A scenic view of a beach with waves, a black text box containing the title, and footprints on the sand. The background shows a blue sky with light clouds, a dark blue sea, and a distant landmass. The foreground is a sandy beach with several footprints. A black rectangular box is overlaid on the middle of the image, containing the title in yellow text.

# **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY!**

## **Lesson 1 Slide 1**

## **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.**

**God has consistently shown His love towards man. God has communicated this Love in many different ways, starting from the time man was created and placed in the garden in Eden.**

**God has asked for Love, Praise, and Obedience from man, and has consistently rewarded those who lived as He directed.**

**Today God is communicating with man through the writings of the bible.**

**Giving every man on earth a convenient way to understand His will. We only have to study the Bible to know of God's promises and wishes for us.**

# A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.

God has given different commandments and laws to men in different ages.

He gave certain commandments to **Adam and Eve** in the garden, which did not apply after they left the garden. Gen 2:16-17;

He gave commandments to **people who lived before the flood**, communicating with them through the heads of families.

**We have very little of this recorded.** We know that He gave **Abraham** certain commandments because He said that Abraham was faithful, making it obvious that He had expected Abraham to live by certain standards that had been given.

# A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.

The Old Testament records in great detail

The law of Moses, which was given  
only to the Israelite nation

Deuteronomy 5:1-3; Exodus 35:

God's unfailing love was shown throughout  
these ages for all righteous people.

We know little of the laws God gave to **OTHER** people of that  
period except that they were referred to as **RIGHTEOUS** or  
**SINFUL** showing that **God HAD a LAW** for them. Rom 2:14-15;

**The bible explains** that the special care given to the  
**Israelite nation** (descendants of Abraham through  
Isaac and Jacob) was for the purpose of  **blessing**  
**all nations with a Saviour for the entire world.**

# A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.

The bible clearly shows that this **SPECIAL** law was given **only to the Israelites**, which was **FULFILLED in Christ**, and is **no longer in effect after the death of Jesus**.

Col 2:13-14; Heb 9:15-17;

**With the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God gave a NEW universal law and covenant for all men. Understanding this is important as we come to determine which commandments in the bible apply to us today.**

**2 Tim 2:15; says “do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who CORRECTLY handles the WORD of truth” We need to be like this today.**

# **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.**

**When you look within the religious world today and see the vast array of religions, churches, and belief systems, you may wonder,**

**“Who do we listen to? / Who has authority?”**

**While most religious groups profess a belief in God and many of them profess a belief in Jesus Christ, they still differ on what to do and how to do things.**

**Such diverse behaviours and practices might leave us wondering?**

**WHO is in control within the religious world?**

**Is it God?**

**Is it Jesus?**

**Is it man?**

## **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.**

The fact that there are a large number of differing religious groups in the world suggests that **man**, in general, **does NOT** have a proper understanding of **who possesses final authority.**

As far as some churches or religious groups go, they range from one extreme to the other.

**Some people will bind where the Bible does not bind and others will loose where the Bible does not loose.**

## **WHAT IS MEANT BY BINDING AND LOOSING?**

**John 20:21-23;** “He spoke to them again and said, **“As the Father has sent Me, even so I am sending you.”** Then He breathed on them and told them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.

**If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven.  
If you refuse to forgive them, they are unforgiven.”**

## **BINDING AND LOOSING.**

This means the **apostles were Jesus' authoritative spokesmen and that their decisions would be binding.** Jesus spoke God's authoritative words and authorized His apostles to speak those words. **We can see this idea in the book of Hebrews:-**

**“The message God delivered through angels has always proved true, and the people were punished for every violation of the law and every act of disobedience. What makes us think that we can escape if we are indifferent to this great salvation that was announced by the Lord Jesus himself?**

**It was passed on to us by those who heard Him speak, 4. and God verified the message by signs and wonders and various miracles and by giving gifts of the Holy Spirit whenever He chose to do so.” Heb 2:2-4;**

# **BINDING AND LOOSING.**

**So binding and loosing have at least two applications. The first (logically) is the authority to declare the terms of forgiveness of sins and thus entrance into the kingdom.**

**This happens through preaching the gospel and authoritatively declaring that those who repent and believe the gospel are forgiven and are added to Christ's family.**

**Those who reject the gospel remain in bondage, (slavery to their sin), are unforgiven, and are outside of the kingdom of God.**

# **BINDING AND LOOSING.**

The **second application** is that to **bind** and **loose** is **the authority to declare what is God's mind on a matter of doctrine or practice.**

This is what the early church did in Acts 15.

**To "bind" is to obligate, to "loose" is to remove obligation.**

The Gentiles who became Christians did not need to be circumcised first.

The future perfect tense ("shall having been bound") shows that **this authority is only valid when used in submission to Christ's word or teaching.**

It does not give the church the authority to make up new teachings later in church history.

## **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.**

Individually speaking, there are plenty of people who live their lives as if no one possesses final authority except for themselves.

**They will ultimately decide for themselves what is right and what is wrong.**

**They base their decisions upon their wants and desires.**

**We need to understand by**

**WHOSE AUTHORITY DO WE NEED to do things.**

# **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.**

**The question of Matthew 21:23;**

**Can be properly asked of all religious teachers and an especially important question for Christians.**

**" By what authority - and who gave you this authority?"**

**In this text, the chief priests asked Jesus,**

**“By what authority are You doing these things?”**

**The chief priests recognized the need for authority.**

**They also recognized the need for someone with authority to grant that authority.**

**Jesus replied by posing a question:-**

**“The baptism of John — where was it from? From heaven or from men?” v 25,**

# **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.**

In Jesus question, we see that authority can only come from one of two sources: from Heaven or from man. **The authority from Heaven would be:-**  
**An authority from a divine source:- God.**

There are some people who would deny that final authority is needed, especially in matters of religion. Quite often these people will look to themselves as authority.

**Looking to one's self for authority is problematic at best.**

**Jeremiah wrote,** "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, NKJV)

**King Solomon wrote,** "There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death." (Proverbs 14:12, NKJV)

# **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.**

Even looking to other men for authority will make a person's worship in vain. Matthew 15:9;

**Jesus said, "And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."**

**The recognition of God's authority is necessary for those people who desire to have God's approval and who desire to be in fellowship with God.**

**The apostle John warned, "For if you wander beyond the teaching of Christ, you will not have fellowship with God. But if you continue in the teaching of Christ, you will have fellowship with both the Father and the Son. 10. If someone comes to your meeting and does not teach the truth about Christ, don't invite him into your house or encourage him in any way. Anyone who encourages him becomes a partner in his evil work.." 2 John 1:9-11;**

# **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.**

**If a person denies proper authority, then he will neither abide in the doctrine of Christ nor in the fellowship of God. Man must recognize his genuine need for authority that comes from someone greater than himself.**

**If the question of authority could be settled, most religious division / problems could be solved.**

**The premise of this lesson:- the final authority, in all religious matters is God Himself.**

**His authority is currently administered by Jesus Christ, with the authoritative will of God being revealed in the inspired words of the Bible.**

# A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.

**Problem:-** some parts of the Bible (the Old Testament) **seem to contradict** some other parts (the New Testament).

**How can we know** which precepts, commands, and principles to follow today?

**Purpose of study:-** to help us "**rightly divide** (understand and use properly) **the word of God.**" 2 Timothy 2:15;

**Practical aim:-** To persuade each person to put the word of God to work in his/her own life, in such a way as to have God's approval.

## **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.**

**God is the primary (ultimate or supreme) authority.**

**"Authority" refers to the author or source of a thing. God is the true author of the world – the source from which all else has come. Psa 33:6,9;**

**“Whatever is good and perfect comes to us from God above, who created all heaven's lights. Unlike them, He never changes or casts shifting shadows.**

**In His goodness He chose to make us His own children by giving us His true word. And we, out of all creation, became His choice possession.”**

**James 1:17-18;**

**Authority also means the right to exercise power, make decisions, impose one's will upon others.**

# A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.

**To authorise**, is to give permission, delegate power for one, etc. (not usurped authority)

**God himself is the source of all authority.** Rom 13:1;

“ Obey the government, for God is the one who put it there. The principle of governments has been authorised by God. So those who refuse to obey the laws of the land are refusing to obey God, and punishment will follow.”

**God has usually chosen** to govern man not in His own person, but through delegated representatives.

## **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.**

**Jesus placed authority in the words He spoke**

**“anyone who rejects me and refuses  
my words has his judge already:-**

**the word itself that I have spoken**

**will be his judge on the last day.” (John 12:48).**

**We will NOT be judged by:- What we think (Isa 55:8-9;)**

**“This plan of mine is not what YOU would work out,  
neither are My thoughts the same as yours! For just as  
the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways  
higher than yours, & My thoughts higher than yours”**

**We will NOT be judged by:- What seems alright**

**“Before every man there lies a wide and pleasant  
road that seems right but ends in death.” Prov 14:12;**

# **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.**

**We will NOT be judged by:-**

**Our hearts or feelings (Prov 28:26;).**

**“He who trusts in his own heart is a fool,  
But he who walks wisely will be delivered.”**

**We will NOT be judged by:-**

**Preachers, Pastors, Priests (1 Cor 4:6;).**

**“I have applied all this to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that you can learn how the saying, **“Nothing beyond what is written”** is true of us: no individual among you must become filled with his own importance and make comparisons, to another's detriment.”**

**We will NOT be judged by:-**

**Creeds, Prayer books, Manuals. (Matthew 15:9;)**

**“Their worship is a farce, for they replace God's commands with their own man-made teachings.”**

## **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.**

**In a simple passage, Jesus established God's final authority. In Matthew 7:21-23; Jesus said:-**

**“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.**

**Many will say to Me in that day,**

**‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’**

**And then I will declare to them,**

**‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”**

# A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY

Look carefully at the text.

According to verse 21, those who DO the will of God will enter into the kingdom of Heaven.

However, according to verse 23, those who do something other than the will of God are practicing lawlessness & will be rejected by God.

## Biblical Authority

is so important in the church.

- A. It determines how we can be saved.
- B. It determines our relationship with God
- C. It determines how we are to worship God.
- D. It determines how we are to work for God.

# A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY

God once spoke to people  
through Moses and the prophets.

- “1. Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets.
2. But now in these final days, He has spoken to us through His Son. God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance, and through the Son He made the universe and everything in it.” **Heb. 1:1-2;**

# A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.

1. The law was given to 'Moses. Exodus 20;
2. The prophets spoke for God, as they were inspired or moved by God's Spirit. 2 Peter 1:20-21;

**“For no prophecy recorded in Scripture was ever thought up by the prophet himself. It was the Holy Spirit within these godly men who gave them true messages from God.**

**Not because they wanted to prophesy. It was the Holy Spirit who moved the prophets to speak from God.”**

## **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.**

**And Moses and the prophets predicted the coming of the Christ or Messiah and the New Covenant. Relationship.**

**Deut-. 18:18; Jer 31:31-33; Isa 2-2-4;**

**“I will raise up a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites.**

**I will tell that prophet what to say, and he will tell the people Everything I command him.”**

**“The day will come,” says the Lord, “when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah.” Jer 31;**

# A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.

And Moses and the prophets **predicted** the coming of the Christ or Messiah and the New Covenant. **Deut 18:18; Jer 31:31-33; Isa 2-2-4;**

**Isa. 2-2-4;** “Now it will come about that **In the last days** The mountain of the house of the LORD (the church) Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And **all the nations** will stream to it.

Many nations will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the Temple of the God of Israel. There **he will teach us his ways, so that we may obey him.**”

**For in those days** the Lord's teaching and **His word will go out from Jerusalem.**

And He will judge among the nations, and will rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plow-shares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

**THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY:  
GOD SPEAKING THROUGH THE CHRIST.**

**All of God's authority** with regard to man has been **given to Jesus Christ**, the Son of God.

**Heb 1:1-2; Mt. 28:16-20; Eph 1:19-23; 1 Pet 3:21-22;**

“At many moments in the past and by many means, God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets; but in **these last days** has **spoken to us through His Son**, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world.” **Hebrews 1:1;**

“And Jesus came to them and spoke to them, saying, **All authority** has been given unto me **in heaven and on earth**. Therefore, after you've gone out, **make followers** from all nations. **Immerse them by the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit**. and then **teach these new disciples to obey all the commands** I have given you; and be sure of this –that I am with you always, even to the end of the world.”

## **THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY: GOD SPEAKING THROUGH THE CHRIST.**

All of God's authority with regard to man has been given to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. **Eph 1:19-23; 1 Pet 3:21-22;**

**“when He raised Christ from death and put Him at His own right side in the heavenly world. There Christ is far above any ruler, authority, power, lord or title which can be given, not only in this world, but also in the next world.**

**And God has put all things under His feet and made Him the supreme Head of the Church which is His body, filled with Himself, the Author and Giver of everything everywhere.”**

## **THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY:- GOD SPEAKING THROUGH THE CHRIST.**

All of God's authority with regard to man has been given to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Eph 1:19-23; **1 Pet 3:21-22;**

**21. “Today, this is a picture of how immersion saves us through the raising of Jesus Christ from death. Immersion is not getting rid of body dirt. No, it is an appeal to God for a clear conscience.**

**22. And now Christ is in heaven, sitting in the place of honour next to God the Father, with all the angels and powers of heaven bowing before Him and obeying Him.” (International English)**

**THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY:  
GOD SPEAKING THROUGH THE CHRIST.**

**There is no danger of error on the part of Christ  
in administering God's authority.**

**The Son knows the mind of the Father,  
and there is no misunderstanding.**

**Mat 1:27; John 10:1-5; and 7:28-29;**

**There is no danger of abuse or misuse of God's  
authority by Jesus Christ since the purposes of the  
Father and the Son are precisely the same. Jn 17:7-18;**

**There is no man on earth regardless of His  
position, who has pre-eminence over Jesus Christ,  
No prophet, No Priest,  
No King, No Government.**

**THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY:  
GOD SPEAKING THROUGH THE CHRIST.**

Hebrews 1:1-2; -

**New testament message & messenger contrasted with Old..**

**John 1:17; Moses the Law giver in O.T. period,  
Christ giver of Grace and truth in the Christian age.**

**“The law was given through Moses, gracious love  
and truth have come through Jesus Christ.”**

**Matthew 11:27; God revealed through Christ.**

**“Everything has been entrusted to Me by My Father;  
and no one knows the Son except the Father,  
just as no one knows the Father except the Son  
and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him.”**

## **THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY:**

### **GOD SPEAKING THROUGH THE CHRIST.**

**John 5:26-27; - Authority given to Christ.**

**"For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself;**

**John 12:48-50; 17:6-15; - Christ's message from God.**

**v8 "for I have passed on to them the commands you gave me; and they accepted them and know of a certainty that I came down to earth from you, and they believe you sent me."**

**John 14:10-11; Christ challenges us to believe the evidence**

**"Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I say are not my own but are from my Father who lives in me. And He does His work through me. believe it that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or believe, because of the mighty miracles you have seen me do."**

## THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY:-

**Mark 9:2-8; Acts 3:19-23; "Hear ye Him" 1 "Jesus went on to say to His disciples, "Some of you who are standing here right now will live to see the Kingdom of God arrive in great power!" 2 Six days later Jesus took Peter, James and John to the top of a mountain. No one else was there. Suddenly His face began to shine with glory, 3 and His clothing became dazzling white, far more glorious than any earthly process could ever make it!**

**4 Then Elijah and Moses appeared and began talking with Jesus! 5 "Teacher, this is wonderful!" Peter exclaimed.**

**"We will make three shelters here, one for each of you "**

**6 He said this just to be talking, for he didn't know what else to say they were all terribly frightened.**

**7. But while he was still speaking these words, a cloud covered them, blotting out the sun, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to Him."**

**8. Then suddenly they looked around and Moses and Elijah were gone, and only Jesus was with them."**

## THE SOURCE OF AUTHORITY: GOD SPEAKING THROUGH THE CHRIST.

**Matt 5:21-22; 5:27-28; "But I say unto you"**  
**Matt 5:21;** "Under the laws of Moses the rule was,  
**'If you murder, you must die.'** But I tell you that anyone  
**who is angry with his brother will be punished.**  
Anyone who says **'You idiot!'** to his brother must  
answer to the Jewish Council. Anyone who says,  
**'You fool!'** will be punished in hell fire."

**1 Cor 9:21; - "Under law to Christ".**  
**1 Cor 9:21;** "I obey no special rules for the good of non -  
Jewish people. This doesn't mean that I am free from  
God's law; **I am within Christ's law!**  
I am only trying to win non-Jewish people."

# **CHRIST'S AUTHORITY TO BE EXECUTED THROUGH HIS APOSTLES.**

**This Authority was delegated to the apostles of Christ under the New Covenant. Only a limited administrative authority was given to them.**

**Matthew 16:13-20;18:18; 19:27-28; 28:19-20; Mark 16:17-19;**

**Matthew 16:16; Then Simon Peter spoke up and said,**

**"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."**

**Matt 16:18; "Upon this rock foundation" Jesus answered, "I will build my community, those called out by God. Death will not overpower them. Blessed are you, Simon, son of John. My Father in heaven, not man, showed that to you."**

**Matt 28:19:20; "Therefore, after you've gone out, make followers from all nations. Immerse them by the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you; and be sure of this, that I am with you always, even to the end of the world."**

## **CHRIST'S AUTHORITY TO BE EXECUTED THROUGH HIS APOSTLES.**

**John 20:21-23;** “He spoke to them again and said,

**“As the Father has sent Me, even so I am sending you.”** Then He breathed on them and told them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.

**If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven.**

**If you refuse to forgive them, they are unforgiven.”**

**1 Corinthians 9:21;** “under law to Christ”

**“I obey no special rules for the good of non- Jewish people. This doesn't mean that I am free from God's law; I am within Christ's law! I am only trying to win non-Jewish people.”**

**1 John 4:6;** “**We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.”**

**We can tell the difference between truth and error, by testing if we are obeying what the Apostles taught or ignoring what they say.**

**APOSTLES WERE TO BE GUIDED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

**This final authority granted to Jesus Christ was delegated to the apostles so that the world could know the will of God.**

**Jesus delegated to the apostles the authority to bind and loose. However, the apostles could only bind and loose on earth what had already been bound and loosed within the will of God. (Mat 16:19;)**

**When Jesus left this world, He sent the Holy Spirit to aid the apostles in their recollection and knowledge of what was to be bound and loosed.**

**Consider:-**

**CHRIST'S AUTHORITY TO BE EXECUTED THROUGH HIS APOSTLES.**  
John 14:16-17; **“And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate to be for ever with you – the Spirit of truth”** Because of human weakness, it was necessary that this **delegation of authority be accompanied by the Holy Spirit.**

**John 14:25-26;** “These things I have spoken to you while being present with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, **He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.”**

See also. John 16:12-15;

John 16:7-15; (13) “When the Spirit of truth comes, **He will guide you into all truth.** He will **not** be presenting His own ideas; He will be telling you what He has heard. **He will tell you about the future.”**

## **CHRIST'S AUTHORITY TO BE EXECUTED THROUGH HIS APOSTLES.**

**Luke 24:49;** “And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But **stay here** in the city **until the Holy Spirit comes and fills you with power from heaven.**”

**Acts 2:1-4; 37-38;** “When the people heard this, they felt a sharp, cutting pain in their conscience. They **asked Peter and the other apostles**, “**What should we do, brothers?**”

Then Peter answered, “Change your hearts and each one of **you must be immersed by the authority of Jesus the Messiah, so that your sins may be forgiven.**

**Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**”

**CHRIST'S AUTHORITY TO BE EXECUTED THROUGH HIS APOSTLES.**  
Being inspired by the Holy Spirit, the apostles and inspired men recorded the word of God in written form so that we might have a complete record of God's will for man.

**In Romans 1:16-17;** The apostle Paul declared that "the Gospel is God's power unto salvation."

The Gospel completely reveals the righteousness of God. (In Gal 1:11-12, Paul states that the Gospel he preached came by the revelation of Jesus Christ.)

**In 2 Timothy 3:16-17;** Paul declares that "all scriptures have come by the inspiration of God." Paul goes on to state that the scriptures are sufficient to "thoroughly equip a man for every good work."

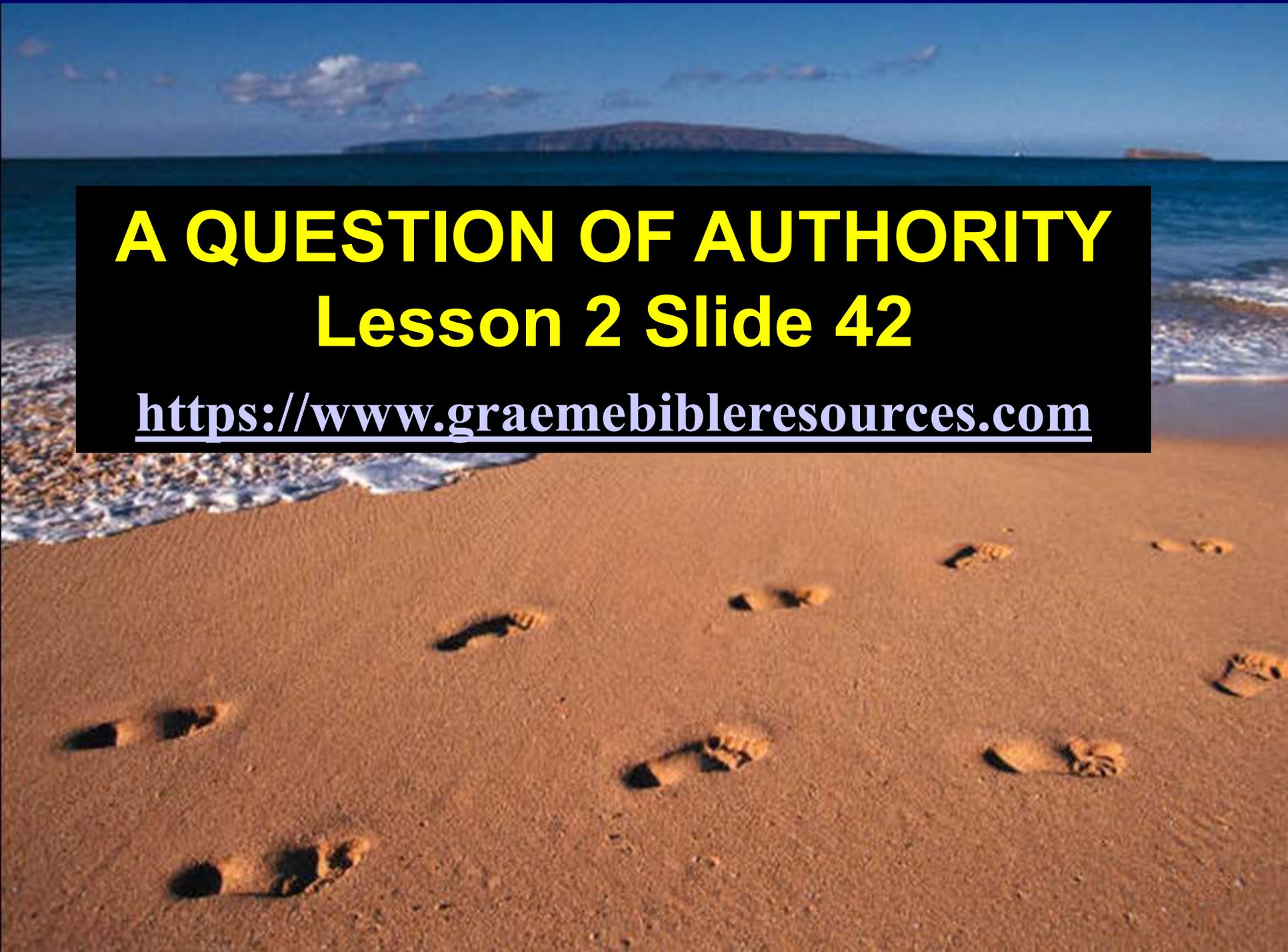
## **CHRIST'S AUTHORITY TO BE EXECUTED THROUGH HIS APOSTLES.**

2 Pet 1:3-5; “As we know Jesus better, His **divine power gives us everything we need for living a godly life.** He has called us to receive his own glory and goodness! 4. And by that same mighty power, He has given us all of His rich and wonderful promises. He has promised that you will escape the decadence all around you caused by evil desires and that you will **share in His divine nature.**”

“5. So make every effort to apply the benefits of these promises to your life. Then your faith will produce a life of moral excellence.

A life of moral excellence leads to knowing God better.”

Notice that God has given us **ALL** things that have to do with / pertain to **SPIRITUAL life and godliness.** **What more** could man/woman possibly need in order **to know how to be acceptable to God?**

A photograph of a sandy beach with several footprints in the sand. The ocean is visible in the background under a blue sky with some clouds. A black rectangular box is overlaid on the image, containing text in yellow and white.

# **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY**

## **Lesson 2 Slide 42**

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**CHRIST'S AUTHORITY TO BE EXECUTED  
THROUGH HIS APOSTLES.**

**In Jude 1:3; Jude refers to the “faith which has  
once for all time been delivered to the saints”**

# **PREACHING OF THE APOSTLES CONFIRMED BY MIRACLES.**

**Mark 16:15-20; Acts 2:43; 4:33; 5:12; Heb 2:1-4;  
2 Cor 12:12 1 Cor 12:1-11, 28-31; 1 Cor 13:8-12;**

**Acts 2:43; “A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders.”**

**Acts 4:33; “With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favour was accorded them all.”**

**Acts 5:12; “Now many signs and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles, as they were all together in Solomon's Portico.”**

**2 Cor 12:12; “When I was with you, I certainly gave you every proof that I am truly an apostle, sent to you by God Himself. For I patiently did many signs, wonders and miracles among you.”**

## **PREACHING OF THE APOSTLES CONFIRMED BY MIRACLES.**

**These gifts of power served a temporary purpose of introducing and confirming New Testament truths.**

**Although the apostles laid hands on some and they became prophets, who then spoke by inspiration, and were able to do miracles to confirm their message. They left no successors to the apostolic office.**

**But the lack of apostles or their successors today does not mean that apostolic authority has lapsed.**

# **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.**

**The authoritative will of God, Christ, and the apostles is revealed in the scripture. The written word of God is the standard of authority now.**

**1. It is preserved in written form.**

**John 20:30-31, 2 Pet. 1:3; 3:15-17;**

**2. It is written under direct inspiration of the Spirit of God. 2 Tim. 3:16-17, 1 Cor 2:12-13; 1 Thess 2:13;**

**3. It is permanent.**

**It has been delivered once and for all. Jude 3**

**4. It is complete and perfect as given in the original – not to be altered. Jn 16:13; Eph 4:12-13; Rev 22:18-19; Gal 1:6-8;**

**5. It contains the Gospel of God. Romans 1:16-17;**

# A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.

Authority is found in the Scriptures in 4 ways.

1. **Direct statements or commands.**

(Mk 16:16; Acts 2:38;).

a. There are **2 kinds of commands:-**

(1) **Specific.** (Mat 26:26-28; Eph 5:19;).

(2) **Generic.** (Mk 16:15; Js 1:27;).

2. **Implications or necessary inferences. (Acts 2:42).**

3. **Approved examples (Acts 20:7).**

a. Approved examples are binding on us only if there is an underlying specific command, making that the exclusive way to obey God.

# A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY.

## 4. Expediencies.

When God tells us what to do without telling us how to do it, we **are free to do that which is in our judgment the most expedient.**

**Worship** - The time and place we meet on Sunday are up to us.

**Evangelism** - The method and transportation are up to us.

**Benevolence** - We may help the needy with food or money.

But **when God tells us WHAT to do and also HOW to do it, then the HOW is as binding as the WHAT.**

**Worship John 4:24;** “For God is Spirit, so those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth.”

**1 Cor 14:40;** “But be sure that everything is done properly and in order.”

**The only authoritative word of God  
that we now have is the Bible.  
Authority is NOT found in the silence of the  
Scriptures:-**

**“Whoever speaks must speak God's words.  
Whoever serves must serve with the strength that  
God supplies, so that in every way God may be  
glorified through Jesus Christ. Glory and power  
belong to Him forever and ever! Amen.” (1 Pet 4:11).**

**When God specifies something to be done,  
all other alternatives are excluded.  
There are O.T. examples.**

# The only authoritative word of God that we now have is the Bible.

**Lev 10:1-4;** - “And **Nadab and Abihu**, the sons of Aaron, took each of them his censer, and put fire therein, and laid incense thereon, and **offered strange fire before Yahveh, which He had not commanded them.** So fire blazed forth from the presence of the Lord and **destroyed them.**”

**2 Samuel 6:6;** “But when they arrived at the threshing floor of Nacon, the oxen stumbled, and **Uzzah** put out his hand to steady the Ark of God.  
**7** And the anger of the LORD burned against **Uzzah**, and **God struck him down there for his irreverence; and he died there by the ark of God.**”

**The only authoritative word of God  
that we now have is the Bible.**

**Genesis 6:14; "Make for yourself an ark of gopher  
wood; you shall make the ark with rooms,  
and shall cover it inside and out with pitch.**

**15 And this is how thou shall make it:-**

**The length of the ark three hundred cubits.**

**The breadth of it fifty cubits.**

**The height of it thirty cubits.”**

**The only authoritative word of God  
that we now have is the Bible.**

**There are N.T. applications:-**

**Mark 16:16; “The person who believes it and is  
immersed will be saved, but the person  
who doesn't believe it will be condemned.”**

**International English Version**

**Infant baptism is has no divine authority.  
Sprinkling is has no divine authority.**

**The only authoritative word of God  
that we now have is the Bible.**

**There are N.T. applications:-**

**Ephesians 5:19; “but drink deeply of God's Spirit.  
Speak to one another with psalms and hymns  
and spiritual songs. Sing and offer praise  
in your hearts to the Lord.”**

**For Christians to use Instrumental music in worship  
for example, is without divine authority.**

**Our Salvation, our manner of life,  
worship, deeds, etc. are to be  
according to God's instructions.**

**The only authoritative word of God  
that we now have is the Bible.**

**Therefore, the Bible alone** must be our  
final guide and authority in religion today.

**Everything we believe and do in religion,  
ought to be authorised by the Bible,**  
otherwise we will not have the approval of God.  
Mat 7:21-28; 2 Cor 10:12-18;

**Most of the **dissension** and **division** that exists  
among professing Christians today has come about  
because people accept "**authorities**"  
other than the Bible or there are  
personality clashes, and power struggles.**

# THERE MUST BE RESPECT FOR GOD'S ALL AUTHORITATIVE WORD.

**In preaching, His authority must be respected 2 John 9-10;**

**“For if you wander beyond the teaching of Christ,  
you will leave God behind; while if you are  
loyal to Christ's teachings, you will have God too.”**

**“Then you will have both the Father and the Son.  
If anyone comes to teach you, and he doesn't believe  
what Christ taught, don't even invite him into your home.  
Don't encourage him in any way”**

**In worship, His authority must be respected Mat 15:9;**

**“Their worship is worthless, for they teach their  
man-made laws instead of those from God.”**

# **THERE MUST BE RESPECT FOR GOD'S ALL AUTHORITATIVE WORD.**

**In Christian living,** His authority must be respected.

**Matt 7:21-23;** “Not all who sound religious are really godly people. They may refer to me as ‘**Lord,**’ but still won't get to heaven.

**For the decisive question is whether they obey my Father in heaven.”**

“At the Judgment many will tell me, ‘Lord, Lord, we told others about you and used your name to cast out demons and to do many other great miracles.’ But I will reply, ‘You have never been mine. Go away, for your deeds are evil.’”

# **The Final Authority Excludes All Other Sources of Authority.**

**No matter what any man claims, there is  
no other authority than that of Jesus Christ,  
found within the Word of God.**

**If a man claims that some great religious leader  
authorizes an action,  
then he is appealing to a false authority.**

**If a person follows in the religious foot steps of his  
parents, using them as his source of authority,  
then he is appealing to a false authority.**

**If a man claims an angel told him something,  
then he is appealing to a false authority.**

# **The Final Authority Excludes All Other Sources of Authority.**

**The New Testament is the Guide for Christians today**

Let us consider several sources of authority that is **excluded**  
**by the final authority of God**, found within the Bible.

**Doctrines and practices  
Of the Old Testament for today.**

**Words of religious leaders.  
Creeds of men.**

**Personal Desires of the congregation.  
Personal Desires of the elders  
of the local congregation.**

# **The Final Authority Excludes All Other Sources of Authority.**

**The doctrine or practices of the Old Testament / Covenant have been excluded as a source of authority. Many people within the religious world fail to realise this simple fact.**

**Quite often, they will appeal to Old Testament authority to authorize religious actions today. However, this cannot be lawfully done.**

**The stumbling block faced by many people is that they fail to recognize that the Old Testament system was removed by the death of Jesus.**

# **The Final Authority Excludes All Other Sources of Authority.**

**Read Hebrews 9:9-27; (see 16-17;)  
And 10:1-10 for a better understanding of this  
fact. Pay close attention to verses 1, 4, 9, and 10;**

**“Then he added, “Look, I have come to do your will.”  
He cancels the first covenant in  
order to establish the second.**

**And what God wants is for us to be made  
holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ  
once for all time”**

# **The Final Authority Excludes All Other Sources of Authority.**

In his letter to Col 2:13-16; Paul referred to the  
**“handwriting of requirements”**  
that had been taken away.

**“You were dead in sins, and your sinful desires were not yet cut away. Then He gave you a share in the very life of Christ, for He forgave all your sins, and blotted out the charges proved against you.”**

**“The list of His commandments which you had not obeyed. He took this list of sins and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ's cross.”**

## **The Final Authority Excludes All Other Sources of Authority.**

**“In this way God took away Satan's power to accuse you of sin, and God openly displayed to the whole world Christ's triumph at the cross where your sins were all taken away.”**

**“So don't let anyone criticize you for what you eat or drink, or for not celebrating Jewish holidays and feasts or new moon ceremonies or Sabbaths.”**

## **The Final Authority Excludes All Other Sources of Authority.**

**The creeds of men have been excluded as a source of authority.** Practically every religious group has its manual, discipline, catechism, prayer book or book of minutes which contains its doctrines and procedures.

The fact of the matter is that **we cannot please God by accepting the creeds of men.**

As we have already shown earlier in this study, teaching for doctrine the commandments of men will make a person's worship in vain.

# **The Final Authority Excludes All Other Sources of Authority.**

**The desires of a congregation have been excluded  
as a source of authority.**

**Some religious organisations take pride in the fact  
that they are democratic and that their policies  
are determined by a majority vote.**

**What they fail to realise is that the wishes  
of the congregation (or the majority)  
may not always be right.**

**In 1 Samuel 8, the nation of Israel wanted  
a king to lead them. However, this desire  
was not in Israel's best interest.**

**Another example is found 1 Samuel 15.**

# **The Final Authority Excludes All Other Sources of Authority.**

**The elders of a local church have been excluded as a source of authority.** The Bible is very clear regarding the roles and responsibilities of the elders (bishops) of a local church.

**1 Peter 5:1-4**, elders are to **tend** the flock / the local congregation. **In verses 2-3, Peter wrote**, “Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; **nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.**”

**In their responsibility of tending the flock, the elders are to exercise oversight.**

## **The Final Authority Excludes All Other Sources of Authority.**

**“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**

**While elders are to lead the congregation.  
(and in that since they have been delegated  
authority by the Word of God).**

**They have no legislative power in matters of faith.**

**Elders can only bind and loose  
what has already been bound and loosed  
in the Word of God.**

# The Final Authority Excludes All Other Sources of Authority.

The results accomplished have been excluded as a source of authority.

You may have heard some people reason that the **“ends justify the means.”**

This is not a valid standard of authority for religious activities and teachings. Some people assume **if a practice is a good work, or if it accomplishes big results**, then it must be authorised by the results.

In the case of **Nadab and Abihu**, the ends did not justify the means. **Nadab and Abihu should have used the fire authorised by the Law of Moses, given to them by God.**

# A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY

**What should we do to anyone who claims to teach the Word of God?**

**TEST THEM** by searching the scriptures daily to make certain that they are not taking authority upon themselves.

This was exactly what the Bereans did in **Acts 17:10-12**;

If you find that what the person is teaching **came from the Bible**, then follow it because the Bible teaches it.

**As a follower of God, this is your responsibility.**

**This same responsibility is seen in. 1 John 4:1;**

**“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”**

# **A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY**

**Be sure to try or test every “spirit” or teaching before you accept it as God’s word.**

# **HOW TO DETERMINE WHICH PARTS OF THE SCRIPTURE APPLY TO US TODAY.**

**Commandments and requirements for salvation and worship under the OLD LAW do NOT apply, and cannot be bound upon anyone today. (not even Jews.)**

Such matters concerning **SALVATION** and **WORSHIP** come only from the New Testament for us today. Gal 2:19-21;

**“For when I tried to keep the law, I realized I could never earn God's approval. So I died to the law so that I might live for God. I have been crucified with Christ. I myself no longer live, but Christ lives in me.”**

**So I live my life in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I am not one of those who treats the grace of God as meaningless. For if we could be saved by keeping the law, then there was no need for Christ to die.”**

**HOW TO DETERMINE WHICH PARTS OF  
THE SCRIPTURE APPLY TO US TODAY.**

Matters which were **prophetic** under the **OT**  
and **fulfilled in the NT**

must be **accepted** and **applied today.**

Isaiah 2:2-4;, Dan 2:44;, Mt 16:18-20; and 28,  
Acts 1 and 2, etc.

**The Church and the Kingdom**

prophesied and fulfilled. Col 1:13-14;

**WE are in the Church, Gods Kingdom today.**

# HOW TO DETERMINE WHICH PARTS OF THE SCRIPTURE APPLY TO US TODAY.

**Principles and characteristics do not change.**

Many lessons about virtue and righteousness, patience, kindness, trust in God, etc. can be drawn from Old Testament writings and examples.

Psa 1, Psa 15, Psa 119, etc. Compare Romans 15:4; James 5:10-11; 1 Cor. 10; etc.

**The scripture guides / teaches us by...**

**1. Direct commandment or precept.**

Acts 2:38, Mark 16:15-16

**2. Explicit example.** Acts 20:7, 1 Cor. 16-1:2;

**3. Implicit example or necessary inference.**

2 Pet 1:10-12; 1 Cor 3:16-23; and 6:19-20;

**A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY:- CONCLUSION!**

**The New Testament scriptures  
containing Gods' will was REVEALED  
through CHRIST and His CHOSEN  
ambassadors.**

**GUIDED and CONFIRMED in their  
MESSAGE by the HOLY SPIRIT.**

**Constitute a COMPLETE and PERFECT  
RULE of FAITH and PRACTICE  
for GOD'S PEOPLE today:-  
The Divine Constitution  
of the Kingdom of God.**

# A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY SUMMARY

## **Excluded Sources of Authority**

**Doctrines and practices of  
the Old Testament.**

**Words of religious leaders.**

**Creeds of men.**

**Voice of an Angel.**

**Desires of the congregation.**

**Unscriptural dictates by elders  
of the local congregation.**

**The New Testament is the Guide for Christians today**

**FROM GOD**

**THROUGH JESUS**

**THROUGH the APOSTLES**

**To the WRITINGS OF NEW TESTAMENT**

**Biblical  
Authority**

**JESUS IS ALIVE !**

# A QUESTION OF AUTHORITY!

Prepared by  
Graeme Morrison

[graemestudy@gmail.com](mailto:graemestudy@gmail.com)

<https://www.graemebibleresources.com>

**Next in the series:-  
Two of the Covenants!.**