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Authority

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The Christian's Authority
by Elizabeth Turner Beall

Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me." He followed that with what we call the Great Commission, but we know God gave Him "all authority" to be "the Head of the church, His body, and is Himself its Savior" (Ephesians 5:23). Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 11:3, "But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God."

If someone owns a business, they have authority over that business. They have the authority to say how that business is to be run, what products and/or services are to be provided, and how those products/services are to be presented to the public. That owner also has the authority to say how his employees are to dress and act while at his business, the days and hours to be worked, and what the wages are to be paid. The owner even has the authority to choose, or not, to give certain benefits to those who work for him, i.e. sick days, vacation time, retirement plans, etc. If an employee comes in and starts to make changes, especially without the owner's permission, he or she would be fired. It's not that employee's business, and therefore, has no authority to change anything unless the owner tells him/her to make that change.

The same is true of the church that belongs to Christ. God offers us His grace (Ephesians 2:8), and when we accept that grace on His terms: repent of our sins (2

Corinthians 7:9-10), confess our belief in Him and His Son, Jesus the Christ (Romans 10:9), and are baptized/immersed in water to wash our sins away (Acts 22:16), we then become a part of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:27). Our lives are to be lived in total submission to Him with our eyes on Heaven (James 4:7). Many decisions are already made regarding our actions, our speech, our dress, and our attendance whenever the saints meet, etc.

Accepting God's grace on His terms takes a strong commitment and dedication of our lives, our hearts, and our minds to live His way. What HE wants should become what WE want. In this dedication and commitment, there is no room for any Christian to ever say "I feel..." or "I think..." or "in my opinion." None of that matters anymore. We are to have the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16), and our lives from that point on should be to learn everything we can about what Christ wants from us in our lives.

Whatever problems or questions arise, our first and only thought should be. "What does the Bible say?" Because the Bible is the Word of God, and Jesus is the Word (John 1:1), no opinion polls are needed, nor a long list of "thou shall nots." If God says even one time to "do this or that," then nothing else should be considered. It does not matter what each of us might think where doctrine is concerned. When God has "spoken" through His Word, it should be settled.

Paul commands us in Romans 10:12 to "Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor." Our relationships with each other should be such that when problems over questions of expediency arise, we are able to resolve those problems in a loving manner because of our love for one another (See 1 Corinthians 13).

Let's dig into His Word, make sure we know what God wants from us, and pray for wisdom to understand His Word, and help others along the way. Let's close with Paul's admonition to the brethren at the congregation in Colossae: "Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another, and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven

you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful...Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Colossians 3:12-15, 17).



Photos

Microsoft Windows 10 Home 64-bit Build 6.2.9200

How Knowledgeable Are You?

by Amanda Stephanus

In our society there is an increasing emphasis on women’s rights and gender equality. Certainly, the need for women to be treated fairly is a Biblical principal (Galatians 3:28, 1 Timothy 5:2). In the church, God has designated leadership roles to be fulfilled by the men of the congregation. Although women cannot serve in these roles, it does not make us inferior to men or of lesser value to the function of the Body; everyone has their part to play (Romans 12:4-5, Ephesians 4:15-16). Sadly, the role of women in the church has been crippled by a lack of understanding or comprehension of our responsibilities. A culture has been created where women’s roles are limited to things such as writing cards, hosting baby/wedding showers, making food for various functions, and deciding what

flowers to put in front of the pulpit. These acts of service have their place, but they are not the be-all and end-all of what God requires of women. There are other duties that we must fulfill. Unfortunately, when women do not work towards satisfying all of their responsibilities, the results are often devastating to women and the Body of Christ as a whole.

A particular area of neglect is Bible knowledge. The principle to grow in knowledge is seen in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, 1 Peter 2:2, and 2 Peter 3:18. These imperatives are universal in nature. However, individuals and congregations are negatively impacted when women do not seek to fulfill these commands in the same way men do. In some instances, women are content with mediocre Bible knowledge, believing men are the only ones who should grow in their studies. As a result, congregations lack qualified teachers to instruct our children, teenage girls, and younger women. The same admonition given to the Hebrew brethren could be given today: "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food" (Hebrews 5:12). Furthermore, the few who have equipped themselves are often worn out by the excessive workload placed on their shoulders.

Congregations and individuals also suffer when events such as ladies' days are filled with milk and not meat. Having talked with many ladies through the years and having attended countless ladies' events, the majority opinion is that women are not being challenged enough in their learning and understanding of the scriptures.

Additionally, when women are content with what some might call passable knowledge, they can be too easily led astray by things written on Facebook and other social media platforms because it is something that sounds good and makes them feel good. One example is a post that was shared by several Christian women reassuring fellow sisters not to become discouraged because they might be too busy to "climb the mountains and talk with God." The post instead urged women to recognize that God will come to us where we are, doing ordinary,

everyday work when we do not have time to come to Him. While things like this might sound good, it is not Biblically accurate. When we are not able to take something that is shared by others on social media and critically think about what is being said in light of scripture, we put ourselves and others at a higher risk for believing something that is not true.

Just as there are negative consequences for not being knowledgeable in God's word, there are rewards to having a deeper understanding of scripture. Growing our knowledge keeps us from being tossed to and fro (Ephesians 4:14); we are not gullible women easily led astray (2 Timothy 3:6) and we are better equipped to be a helpmeet to our spouses whether the way Priscilla was (Acts 18:26) or by being an example to an unbelieving or weak-in-the-faith spouse (1 Peter 3:1).

Bible knowledge is not something commanded to men only. Women also have a duty to grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior to the edification of the Body of Christ and self. I have been encouraged by various works that are geared towards helping women do just that. If you are looking for something to help you increase your knowledge, check into the following specifically designed for women: Digging Deep In God's Word group on Facebook or at <https://thecolleyhouse.org/>; Come Fill Your Cup (<http://comefillyourcup.com/>) and Choosing That Good Part Retreat group on Facebook.



Wife's Submission
by Wilburta Arrowood

“I would never let a boy tell me what I can do,” the young girl’s voice raised for emphasis, “let alone what I cannot do!” The bible class teacher sighed for it was going to be a trying class.

Why do we as women raise our hackles so high when it comes to submission? [Ephesians 5:22](#) clearly tells us, “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.” I believe it is partially due to the American mindset. Both men and women are taught to think for themselves and to raise themselves up by their bootstraps. We cherish our independence and want to rule our own lives. My question is, can we not do that and still be submissive? Could the answer lie in our understanding of why we need to submit?

It is sad to see a child disrespect and blatantly disobey a parent, even to the point of horrible temper tantrums. Nobody likes to witness such a display. We turn and shake our heads, and yet we condone and display basically the same behavior when we refuse to follow God’s instructions. How many parents do you know who impose arbitrary rules on their children just to incite their rage? Very few, if any, and certainly not God. We know most parent’s rules are for the benefit of the child and the people around them. Bedtime is so the child can get some rest and rebuild their energy. It also gives the parents some respite from that abundance of energy! Ditto for, “eat your vegetables, clean your room, and stay at home during a pandemic.” The rules are for the child’s benefit. We need to realize God’s rules are for our benefit.

May I suggest “Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord,” is for the woman’s benefit? Life is hard, there are many decisions that must be made as we live here on this earth. God’s design is to shield the woman from having to make all those decisions and from bearing the brunt of consequences of them.

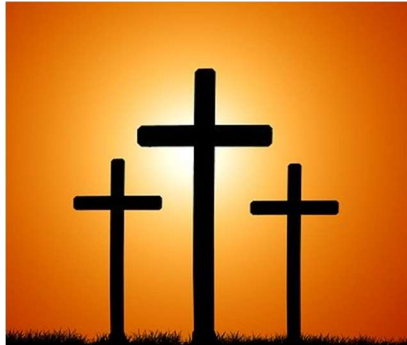
What many women do not seem to realize is that this command does not prohibit them from having some input. They certainly can make their feelings and wishes known. One woman said, “The man is the head of the house, but the

woman turns the neck.” That may sound funny, but in a sense it is true. In a godly marriage, both partners will be Christians, with the same goal of reaching heaven. With that common goal, all other decisions are made within that parameter. A husband is going to make decisions that conform to God’s desire, and the woman is going to want to support her husband and conform to that as well.

That does not mean they will always agree about every little thing, since many decisions do not directly conflict with the overall goal. He wants the kitchen painted white because he already has enough left over from painting the rest of the rooms. Paint colors do not conflict with any of God’s requirements, and she really wants a yellow kitchen. Is she required to just “submit” and take the white paint? No, she is at liberty to present her desires and her reasons. She spends most of her time there, and it will lift her spirits to see a sunny yellow as she works. He insists he still has all that white in the can, and money is tight. She might counter with the idea of having the white tinted at the store. That should be free or low cost. The husband agrees to check it out. Did she fail to “submit?” Not at this point, however, if he returns and says the paint they have cannot be tinted, and there is no money to buy more, she must. The husband has made a decision based on their livelihood for the good of all concerned. The wife is obligated to accept that. In the ideal world, the husband would have brought a small can of yellow paint for her to use to stencil designs in key locations, because he loves her. He would realize marriage is not a dictatorship, but a mutual concern for one another. Even that small can may not be possible, much as he would like, but his main concern is their overall wellbeing, and that means caring for the finances responsibly.

In the scenario above, had the wife insisted on the yellow paint, no matter what, not only would she be in disobedience to God, but she would be jeopardizing the entire family. When disaster came crashing down, she would be the one bearing the blame and watching her family suffer the horrible consequences. By submitting, if that disaster still threatens, her husband will shield her from that. He will be the one managing a means to survive; however, she will be right there

helping him.



Sugar and Spice
by Alice Simmons

“Sugar and Spice and everything nice, that’s what little girls are made of,” according to English poet Robert Southey (1774-1843), commonly found in Mother Goose nursery rhyme collections. God created woman different with purpose and reason. When we read about the Creation (Genesis 1), we quickly see the wisdom and foreknowledge of God. Every twenty-four hours, for six days, He added a basis for the next phase of His work. Finally, by the sixth day, man was created, but God knew man needed a companion. He made woman (Eve), not from the same dust as Adam, but from a bone from Adam’s own body. But not just any bone. God could have used a bone from Adam’s leg, but chose instead to take a rib bone from man’s side, close to his heart. How remarkable was the importance of the woman, made complementary to man, to be his help-meet/helpmate. However, in time she (Eve) yielded to the temptation of Satan through the serpent, and in turn caused Adam to sin as well. Thus, the consequences of their sin would quickly come to pass.

Mrs. Noah had to have helped Noah in some way to prepare for the flood. Sarah, as she left her home and went with Abraham to an unknown land, evidently

went willingly, and surely had charge of the household servants in their travels. Esther was instrumental in saving her people, and had an Old Testament book written about her. Rahab aided the spies in Jericho and thus saved her family, and is a part of the physical genealogy of Jesus' earthly family. Deborah was a judge to the Israelites, who went to battle beside Barak at Kedesh. Ruth, a woman of Moab, left her family and went with Naomi back to Judah, where she became a grandparent to King David. The Old Testament book of Ruth is about her.

Other women, such as Mary Magdalene in the New Testament, aided Jesus and the group traveling with Him. Priscilla helped her husband, Aquila, as they taught Apollos "the way of God more accurately" (Acts 18:26). Other godly women, like Lydia, Dorcas/Tabitha, and Lois and Eunice are also mentioned, along with several other Christian women. But perhaps most important, was the miraculous birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ via a young Jewish virgin named Mary. What an honor was bestowed upon womankind at that time by bringing the Savior into the world in human flesh by being born of a woman!

The Apostle Paul, writing to the Ephesians, compares the love of Christ and His Church to a husband's love for his wife. Even though the wife is subject to her husband, Paul states the husband and wife are to show love and respect in their treatment of one another (Ephesians 5:22-33).

Every member is to be actively involved in the work of the church, but ladies, we have a great responsibility in teaching young children, teen girls, and women. In the epistle to Titus, Paul states the various responsibilities that women are to have: "Older women are to teach what is good and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled" (Titus 2:3-5).

Ladies' Bible classes are a great way to spend time with Christian sisters, studying and fellowshiping, encouraging one another to grow in the Word. Good works can be accomplished by sewing, visiting, taking food, sending cards, and especially praying for those who are ill, in hospitals, or weak in the faith. (Ladies,

we can especially work with our sisters who have gone back into the world, and encourage their return.) Hospitality is a trademark of godliness, showing concern, and inviting others for dinner/fellowship is a blessing, especially to newcomers and visitors. In this we are reflecting God's love when we serve others.

We are sugar and spice and everything nice! We hold the physical family together. We are the shoulder to cry on, the arms to hug a hurt, a kind word spoken, disciplinary action with love when needed, the soft gentle touch, the tender feelings, and the creation made for love. We also help hold our church/spiritual families together with a shoulder to cry on, willing ears to listen and closed mouths that hold in those confidences, arms to hug, and words spoken in love—of encouragement, instruction, or reproof. Let us focus on who we are and our purpose while here. Let us 'work' 'til Jesus comes again!



Because I Say So
by Wilburta Arrowood

How many parents, when challenged, say, "Because I say so?" Is that because they are arbitrary brutes? Of course not. Parents have the authority to make decisions regarding their children's behavior. Loving parents make those decisions for the child's well-being. Do you suppose God loves us any less?

It is a phenomenon that so many people claim to love God and yet balk at His authority to tell us what to do and how to live our lives. Who could possibly love us more than God loves us? And yet, we balk, like a small child. We don't see why God requires certain things, thus they do not make sense to us, so we balk. Small children seldom see the big picture when a parent says, "It's bedtime." A child without sleep will soon become cranky at best and ill over a long term, but they see

neither eventuality. In the same manner, we often do not know why God requires certain things, but we can certainly trust that whatever the reason, it is for our benefit.

Psalm 19:8 “The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.” With God’s words in the Bible we have everything we need for salvation. That is love unbounded.

When we look at Old Testament laws we often still do not know why, but science has proved several of those are absolutely for the benefit of the people. Some examples are below.

Leviticus 11:7-8 “and the pig, for though it divides the hoof, thus making a split hoof, it does not chew cud, it is unclean to you. You shall not eat of their flesh nor touch their carcasses; they are unclean to you.” With the nomadic lifestyle and primitive cooking methods it would have been very difficult for the meat to have been cooked well enough to prevent trichinosis, a serious parasite infection, that left untreated can cause heart problems and even death. The Israelites had no idea that was an issue, but God knew and protected them.

Numbers 5:1-4 “Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 “Command the sons of Israel that they send away from the camp every leper and everyone having a discharge and everyone who is unclean because of a dead person. 3 You shall send away both male and female; you shall send them outside the camp so that they will not defile their camp where I dwell in their midst.” 4 The sons of Israel did so and sent them outside the camp; just as the LORD had spoken to Moses, thus the sons of Israel did.”

The Israelites had no idea about bacteria and how it worked, but God knew, and he protected them. Read the whole book of Leviticus and see how many of the laws God gave the people that have proven to be for their benefit. Those laws were not arbitrary bullying. They protected the people from some serious consequences.

Now, the question is, do we really believe God loved those people more than He does us? Why is it so hard for us to acknowledge God’s authority and do what

He instructs in the way He instructs? Do we doubt His love or His authority?

Consider the following scriptures:

Proverbs 16:25 "There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death." God has never wanted that for us. He sent His only son to save us from our sins and that death, if only we bow to his authority.

Matthew 24:35 "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away."

John 12:48 "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day."

Sometimes we may not fully understand why, but because we know God loves us and wants the absolute best for us, we just need to obey because He "says so."



Questions for discussion and meditation:

1. What is one thing you have done in the last year to increase your knowledge? How can you build upon that?
2. What is the purpose of increasing your Bible knowledge? What would change in your service to God if you increased your knowledge even more?
3. What should our attitude be regarding our commitment to God and His Word?
4. Why is it hard for some people to acknowledge God's authority and to do what God instructs us to do?
5. Discuss the role of husbands and wives regarding submission. How is a wife's submission to her husband a shield and a protection?

Ideas for application of the topic:

1. Take this week to reflect upon you level of knowledge and see where you are: are you still only feeding upon the milk of the Word or upon the meat? Strive for more meat.
2. Think through your friends and ask one or two of them to be your study partners. You can either study the same thing, or just check in at a certain time of day, week, etc. and see how each other's study is going. This can be done in person, via text message, video messaging, or any other means available.
3. Look inward to see if there is anything God has instructed us TO DO or NOT TO DO that is holding you back. Write it down. Set a goal. Write a plan for how you will learn to do, or learn NOT to do, that one thing.
4. List things women can and should do—see suggestions in the articles. Continue doing those things you already do, but add one new thing this month, another next month, etc.

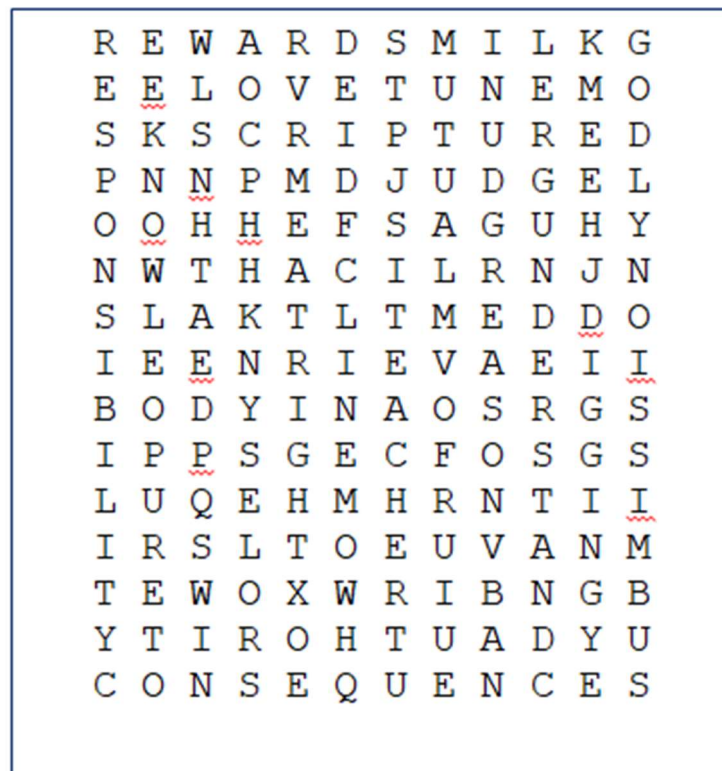
Prayer Suggestions:

1. Pray for an open heart and mind as you gain more knowledge.
2. Pray for an open mind and submissive heart regarding areas in God's Word that give you trouble. Pray for a better, clearer understanding of those issues, and the ability to follow God's guidance.
3. Pray that you can be the Christ-like example God wants you to be, to encourage not only your Christian sister, but those in the world around you.
4. Pray that you can be the encourager, not the discourager, on hard issues you face regarding God's Word. What is one thing you have done in the Word.



Find the following words in the puzzle below:

MEN	GODLY	RESPECT
RIB	JUDGE	REWARDS
BODY	ROLES	TEACHER
KNOW	RIGHT	AUTHORITY
LOVE	WOMEN	SCRIPTURE
MEAT	WORDS	SUBMISSION
MILK	HEAVEN	UNDERSTAND
PURE	MUTUAL	CONSEQUENCES
DEATH	REASON	RESPONSIBILITY
FAITH	DIGGING	



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