

*Title: How To Establish Authority Part #1*

In everything we do in life, we must appeal to the proper standard as a guide. It's that way in driving an automobile, in doing business (exchanging money), etc. A simple line on a whiteboard can illustrate this. How long is the line? We may guess at its length, but we need to appeal to the proper standard (a tape measure) if we want to get the correct answer. It's not enough to appeal to the proper standard. The standard (a tape measure) must be used in the correct way. If we use the right standard **incorrectly**, then our answer will be just as wrong as if we used the wrong standard or no standard at all!

The problem we face in religion is not just that men have no standard or the wrong standard, but that they misuse the true standard! The Bible – the New Testament – is our standard of authority (Colossians 3:17; 2 Timothy 3:16-17). While we recognize that God speaks through His word, the question is “How?” That is, how does God authorize or teach us by means of His word? There are many who profess to follow the true standard. But if they misuse it, they will come to the wrong conclusions and will be just as much in error as if they had never gone to the Bible at all.

How does God authorize a practice? There is no chapter in the Bible where God goes into a detailed study of how He authorizes. God doesn't have to do that. The reason for this is that God speaks to us in such a way that is commonly understood by all men in communications. God does not have to give us a special set of rules to follow in studying the Bible. ***The same rules that apply in all areas of communication apply here also!*** God authorizes by direct statement, example and implication.

1. A father speaking to his son teaches his son in these same three ways.
2. An instruction manual (for operating an automobile) speaks or authorizes in the same way.
3. It's the very nature of any kind of authority to speak or authorize in this way.

Let's focus a little more on direct statements.

1. This is where God has made a positive statement pertaining to the thing at issue. God may tell us to do, not to do, etc. The direct statement is sometimes referred to as ***a command or precept***.
2. Consider Matthew 28:19. Jesus told His disciples to “Go.” They now know what to do.
3. Consider 1 Corinthians 11:24. Jesus gave a command for the Lord's Supper, saying, “This do...”

- Benjamin Lee

