

Where Does It Lie?

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I. The final authority on religion. (Isaiah 1:2)

A. Major life questions:

1. Is there some major authority?

a. If this authority does not exist, there is no reason for existence or for discussing it.

b. It cannot be dismissed; it is a reoccurring question.

c. It would be a cosmic calamity if there was such an authority and we denied it - we would have to report to it.

d. This would be the tragedy of the soul.

e. We do not take kindly to authority, but if it is a true authority it ought to have the right answers.

1. We ought to know their credentials.

2. What are the facts based on?

f. False authorities.

1. Tradition.

a. Many traditions that all claim to be right.

b. Tradition is the dust bin of history.

c. It is subject to falsehood and error.

2. Numbers.

a. The size of an organization.

b. The masses are never right.

c. They were wrong at Noah's flood.

d. Truth does not become truth based on the amount of people saying it.

3. Nature - instinct within you.

- a. The error of the humanist - Ralph Waldo Emerson.
- b. Humanism makes the human spirit the ultimate test of truth and authority.
- c. They say trust the light within us, but Jesus said that darkness was in us.
- d. The error is in trusting the “light” within. The Bible is more than a book that has patches of inspiration in you.

4. Reason - philosophy.

- a. Which philosophy?
 - 1) Spiritualism?
 - 2) Naturalism?
 - 3) Realism?
 - 4) Materialism?

5. Religion.

- a. Which religion - there is contradiction in every religion of the world.
- b. Religious organization may grow in a variety of ways.
 - 1) Age.
 - 2) Wealth.
 - 3) Prestige.
- c. Religious organizations then increase their power through a variety of means.
 - 1) Customs.
 - a) When the origin is forgotten, it takes on a power.
 - 2) Clothing.
 - a) The clothing would be seen to be strange if not for the assumed authority that went with it.
 - 3) Pageantry.

a) A man is more than the show - what are his credentials? Is he speaking from God now?

b) The church is becoming earthly.

d. Being bound by religion is the same as being bound by Nazism.

B. Authority lies in the Word.

1. It is the spoken voice of God.

2. The day is coming when we will no longer be able to take the Word for granted.

3. Only one authoritative man - Jesus Christ - and because of it only one authority for us - the Word.

4. It is good to stand for something - Protestantism is a positive doctrine.

5. We follow one man, Jesus Christ - He has a right to our obedience because He is God, and as God man, He gave His life for us.

Application questions.

1. Why is the question of authority so important?

2. Which false authorities do you see as the greatest threat to a positive relationship with Jesus Christ? Are these things bad in and of themselves?

3. Why is the authority of the Word central? What implications does this have on our personal lives? How can we be discerners of the Word of God? What will you do personally?
