

How Does One Establish Bible Authority?

The source of bible authority today is not the Old Testament, the preachers word, creeds of men, or the desires of a congregation.

Christ is the right source of authority today because He is God's spokesman. He has all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt 28:18), He is King, and is the head of the Church (Eph 5:22).

The New Testament is the will of Christ that came forth from God. It recognizes that God teaches us in three ways. In these three ways He teaches us his will, His word, His ways.

He teaches by direct statement, by positive command.

He teaches by Examples which are approved and inspired of God, those concrete example comes to us with all the power and force of divine authority.

Last there are passages in the bible from which a necessary conclusion and inference must be drawn.

Direct statement or command

Examples:

All must repent Act 17:30, Luke 13:3

Disciples are to contribute 1Cor 16:1-2

The assembling of saints Heb 10:25

It is wrong to lie Col 3:9

Approved Example

Examples:

Breaking bread n the first day of the week Act 20:7

Churches sending to the relief of others in benevolence

Act 11:29-30

Necessary Inference

An Inference:

An inference is a logical conclusion drawn from given data or premises. A necessary inference is a conclusion that is necessary.

Examples of necessary inference:

Lot went down into Egypt with Abram Gen 13:1, 12:10

Before he was baptized Jesus went down into the water Mt 3:16

The Lord's Supper illustrates the 3 ways in which authority is established:

1. We learn what to eat and drink by a direct statement
Mt 26:26-28
 - a. Jesus took bread—he took the cup (note: we know the cup is the fruit of the vine cf Luke 22:18)
 - b. This is why we still use bread and fruit of the vine
2. We know when to eat and drink by an Approved Example
Act 20:7
 - a. This is the only reference to the day on which the disciples met to break bread.
 - b. to break bread on any other day would be to act without authority from the Lord.
3. We know the frequency of eating by a Necessary Inference
Act 20:7.
 - a. Since the disciples met upon the first day of the week, it is necessarily inferred that it was a weekly occurrence.

(I) When a thing is to be observed only one time a year the month and the day of the month must be specified
 - a. Your birthday
 - b. Pentecost day the morrow after the Seventh Sabbath from the Sabbath of the Passover (Lev 23:15-16). Thus, always fifty days from the Sabbath of the Passover.

(2) Things to be observed one time each month must be specified by day of the month, or any particular day.

(3) For a weekly observance only the day of the week need be specified.

a. The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord they God Ex 20:10. He did not say every seventh day but it was necessarily inferred, and the Jews understood.

By using the three ways of establishing authority you should be able to determine whether the following things are authorized or unauthorized.

1. The Kingdom was established on Pentecost Day.
Mk 9:1, Act 1:4-8, 2:1-4. Which of the three ways were used to establish this truth?
2. Baptism to the penitent believer is for remission of sin
Act 2:38. Which of the 3 ways used?
3. What about: Counting of beads? Burning incense? Offering animal sacrifices? Confessing sins to a priest? Sprinkling for baptism? Thursday night communion?

Authority must come from the Lord. Authority maybe established by a direct statement, approved apostolic example, or a necessary inference.

If there is no direct statement, no approved example, or no necessary inference then it is not authorized and is therefore sinful.