

# “Every Where In Every Church”

**Introduction.** Can you imagine the enormous task Paul had in teaching and strengthening churches (Acts 15:36; 18:23)? Probably half of his life was dedicated to visiting and writing brethren precious to him, and after Paul had written about the need for unity to the Corinthian church, he said that he was sending Timothy to remind them of spiritual truths, just as he teaches “every where in every church” (1 Corinthians 4:17).

This brings up the question of what needs to be taught in every church. The church is a place of comfort, but it is also a place of strength and fortitude, a place of knowledge for eternity. Paul saw the value of many items in his writings that needed teaching to all Christians, and we are going to look at a small sample of them in our lesson today.

## ***I. The Authority Of God***

- A. “Authority” originally indicated the idea of leaving, permission, or liberty. It later meant the ability or strength with which one is endowed, then the power of one whose will and commands must be obeyed (Luke 7:7-8; Matthew 28:18).
- B. God demonstrated three ways to establish Bible authority.
  - 1. Direct command — a statement from God in the form of either a positive statement or a negative prohibition (Acts 15:27-28).
  - 2. Approved example — the practice of the church in the New Testament under apostolic guidance and which the apostles had received from the Lord. It is a description of what someone did, teaching by “show” rather than “tell,” and it is approved because the conduct meets God’s approval. God must have intended to teach us by examples in view of the amount and variety of them (Acts 15:13-14).
  - 3. Necessary conclusion — neither expressly stated nor specifically exemplified yet is necessarily implied by the clear import and meaning of the language used. Evidence is evaluated and a judgment or a conclusion is based on that evidence. The problem in using this approach is not whether necessary conclusions are valid, but does the implication exist to point us to an inference or unavoidable conclusion (Acts 15:7-12).
- C. Authority is either generic (“characteristic of or relating to a class or group of things; not specific”) or specific (“clearly defined or identified”).
  - 1. Sometimes both elements exist within the same command. Generic authority includes and specific authority excludes.
  - 2. Examples of generic and specific authority.
    - a) Generic authority.
      - (1) Exodus 12:3 required a “lamb” but it did not specify the color of the lamb to be sacrificed.
      - (2) Ephesians 5:19 says “sing.” We can sing using song books or we can sing by memory. We can all sing the same part or we can sing in harmony.

- b) Specific authority.
  - (1) God told Noah to build an ark of gopher wood (Genesis 6:14). Gopher wood excluded walnut, pine, ash, spruce, oak, and all other kinds of wood. When God specified gopher wood, no one had the right to add another kind.
  - (2) Ephesians 5:19 says “sing.” This excludes every other “kind” of music. Instrumental music is excluded by the fact that God specified “sing” and that does not include “playing” an instrument.
- 3. Many problems have plagued the church because brethren refused to respect generic and specific authority in God’s word.
  - a) The liberal view says that in order for something to be wrong it must be specifically condemned. This fails to recognize that a specific command excludes and therefore condemns everything not specified.
  - b) The anti-Bible class view says that in order for something to be right it must be specifically authorized. This ignores generic authority and hinders church growth.
  - c) Both are wrong! One looses where God has not loosed and the other binds where God has not bound.

## **II. The Obedience Of Christ**

- A. The Bible demands “obedience unto righteousness” (Romans 6:16-18; 16:19). Eternal life is given to those who obey (Hebrews 5:8-9).
- B. What does it take to obey the gospel?
  - 1. Hear (John 6:44-45; Ephesians 1:13).
  - 2. Believe (John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6).
  - 3. Repent (Luke 13:3, 5; 2 Timothy 2:24-26).
  - 4. Confess (Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:10).
  - 5. Baptism (John 3:3, 5; 1 Corinthians 12:13).
- C. If one does not obey the gospel, they will be judged eternally (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Hebrews 2:1-3).

## **III. The Importance Of The Kingdom**

- A. The church is the body of Christ, and He is the head and savior (Ephesians 1:21-23; 2:16; 5:23). It is a singular body (4:4).
- B. The church is also known as the kingdom in the New Testament (1 Corinthians 15:23-24; Colossians 1:13-14). This makes Christ its king and lawgiver.
- C. He has established multiple hallmarks of the kingdom in the New Testament.
  - 1. Work — the church works in the areas of edification (Ephesians 4:11-16), evangelism (1 Thessalonians 1:3-8), and benevolence (Romans 15:26; 2 Corinthians 8:12-15, 23; 9:13).
  - 2. Worship — worship on the first day of the week includes singing (Colossians 3:16), prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:17), teaching/preaching (Acts 2:41-42), partaking Lord’s Supper (Acts 20:7), and giving (1 Corinthians 16:1-2).
  - 3. Organization — the church is overseen by a plurality of elders (Acts 14:23; 1 Timothy 3:1-7), and special servants to aid the physical work of the church are known as deacons (Acts 6:1-7; 1 Timothy 3:8-13).

4. Doctrine — the church is to follow the commands of the New Testament (2 Peter 1:3). The church is not to follow any doctrine which originates from man. In fact, it is to reject false teachers (Ephesians 5:11; 2 John 9-11; Jude 17-21). The use of creeds or other disciplines does not agree with the New Testament pattern (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

#### **IV. The Faithfulness Of A Christian**

- A. Paul exhorted the Philippian Christians to let their conduct be worthy of the gospel (Philippians 1:27). God wants a “glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle;” He wants it “holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:27).
- B. It is possible to run well and fall from grace, being hindered from obeying the truth (Galatians 5:4, 7; cp. Matthew 13:40-43).
- C. Practically speaking, faithfulness means:
  1. Devotion in heart.
    - a) Timothy (1 Corinthians 4:17).
    - b) Tychicus (Ephesians 6:21).
    - c) Epaphras (Colossians 1:7).
    - d) Onesimus (Colossians 4:9).
    - e) Silvanus (1 Peter 5:12).
    - f) Antipas (Revelation 2:13).
  2. Purity in mind (Psalm 63:3-6; 143:5; Philippians 4:8).
  3. Virtue in body (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 5:3-5).

**Conclusion.** Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 7:17, “And so ordain I in all churches.” While we can see what needs to be taught in churches now, do you think Paul would be permitted to teach these points in every church today? Most Christians have moved on, thinking these lessons are old-fashioned. It is scary that this would not be appreciated in churches today, for this leaves the younger generation vulnerable to weakness and a lack of distinction among religious groups. If we are convicted that these are good principles, then endorse them without compromise.