “**the SILENCE of the scriptures does not authorize anything**” and how true that is. In other words, one can't find authority to do anything by saying, “The Bible doesn't say **NOT** to do this or that”. Please don't ever forget that one has an obligation to,

- “**PROVE** all things, **HOLD fast** that which is **GOOD**” ([1Thess.5:21](#)).
- We need to put our “**APPROVAL** (on the) things that are **EXCELLENT**” ([Phil.1:10](#)).

We need to

- “**RECEIVE** the word with all **READINESS** of mind, and **SEARCH** the scriptures **DAILY**, (to prove or determine) whether those things were so.” ([Acts 17:11](#)). “**STUDY** to shew thyself approved unto **God**, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **RIGHTLY** dividing (or handling aright) the **WORD** of Truth” ([2Tim.2:15](#)).
- We cannot go “above (or beyond) that which is written” ([1Cor.4:6](#)).
- “The scripture(s) cannot be broken (or violated)” ([John 10:35](#)).
- We must “observe **ALL** things” ([Matt.28:20](#)).

IV. Consider The Principle Of Necessary Inference Or Implication, Which Is An Inescapable Conclusion

Notice this example in nature:

- If one exits their home and notices that there is ice on their car windshield, one can necessarily reason, infer, imply, prove or conclude, that the temperature dropped below 32 degrees.

In [Acts chapter 8 and verse 5](#), the Bible says:

- “Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached **CHRIST** unto them.”

In [Acts chapter 8 and verse 12](#), the Bible says:

- “when they believed Philip **PREACHING** the things concerning the **KINGDOM** of God (that is, the church of God), and the **NAME** of Jesus Christ (that is, the authority and power of Jesus Christ), they were **BAPTIZED**, both men and women.”

One can necessarily reason, infer, imply, prove or conclude, that to preach **CHRIST**, necessarily includes **BAPTISM**.

In [Acts chapter 8](#), the Bible says:

- “Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain **WATER**: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be **BAPTIZED**? And Philip said, **IF** thou believest with **ALL** thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I **BELIEVE** that Jesus Christ **IS** the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they **WENT down BOTH into the WATER**, both Philip and the eunuch; and he (Philip) **BAPTIZED** him (the eunuch). And when they were **COME up OUT** of the **WATER**, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way **REJOICING**. “ ([Acts 8:35-39](#))

One can necessarily reason, infer, imply, prove or conclude, that to go “**DOWN ...into the water**” and to “**come UP out of the water**”, necessarily concludes that there must have been enough water to do so – implying that there was a full immersion and not a sprinkling or pouring.

V. Consider The Expedience Principle.

The definition of expedience is:

- “That which serves to promote or advance”
[Webster New Twentieth Century Dictionary (Unabridged); page 616; Standard Reference Works Publishing (1956)]
- In other words, expedience aids to accomplish a particular task.

For something to be expedient, it must do two things:

It must first be lawful or Biblical

- “All things are **LAWFUL** unto me, but all things are not **EXPEDIENT**: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.” ([1Cor.6:12](#))

Secondly, for something to be expedient, it must build up or edify

- “All things are **LAWFUL** for me, but all things are not **EXPEDIENT**: all things are lawful for me, but all things **EDIFY not**.” ([1Cor.10:23](#))

To serve as an example, one might consider “when can christians meet for worship”?

First, one must consider what is lawful?

- The first day of the week ([Acts 20:7](#); [1Cor.16:2](#)).

Secondly, one must consider what would build up or edify?

- Could christians meet for worship at 3:00am on Sunday morning? Well, it would certainly be lawful, because it would be on the first day of the week – But would it edify or build up? It is not likely that anyone would be very edified, by assembling for worship at 3:00am in the morning. Most christians that I know, meet some time between 9:00am and Noon on the first day of the week, because that time frame is edifying for most.

VI. Consider The Application Principle – With Illustrations (Applications) Or Examples Of Generic And Specific Authority (Bible), Including Aids (Expedience) vs. Additions (No Bible).

Consider Noah’s Ark.

Think about the command or instruction given to Noah to build an ark.

- In the book of Genesis, we find that God gave a **GENERIC** command for Noah, to build an ark.
- Then God gave **SPECIFIC** instructions for Noah in [Genesis 6:14](#) to build that ark out of gopher wood.
- Notice that God did not tell Noah what **tools** he could use, so Noah would have authority from God, to use an axe, hammer, nails and a saw as an **AID** (or expedience) to carry out the command given him, to build an ark.
- However, If Noah had decided to utilize pine wood as the source to construct the ark, **rather** than gopher wood, Noah would **not** have had authority to do so, because God gave **SPECIFIC** instruction for Noah to use gopher wood and that specific instruction would have **EXCLUDED** any other kind of wood. Utilizing pine wood to construct the ark, instead of gopher wood, would have been an **ADDITION** to what God had instructed.
- Notice the chart emphasizing these principles:

GENERIC	SPECIFIC (Bible)	AID (Expedience)	ADDITION (No Bible)
Build an Ark	Build Ark out of Gopher wood (Gen.6:14)	Axe, hammer, nails, saw. White Gopher, Red Gopher ?	Pine, Oak or Cherry wood

VII. With these principles, one can have confidence in their spiritual convictions on any Biblical subject.
 If I can be of benefit to you, please let me know. (wrightcrew@verizon.net)
 Now, get to studying! 😊