



# The Tri-Cities Edifier

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## The Authority of Christ

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“Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power.” — (1 Corinthians 15:24)

Paul is writing to the Corinthians about the return of Christ. He states that Christ will give the kingdom to the Father, thereby ending His rule and authority. Paul emphasizes that, at this time, Christ has all authority, just as Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 28:18. Let us take a moment to reflect on the authority of Christ.

### Authority Is From God

Authority means “the power or right to command, make decisions, enforce obedience.” But who possesses this authority? Ultimately, it is our Creator, God, who has the right to give commands and makes decisions as to what is right and what is wrong. All authority extends from Him.

In the Bible, we see God’s order of authority reflected in Paul’s words: “the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man; and the head of Christ is God” (1 Corinthians 11:3). While God possesses ultimate authority, He has delegated all authority to Christ (Matthew 28:18).

In the affairs of men, God has ordained the establishment of governments, however, their authority is valid only as long as it does not conflict with God’s teachings. In Acts 4, Peter and John were commanded not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus. They responded, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, judge you. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:19-20). They continued to share their message about Jesus, even facing threats. Peter and the other apostles declared, “*We ought to obey God rather than men*” (Acts 5:29). This clearly illustrates that the apostles recognized God as the ultimate authority in all matters.

### The Necessity of Authority

Throughout the scriptures, it is clear that practicing religion without proper authority from God is unacceptable. A prime example is Cain’s sacrifice in Genesis 4, where he offered the fruit of the ground. The Lord rejected this offering because it did not align with His divine authorization. Similarly, in Leviticus 10, Nadab and Abihu made the grave mistake of offering “profane fire” that the Lord had not commanded. As a direct result, fire came from the Lord, consumed them, and they perished before Him (Leviticus 10:1-2).

This emphasis on the need for authority is reinforced in the New Testament. Jesus, during the Sermon on the Mount, speaks about the day of judgment. Many who have engaged in various religious practices will stand before Him, calling Him “Lord.” However, Jesus will respond, “*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’*” (Matthew 7:22-23). This stark warning makes it clear that even those who act in His name without the proper authority are guilty of “lawlessness.” Thus, it is imperative that in all matters of faith and practice, we operate with the authority given by God.

### What This Means To Me

Understanding that Jesus is the one who has all authority and that authority is necessary for what we do in the faith and practice, what must we do? We must look into God’s word and see what it teaches about the Lord’s will. The Lord has

given us all things that 'pertain unto life and godliness' (1 Peter 1:3). As we go through life, we can look to the word of God and find all that God wants us to do. As we then seek to please Him, we do what the scriptures teach us. We do not rely on what family members, friends, or others might say or believe, but we act upon our own faith that comes from the word of God (Romans 10:17). We do what God authorizes us to do in the way He would have us to do it. In doing this, we are then practicing things with God's authority, the proper authority for us. Therefore, we must always seek God's word for guidance, as it is the ultimate source of authority and wisdom.

## Doing More, Trying Harder

By Jamey Hinds

So that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Titus 3:7

In the final assessment, we are saved by God's grace. *"For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment."* (Isaiah 64:6)

*"But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins."* (Rom 3:21–25)

I have never understood why so many will run away from this passage and its stunning message of salvation dependent on God and not on our own merits. We act as if there is a perpetual contradiction in God's word between obedience and faith. Paul himself began and ended the great letter to the Romans with an emphasis "the obedience of faith" (see 1:5; 16:26). Specifically, we read from Romans 16:26,

*But [the revelation of the mystery] has now been revealed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith.*

One of the best "outlines" we have been given from the Holy Spirit is found in Romans 4–6:

- chapter 4 focuses on faith—with the clear point being made about us having the kind of faith Abraham showed.
- chapter 5 concentrates upon grace—which is not like the sin of Adam, affecting all of us because we all sin (5:12).
- chapter 6 emphasizes the imperative action of our being baptized into the death of Christ (v. 4 / Acts 10:48) so that we can also be raised with him by the glory of the Father.

***Faith and baptism are connected intelligently by God himself through grace!***

When Peter was asked, "Brothers, what shall we do?" His response was not complex—"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins" (Acts 2:37- 38)

*What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? (Rom 6:1–3)*

Just as the Lord taught the apostles after they asked for an increase in faith—*So you also, when you have done all that you were commanded, say, "We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty."* (Luke 17:10)

I think, sometimes, that a lot of people are simply allergic to obedience. We are so bound to sin that we automatically refuse to obey. But we are not God who can save and destroy (James 4:11–12). God seeks humility (Isa 66:1–2 / Matt 5:3 / 23:12 / James 4:10 / 1 Pet 5:5–6). The Lord himself is lowly in heart (Matt 11:29 / Php 2:3–11).

Doing what we have been commanded by God is not legalism—it's salvation! And we're not earning salvation by doing what we've been commanded—we're simply trusting him who makes and fulfills all his promises (2 Cor 1:20–22 / 7:1 / Heb6:11–12 / 8:6 / 2 Pet 1:4).

*This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men. Titus 3:8*