



THE LENEXA EDIFIER

John 8:32
And ye shall
know the
truth and the
truth shall
make you
free.

November
17
2019

Rom. 14:19
So then let
us follow
after things
which make
for peace,
and things
whereby we
may edify
one another.

CHURCH FATHERS OR APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY?

By Jim Stauffer

“And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.” (Matthew 28:18)

“far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.” (Ephesians 1:21–23)

The Scripture teaches me to defer all things to the word of the Lord. I have become His servant. I am not subservient to any other authority concerning matters spiritual. Any hopes and dreams I have for eternal glory and bliss rest in my ability to humble myself before Him in all things.

I recently viewed a written comment in defense of infant baptism that we should consult the “Church Fathers” who, after all continued the practices of the church of the New Testament. Subsequent comments to my question about this were that the Bible (*the Canon*) did not exist until many centuries following New Testament times and we therefore are dependent upon the “Church Fathers” for factual content of what the New Testament church was all about.

I googled the “Church Fathers” and found this list on a website that claims to be answers provided by Catholic sources. This is the initial list they provide: Clement of Rome (d. A.D. 97), Ignatius (d. 110), Polycarp (d. 155), Justin Martyr (the Church’s first major lay apologist; d. 165), Irenaeus (d. 202), Cyprian (d. 258), Anathasius (d. 373), Basil (d. 379), Cyril of Jerusalem (d. 386), Ambrose (d. 397), John Chrysostom (d. 407), Jerome (d. 420), Augustine (d. 430), Cyril of Alexandria (d. 444), Pope Leo the Great (d.461), Pope Gregory the Great (d. 604).

What this person is advocating is the age old church doctrine that does not comport with Scripture as the true authority in the matter of our service to God and Christ in His kingdom.

The argument made is the Bible (New Testament) was not completed as far as the Canon is concerned for many centuries following the establishment of the church. Therefore, we are dependent upon these men for guidance in the church.

Let me proffer two very pertinent points that clearly refute this concept. First, the Canon of Scripture satisfied each and every one of these men listed. They all quoted from both the Old and New Testament writers in their own writings. Second, these men who are being represented as those who are our authoritative teachers today depended upon Scripture to guide them. If and when they deviated from Scripture, it was just as wrong for them as it is for us. Yes, some of them failed to understand some of the teaching of the apostles and led people astray by either their misunderstanding or their deception by Satan himself (**1 Tim. 4:1-4**).

But the interesting part of it all is how these men are being used by religionists today as being authoritative in and of themselves when in reality they all taught the Scriptures were the authoritative word and that they came from God by way of apostolic approval.

“In New Testament terminology the church was built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets (**Eph. 2:20**), whom Christ had promised to guide into all the truth (**John 16:13**), by the Holy Spirit. The church in Jerusalem was said to have continued in the *apostles teaching* (**Acts 2:42**). The term “apostolic” as used for the test of canonicity does not necessarily mean ‘apostles authorship’ or ‘or that which was prepared under the direction of the apostles.’” (Geisler/Nix, GIB, 283). They go on to state, “It seems much better to agree with Louis Gaussen, B.B. Warfield, Charles Hodge, J.N.D.Lelly, and most Protestants that it is apostolic authority or apostolic approval, that was the primary test for canonicity, and not merely apostolic authorship.” (Geisler/Nix, GIB 283).

It is clear this concept of the “Church Fathers” being the primary source of authority in biblical matters is a front for those who have chosen to corrupt not only many of the practices authorized by apostolic approval, but also to digress completely from the organization of the church in order to establish earthly authority in men in such places as we see in Rome.

In the list of “Church Fathers” two men are identified as Popes, a title and position that is absent in all of Scripture and is in direct violation of the teaching of Jesus Himself in **Matthew 23:8-12**.

Josh McDowell illustrates this problem clearly with a chart in his book, *The New Evidence Demands a Verdict*. Here is the information from that chart:

Incorrect View: The Church is the Determiner of Canon

Correct View: The Church is the Discoverer of Canon

Incorrect View: The Church is Mother of Canon

Correct View: The Church is the Child of Canon

Incorrect View: The Church is Magistrate of Canon

Correct View: The Church is Minister of Canon

Incorrect View: The Church is Regulator of Canon

Correct View: The Church is Recognizer of Canon

Incorrect View: The Church is Judge of Canon

Correct View: The Church is Witness of Canon

Incorrect View: The Church is Master of Canon

Correct View: The Church is Servant of Canon

No man we shall ever cite is above criticism or correction. But we do hold the Scriptures to be the word of the Almighty God in heaven spoken to man in these last days by His Son by way of apostolic guidance as specifically authorized by the Holy Spirit.

It is with this view that we shall abide in the instruction given to Israel of old, *“You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.”* (Deuteronomy 4:2)

As well we will abide in the instruction of the Lord in the New Testament as well, *“Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son.”* (2 John 9)

The reason we are willing to rest our case entirely on what the Scriptures say is because they contain the promises of God. If I seek to benefit from His promises, what other source would I choose to guide me. The same revelation that promises heaven to the faithful promises this about the Scriptures, *“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”* (2 Timothy 3:16–17)

On Denying the God of the Bible

When unbelievers deny God, what they are mostly denying is a toned-down version of God. The concept of God gets brought down to a human level who cannot know more, do more, or have any more authority than the skeptic.

Since we cannot conceive of allowing something to happen, then we cannot allow for a God who would permit it. If we do not have the ultimate power of life and death, then we will not allow for a God to have such power. If we do not understand some great difficulties, then we cannot allow for a God who can understand them.

And if there is such a God who does have such power and knowledge, then we cannot believe in Him because He has not explained Himself to us adequately, for if He exists, then surely He must be amenable to us in some way.

These denials then often take the form of some straw-man. God, after He is lowered to the level of an ignorant, foolish, narcissistic brute who is no better than a power-hungry dictator, is thus caricatured and readily dismissed.

What we need to see is that all of these caricatures and denials are not dealing with the God of the Bible. They are dealing with some other version of a god that has been watered down and subsumed under the umbrella of the finite reason of faulty men. Such a god does not exist. That’s right. Such a god does NOT exist. If their version of God is what we are really dealing with, then I will join their ranks. The magical sky fairy is a myth. The flying spaghetti monster does not exist. The bearded sky clown is foolish. Any such version of God does not exist. I won’t defend it.

But that is not the God I believe in or defend. The biblical God has wisdom and knowledge unfathomable to a finite mind. He has the knowledge of perfect justice. Because of who He is, He has the power of life and death, and He can exercise that power in ways that we cannot comprehend.

The problem is that we cannot comprehend the fullness of divine power, knowledge, and authority, but we act like we do get it. Then, thinking we have this God figured out, we make ourselves out to be authoritative enough to put this God under our reason. No wonder such a God gets denied.

Ultimately, no one is in a position to deny the actual God who reveals Himself in Scripture. Think about it. If, in order to deny God, we bring Him under our reason, we fundamentally change who He is, then summarily dismiss this new version of God, then we still haven’t truly denied the God of Scripture. We’ve replaced Him with a false version.

Yet, in order to deny His existence, this is what we must do. I feel no need to defend the God that typical atheists deny, for they are denying a version of God

who is far, far less than the true and living, almighty God.

We need reminding of this ourselves, for when we begin to doubt, it is almost certain that what we are doing is downgrading our concept of God in some fashion. What we are doubting is a watered down version of God that does not exist.

The answer, then, is to give up the pride we have in our own conceptions of God. We need to quit putting Him in a box. We need let go of thinking that we have understood the One who can do exceedingly far above anything we can ask or think. These lesser concepts don't even come close to the true God.

The bottom line is this: no one is in a position to deny the true, living God of heaven and earth. No one.

Doy Moyer; Taken from kirkwoodcoc.org

Tell Me About Gratitude!

One of the more prominent aspects of any religion given by the hand of God from the Garden of Eden until the New Testament of Christ is the emphasis on gratitude. According to the 'American Heritage College Dictionary' grateful means "to be appreciative of benefits, thankful". For the word 'thankful' the given meaning is "aware and appreciative of a benefit, grateful". These two definitions cover the idea fairly well but for one small kernel of truth which I think ought to be included which is the acknowledgement of the benefit received. If I know that my life is made better by the actions of others but never make any acknowledgement of the fact can I really claim to be grateful?

God frequently commands his children to be grateful for blessings received:

Psalms 106:1 *Praise ye Jehovah. Oh give thanks unto Jehovah; for he is good; For his lovingkindness endureth forever.*

Ephesians 5:20 *"giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father".*

1Thessalonians 5:18 *"in everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus to you- ward."*

Colossians 3:17 *"And whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."*

Why is it so right that we do this? Paul explains in **Romans 11:33**, *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! ...For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory for ever. Amen."*

Oh My God!

Mike Thomas | Kokomo, Indiana, USA

It amazes me that there are those in our society who are quick to remove God's name from everything except defamatory language. God's name is not welcomed in our public schools or court houses, but no one is upset when His name is associated with cursing or angry outbursts. "G-D" is a common phrase when someone is upset, and "Oh my God" is a typical response to surprise, but mention God's name in a public ceremony and someone's religious rights are infringed upon. That is truly insane.

One of the Ten Commandments God gave the Jews was to have respect for His name. *"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain" (Exodus 20:7)*. If you and I were to list the top 10 things we expect of people in living a righteous life, I doubt any of us would include a caution about how we use the Lord's name. It is not as offensive to us as the other things in the Ten Commandments: lying, murder, adultery, and so on. But to God, it is just as wicked to use His name in a disrespectful manner as it is to murder someone. Both are acts of irreverence and disregard. And even though we are not under the Law of Moses, we are just as accountable to Him for how we use His name. Paul said he rebuked *"Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme" (1 Timothy 1:20)*. Thus, it is still wrong to use God's name in a disrespectful manner.

If I got mad and cursed your mother's name, would you be upset? If I used your name in association with evil, would it bother you? "Oh my God" is no different to God. It is taking His name in vain by using it in a common and disrespectful manner. Our Creator deserves a better response from us. Correction. Our Creator **demands** a better response from us!

Taken from Meditate on These Things; October 2018

Some Quotes from C.S. Lewis

Friendship is born at that moment when one person says to another: What! You too? I thought I was the only one.

True humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less."

There is but one good; that is God. Everything else is good when it looks to Him and bad when it turns from Him."

"The homemaker has the ultimate career. All other careers exist for one purpose only - and that is to support the ultimate career."

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study

Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

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SUZANNE WIMP PASSED AWAY THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2019.

BIBLE CLASSES

SUNDAY MORNING
STUDY OF AUTHORITY - TEACHER
BILL MILLER

WEDNESDAY EVENING
THE BOOK OF JOB - TEACHER
JIM STAUFFER

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON:
JESUS OUR MASTER



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10