

BIBLE AUTHORITY
(Zechariah 7:1-7)

Introduction:

1. Zechariah was a prophet of God after the Jews had returned from the Babylonian captivity.
2. With Haggi, he stirred up the people to finish rebuilding the temple.
3. The Jews came to Zechariah with a question regarding continuing a fast begun during the Babylonian captivity.
 - a. God asked: “Did you really fast for Me?...Should you not have obeyed the words of My prophets before Jerusalem was destroyed?”
 - b. They had been keeping a fast which was not authorized by the Lord, nor would it have been necessary if they had obeyed God’s Word.
4. Today, many things are done in the name of the Lord which were not authorized by Him.
5. Jesus spoke of such unauthorized practices in His day:

“These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men” (Matt. 15:8,9).

“But why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord’ and not do the things which I say” (Luke 6:46)?
6. One must have authority from God for all he practices in religion.

“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him” (Col. 3:17).

Discussion:

- I. WHAT IS THE AUTHORITY IN RELIGION?
 - A. Our authority is not:
 1. What we think (Isa. 55:8,9).
 2. What seems right to us (Prov. 14:12).
 3. What is in our hearts (Prov. 28:26).
 4. What men teach (Jer. 10:23; 2 John 9).
 - B. God is the ultimate authority (Eph. 4:6).

1. God has given all authority to His Son (Matt. 28:18).
2. Jesus placed that authority in His Word (John 12:48).

II. WE COMMIT PRESUMPTUOUS SIN WHEN WE DO THINGS FOR WHICH WE HAVE NO AUTHORITY.

A. Presumptuous sin is doing what we want without consulting God.

1. Moses wrote: “But the person who does anything presumptuously, whether he is native born or a stranger, that one brings reproach on the Lord, and he shall be cut off from among his people. Because he has despised the Word of the Lord and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt shall be upon him” (Num. 15:30,31)
2. David prayed: “Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me. Then I will be blameless, and I shall be innocent of great transgression” (Psa. 19:13).

B. Both Old and New Testaments warn of the danger of acting without God’s authority.

1. Cain’s worship was rejected (Gen. 4:3-7; Heb.11:4; Rom. 10:17)
2. Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire (Lev. 10:1-3).
3. Saul did not utterly destroy the Amalekites (1 Sam. 15).
4. David disregarded the Lord’s instructions for moving the ark (2 Sam. 6:1-11; 1 Chron. 15:11-15).

III. WHAT ARE SOME WAYS MEN DISREGARD GOD’S AUTHORITY TODAY?

A. Many disregard God’s pattern of worship for the church.

1. The Lord’s supper is to be kept on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7).
 - a. Some have it on other days of the week.
 - b. Some have it monthly, quarterly, or yearly.
2. Christians must give of their means on the first day of the week as God has prospered them (1 Cor. 16:2).
 - a. Some raise money by raffles, auctions, car washes, etc.
 - b. Some tithe or tax their members (2 Cor. 9:7).

3. Some replace congregational singing with choirs, solos, etc.
 - a. God's command to sing is directed to every Christian (Col. 3:16).
 - b. We are participants, not spectators; God is the audience.

- B. Many disregard God's plan of salvation.
 1. It was given by Jesus in the Great Commission (Mark 16:15,16)
 2. It is demonstrated in the conversions in the book of Acts (Acts 2, 8, 9, 10, 16, 18).
 3. It involves five simple steps:
 - a. Hearing the Gospel (Rom. 10:17).
 - b. Believing in Jesus Christ as God's Son (John 8:24).
 - c. Repenting of one's past sins (Acts 2:38).
 - d. Confessing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Acts 8:37).
 - e. Being baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).
 4. Many disregard the Bible teaching on the form of baptism.
 - a. The Greek word means "to dip, plunge, submerge, immerse."
 - b. The Bible plainly says, "We are buried with Him by baptism into death..." (Rom. 6:4).
 - c. Many, however, substitute sprinkling or pouring.
 5. Many disregard the Bible teaching of the purpose of baptism.
 - a. Baptism is in order to be saved (Mark 16:16).
 - b. Baptism is for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).
 - c. Baptism is to wash away our sins (Acts 22:16).
 - d. We are baptized into Christ's death where His blood was shed (Rom. 6:3,4).

Conclusion:

1. Is the Lord is pleased when we ignore His will and do what we want to do?
2. We live in the time foretold when men would not respect God's Word but "heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts" (2 Tim. 4:1-4).
3. If you want to be sure of your salvation, do what God says!

