



THE BEACON BEAM

August 2011

Worshipping with Humble Obedience

He Is Lord

By Jerry Bridges

We live in a day of bumper-sticker slogans. Some are amusing and elicit a chuckle from us; others are repugnant and disgusting. Some are downright dangerous, such as “Question Authority.” Of course all of us have trouble with authority at times. But questioning authority—even resisting it—seems to have been elevated to a national virtue. It is spreading like a virus throughout our society.

The fact is, however, that God has built authority into the entire fabric of our moral universe. Society, even on a purely human plane, could not function without it. The opposite is anarchy: a state of lawlessness or disorder due to a lack of authority.

God established His authority over mankind with Adam in the Garden of Eden: “And the LORD God commanded the man,

“You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die” (Genesis 2:16-17). The effect of this single prohibition was to confront Adam head-on with God’s absolute authority and thus to face him with the demand for clear-cut obedience. Of course, Adam and Eve did not obey, and authority has been a problem for us ever since, both in resisting it and abusing it. We must therefore learn what it means both to submit to authority and to exercise it properly in all our various relationships to authority structures.

Foremost among the fundamental traits of those who follow God is the commitment to live all of life under God’s authority. It should go without saying that those who fear God and follow Him submit to His authority (in its most basic meaning of “right to command”) from Genesis to Revelation. The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17) are an expression of God’s authority. Moses spoke of God’s “commands, decrees and laws” that the Israelites were to obey (Deuteronomy 6:1). The psalmist said, “You have laid down precepts that are *to be fully obeyed*” (Psalm 119:4). God’s people are clearly reminded of this in Jeremiah 7:22-23: “For when I brought your forefathers out of Egypt and spoke to them...I gave them this command: *Obey me*, and I will be your God and you will be my people. Walk in all the ways I command you, that it may go well with you.” Jesus said, “If you love me, you will *obey* what I command” (John 14:15; see also verses 21 and 23). All these references assume divine authority to issue commands and to call everyone to account for obedience to them at the final judgment (Revelation 20:12).

Clearly the issue of God’s authority over His creatures is one of the most basic principles of Scripture. It underlies everything else. We know that the Bible, overall, is the revelation of God’s plan of redemption for sinners through Jesus Christ. But that plan of redemption is basically the

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“Bringing people everywhere under the authority of Jesus Christ is the essence of His Great Commission to the church.”

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Schedule of Services:

Sunday
Morning Worship....9:00 AM
Sunday School.....10:45 AM
Evening Worship.....6:00 PM

Wednesday
Prayer Meeting.....7:00 PM
IMPACT Clubs.....7:00 PM
Teen Ministry.....7:00 PM

Beacon Highlights for August

Special Events for August

01	Tri-State Particular Baptist Fellowship	13	Teen Homeplace Ministry
		14	Lord's Table
03	Teen Focus Groups	21	Members Meeting
07	Pastor Conrad Mbewe (Evening Service)	25	Junior High YAC
16	Pastors/Deacons Meeting		Silver Saints Kickoff

IMPACT Clubs



IMPACT Clubs 2011-2012

Our IMPACT children's clubs begin Wednesday, September 7, at 7:00 p.m. This is a unique opportunity for Bible instruction through Scripture memory and catechism questions. Age appropriate clubs are designed for children beginning at age 3 and continuing through sixth grade. IMPACT clubs meet each Wednesday night 7:00 to 8:15, through the school year. Your children, grandchildren, and the children of your friends and neighbors will benefit from this stimulating approach to learning.

Sympathy ~ We express our heartfelt sympathy to the families of:

Arthur Apple	Nancy Jones	Dwayne Smith
Georgia Goodwin	Lynn Quakenbush	William O. Thompson
Helen Holland	James Simmons	Hildred Walters

The Beacon Broadcast

Monday thru Friday

WDJS 1430 AM (Mt. Olive, NC)	9:00 a.m.
WTA 1490 AM (Knoxville, TN)	9:30 a.m.
WKBA 1550 AM (Roanoke, VA)	10:00 a.m.
WKPA 1390 AM (Lynchburg, VA)	10:00 a.m.
WBAG 1150 AM (Burlington, NC)	12:15 p.m.
WTRU 830 AM (Winston-Salem, NC)	2:00 p.m.

Sunday

WPCM 920 AM (Burlington, NC)	9:00 a.m.
WKXR 1260 AM (Asheboro, NC)	9:30 a.m.
WCRU 960 AM (Charlotte, NC)	9:30 a.m.
WBAG 1150 AM (Burlington, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WTRU 830 AM (Winston-Salem, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WDRU 1030 AM (Raleigh, NC)	10:30 a.m.
WSML 1200 AM (Graham, NC)	8:30 p.m.
WLES 560 AM (Richmond, VA)	10:30 a.m.
KUTR 820 AM (Salt Lake City, UT)	11:00 a.m.
Harbour Light of the Windwards	9:30 p.m.
1400 AM/94.5 FM (Caribbean)	

August Member Birthdays

06	Carol Underwood
11	Brenda Jarrell
12	Larry Apple
17	Charlotte Evans
	David Hurley
21	Pat Duncan
22	Regina Abernathy
	BJ Massey
25	Alan Dyer
26	Crystal Guthrie
28	Kayla Moody
29	Ann Barker
31	Kelly LaTour

Happy
Birthday!

August Missionary Birthdays

03	David Edens
06	Nicky Vaughn
08	Tony Payne
11	Erika Giuliani*
14	Donna Edens
22	Renato Giuliani
24	Joshua Andersen*
26	Alice Campos*
	Catherine Webster*

*Children of Missionaries

Beacon Pastors

Gregory N. Barkman	Senior Pastor
Michael R. Karns	Minister of Christian Education
Robert F. La Tour	Minister of Families
Gerald J. Counts	Minister of Visitation
Gregory L. Phillips	Minister of Music

When the term “liberal” is used in a Christian context, it often means different things to different people. Some equate it with political liberalism, but they are not the same. While it is true that most theological liberals are also political liberals, this is not always the case. Sometimes “liberal” is applied to standards of conduct, “strict” being equated with conservative, and “loose” with liberal. Again, though there are often areas of correspondence, this is not an accurate use of the term. Liberal Christianity should be understood theologically. Liberalism is a different way of understanding Christian doctrine as well as the source from which Christian teaching is derived.

Although it is a vast subject, perhaps we can examine it by looking at a recently published letter on the editorial page of our local newspaper. The author, Billy Griffin, wrote to object to a previous letter by Baptist Pastor Dale Steele, who affirmed that Jesus Christ is the only way to know God. Steele’s letter incensed Griffin, a theological liberal, who wrote to scold him, and set the record straight. By examining what Griffin said, we can understand some of the thought patterns of theological liberalism.

TOLERANCE. The letter begins this way, “Intolerance should have been the title of the Rev. Dale Steele’s letter to the Open Forum on July 10... His article is both divisive and unbecoming of a Christian.” What did Griffin consider intolerant? The citation of John 14:6, where Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no one comes to the Father but by me.” Steele’s “audacity” to state publicly that there is only one way to God is an egregious example of intolerance, according to Griffin, and virtually all theological liberals would

agree. Toleration is a foundational doctrine of liberalism, and anyone who expresses belief in the exclusivity of Christ is deemed intolerant. To counter John 14:6, Griffin quotes John 10:16, “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold.” Griffin asserts that the sheep text is “a direct

“How can anyone reason in such a way? Welcome to the world of theological liberalism.”

contradiction” to John 14:6, and he demands, “which is it?” He apparently believes that the “other sheep” are Jews, Muslims, and others who worship God in their own way, and do not believe in Jesus. If that is so, why does Jesus call them sheep which “I have.” In what sense does Jesus “have them” if they do not believe in Jesus and will never be brought to faith in Christ?

Griffin assumes a contradiction between the two texts, then demands to know which one is correct. He implies that John 10 contradicts and cancels John 14, rendering it meaningless. Apparently it doesn’t occur to Griffin that both texts are true. As nearly every Bible reader knows, the “other sheep” of John 10:16 are Gentiles, who are not of the Jewish fold. Jesus tells His disciples that He will bring Gentiles into the fold along with Jews, but only believing Jews and believing Gentiles. Both Jew and Gentile must believe in

Jesus Christ as the only way of salvation. Far from contradicting John 14:6, this text affirms it. But when “tolerance” is your foundational doctrine, you cannot understand the simplest Bible teaching. Indeed, when “tolerance” is your foundational doctrine, you do not want to hear anything the Bible says which contradicts your faith in diversity. This is a prime example of the way theological liberalism reasons.

THE WAY OF SALVATION. Griffin also quotes Isaiah 56:8, “The Lord which gathereth the outcast of Israel saith, yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him.” That might seem like an odd, rather obscure text, but Griffin continues to press for inclusive diversity. He interprets Isaiah to say that God will gather Muslims, Buddhists, and so forth without any change in their thinking. Griffin is correct that God will gather people from all over the world, out of every language, race, and culture, but he is profoundly mistaken that any of these will be gathered apart from faith in Jesus Christ. The Bible repeatedly affirms the astounding news that God will save people from all over the world. The Bible also repeatedly tells us that He will do this by bringing individuals from every race and tongue to faith in Christ.

If that were not enough, Griffin refers to the Beatitudes, and states that Jesus pronounces these blessings without any reference to John 3:16 or John 14:6. What? Does it therefore follow that John 3:16 and John 14:6 are irrelevant? Griffin apparently thinks so. To him, the “silence” of Matthew 5 proves the invalidation of John 3:16. Bizarre! How can anyone reason in such a way? Welcome to the world of theo-

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And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression (1 Tim. 2:14).

To deceive per Strong's Concordance is: *to cheat, i.e. delude*. Per Merriam-Webster: *to cause to accept as true or valid what is false or invalid*. *Delude: To mislead the mind or judgment of and implies deceiving so thoroughly as to obscure the truth.*

Woman in the Garden of Eden was deceived by Satan via the serpent. How did Satan accomplish this deception? It may have come about somewhat like this: He came along side of Woman intending to delude her, that is, to get her to wonder about what God had said about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in order to mislead her. What did God really tell Adam? Maybe Adam misunderstood God. Surely if God didn't want us to eat He did not want us to touch either (Gen. 3:3). Did He really mean of all the trees in the Garden with fruit good to eat that there is only one that He did not want us to partake of? *Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?* (Gen. 3:1). With all the other trees why just this one? Woman, go ahead and eat *Ye shall not surely die*. Maybe the command applies to the man only and does not include me. *After all Adam was the one God talked to about it. Anyway, God is just trying to keep something to Himself that will make us wise like Him! What is this dying anyway?*

The Master Deceiver deceived Woman and he has been using his art of deception ever since. And since mankind is a religious creature we would expect him to use religion to that end. History has proven this expectation correct. Deception concerning the worship of God has been with us at least since Nimrod's Babel; paralleling or replacing the unseen Creator

with creature images. Untruth was mixed in with truth about the Woman and her Seed to obscure truth, thus as the nations developed from the days of Babel so did paganism. No doubt with Satan's help and to his great glee men turned from their Creator and in spiritual blindness worshiped the creature more than the Creator (Romans 1:21-25).

“...the adoration of images of God's creation are unacceptable in worshipping Him.”

Following Babel, In the course of time, as the nations became more and more apostate/pagan God called Abraham out of the idol worship of Ur and through him separated a people for Himself. But when He brought His people out of Egypt, on their way to the Promised Land they were introduced to the paganism of that land. Thus the molten calf, an image of a creature, at the foot of Sinai: *This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt! And when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation, and said, Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD* (Exodus 32:3-5). Surely the Israelites did not believe the molten calf was God Himself yet Aaron presented it as a representation of and an assistant in the worship of Jehovah. While the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows His handiwork, the adoration of images of

God's creation are unacceptable in worshipping Him. Satan via Israel's sinful hearts used a creature image to deceive Israelites concerning acceptable worship of Jehovah (LORD) and he has done much the same within Christianity. There is no place this is more evident than in the Roman Catholic Church.

With the “conversion” (312AD) and decrees of Roman Emperor Constantine some sects of pagan religions began to Christianize. The Roman Catholic Church is the depository of much Christianized paganism. For instance Ishtar, an Assyrian and Babylonian moon goddess also called Ash-toreth and Astarte is the queen of heaven (Jeremiah 7:14, 44:17-25). Pope Pius IX in 1854 declared that Mary the Mother of Jesus “... has been appointed by God to be the Queen of heaven and earth but not made official till 1954 by Pius XII”. Surely the Popes did not have Ishtar in mind (or did they!) as they thought of and in some way crowned Mary; however, the pagan goddess Ishtar lives on today as the Virgin Mary standing on the moon in Roman Catholic iconography. Of course Romanism points to Rev. 12:1 as justification. While a direct link between the Catholic Church and paganism, as in *The Two Babylon* by Alexander Hislop, is difficult to make, the existence of many religious icons in Catholicism evidences such link. But with just enough truth dispersed within untruth some true believers have been deceived into accepting Roman Catholicism as just another denomination of Christianity. While not approving all his works I point out that James G. McCarthy, an ex-catholic, in his books *The Gospel According to Rome* and *Conversations with Catholics* clearly shows just the opposite. Yet some well known Protestants have put their blessing on

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Theological Liberalism

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logical liberalism. The Bible must be edited to fit preconceived ideas of what liberals believe it ought to say. If they find a text to support their doctrine, they will use it. If you quote a text that contradicts their doctrine, they will declare it invalid. To a liberal, the Bible is not the Word of the Living God. It is a manmade book to be shaped like putty to teach whatever they want.

It gets even worse when Griffin cites Christ's encounter with the Rich Young Ruler. He says, "In Matthew 19:16, a man asked Jesus how to achieve eternal life and Jesus replied, 'keep the commandments.' He said nothing about belief in Jesus." In other words, Jesus taught that salvation is by works, by keeping the commandments, not by faith in Christ. Never mind that Jesus tells him in verse 21 to sell all he has and follow Jesus, another way of telling him to exercise supreme faith in Christ. How can one discuss Christian doctrine with someone who employs such convoluted thinking? It really doesn't matter what you demonstrate from the Bible, for the theological liberal will either pronounce your text invalid, or twist another verse out of context to cancel, in his mind, the meaning of your text. There is no way to reason with someone who, though claiming to be a Christian, treats the Bible in such a disrespectful manner. J. Gresham Machen, professor at Princeton Theological Seminary in the 1920's, and founder of Westminster Theological Seminary, in his book, *Christianity and Liberalism*, declared theological liberalism to be a totally different religion. It is not another branch of the Christian faith comparable to the various denominational varieties within Christianity. Rather it is a different religion altogether, one that

has dominated mainline Protestantism in America for several decades. It may be called "Christian," but it is not truly Christian at all.

*"In other words,
toleration is
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INTOLERANCE. The Griffin letter to the Burlington, NC, *Times-News* demonstrates the intolerance of theological liberalism, despite their claim to tolerance. The author stated that Dale Steele's citing of John 14:6 was "unbecoming of a Christian." Come again? All Steele did was quote the Bible. Since when does quoting Scripture constitute unchristian behavior? What Steele stated is a basic tenant of Orthodox Christianity, shared by millions of Christians down through the centuries and around the world today. I wonder if Griffin would have showed similar intolerance for a Muslim who expressed sincere belief in the teachings of Mohammed? If a Muslim said that the only way to Paradise was by keeping the commandments of Allah as delivered by the prophet, Mohammed, would Griffin have labeled him "divisive and unbecoming of a Muslim?" I imagine he would fall all over himself to show utmost respect for this diverse religious viewpoint, and urge others to do the same. In other words,

toleration is required for everyone and everything except Bible Christianity. Inconsistent? You bet. But liberals cannot see their own inconsistencies. They are blind leaders of the blind. Jesus told His disciples, "If the world hates you, you know that it hated me before it hated you...But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent me" (John 15:18-21). I quote one of the Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount, a portion of Scripture theological liberals hold in high regard. Jesus said, "Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you" (Matthew 5:11,12). May God grant us grace to declare truth whether received or rejected, admired or ridiculed. Let us honor Jesus by proclaiming His exclusive position as Savior and Lord, and that there is no salvation apart from Him. It is a privilege to suffer reproach for His sake.

The first clue was an unusual noise coming from the direction of the garage, but the view from the back door revealed nothing out of order. The second clue I spotted as I drove away from the house. It was the unbelievable mess on the garage door. Birds!! Yes, more problems with birds! It seems our acquisition of new garage doors has done more than just make that end of the house look better. The new doors have windows, and those windows are, for some reason, quite a draw for the pair of birds that has taken up residence in the crepe myrtle near the corner of the house. These birds, hereafter referred to as Bird Couple, sit on the tiny ledge at the bottom of the window and peck, sing, and-well-do what birds do, and do and do! They are not content to dirty just one spot, but work their way across all eighteen feet of door.

One day, after hosing the doors clean, I decided to leave them open and thereby unavailable to Bird Couple, thinking they would move on. I was right. Move on they did...not on, but IN...INTO the garage. There they sat, one of them on the antenna of the car, the other, on the side mirror of the van, singing away at high volume. Now their mess was on both vehicles.

What in the world has attracted these birds to the window and our cars? I think it's their reflection! That nice long window is really just a nice long mirror to them, and I've noticed, with some embarrassment, that now, every car leaving our property is wearing the same white and brown streaks on the side door, always near the mirror!

What are we to do about Bird Couple? Well, the solution is easy! Knock their nest out of the tree! Soon after their arrival I checked to see if there was a nest in the crepe myrtle and sure enough, way up high, I

spotted it, snuggled into the branches. It would require a very long stick, but one swift hit should take care of it. Down would come babies, cradle and all, Bird Couple would go away, and my garage doors would once again be clean.

“Good parenting doesn’t happen by chance. It’s intentional!”

But I couldn't do it. I know they are just birds. I don't even like birds and I'm tired of their mess. But sitting up there in those branches is more than just a collection of pine needles, twigs, and moss. It's a home with a mother's babies in it. They're not my babies, but they are someone's babies. And unless they are hurting my babies, I must let them be.

Amazing what we'll do for the children, isn't it? When they're tiny and vulnerable, completely needy, there's nothing we wouldn't do for them. But... when they get a little older, and not quite so new, when they become a bit more self-sufficient, when we are dealing with more than cute, cuddly sweetness, and have moved on to disobedience, whining, bad manners, sibling rivalries, messy rooms and homework...well, we find a bit of selfishness creeping in. We start thinking too much about our needs, our 'unused' abilities, what we deserve. Sometimes we just get plain tired. And like Bird Couple, we get focused

on our own reflection. We'd still say there's nothing we wouldn't do for our kids, but our actions belie what we say. What are some of the most critical needs of children and just how much of it do we do?

How about the need for praying parents? Of course we all pray for our kids...“Lord, please keep them safe/healthy/successful/happy.” But if this ‘as they drive out of the driveway’ kind of prayer is all there is, how much praying are we really doing? I must admit to praying many of these prayers and that they are often prayed with my own reflection in view, for these things will make ME happy! Would prayer for holiness be more beneficial?

Then there's the matter of discipline...another need of all children. It's SUCH hard work and we're so tired, and we'll attend to it the next time they need it. And besides, we know we can't teach it very well when we struggle with self-discipline. Right! But our disciplining OF them becomes self-discipline IN them. Will we do this for our children?

And one you might not think of as being for the children...Loving their other parent. Really? Years ago I heard a man say, “The best thing I can do for my children is to love their mother.” How wise! Your children need two good parents. The best parents love one another and do all they can to ensure that their children have the blessing of TWO parents.

Is there anything we won't do for our children? Maybe we should ask the question this way: What am I willing to do for my children? Good parenting doesn't happen by chance. It's intentional! Children-of all ages-need good parents who have learned to focus somewhere other than on their own reflection.

Be Not Deceived

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Roman Catholicism in an ecumenical accord known as Evangelicals and Catholics Together (ECT). The signers of this accord declare “Evangelicals and Catholics are brothers and sisters in Christ.” Have these Protestant brethren been deceived?

In chapter 10 of *Conversations with Catholics* McCarthy tells of a conversation he had with a Catholic nun while riding a bus in Ireland. After telling her that salvation is of God, by grace through faith she replied “I agree. Salvation is by faith in Christ. Christ died on the cross for our sins. We are saved through Him.” And when asked if she would go to heaven when she died she responded “Yes, I’m trusting Christ to get me there.” McCarthy thought to himself “Maybe she’s a believer, a sister in Christ. I had never met a priest or nun who could explain the biblical way of salvation. *I guess there is always a first!*” When they arrived in Dublin and McCarthy asked if she was visiting family Sister Teresa replied “No, I’m going to Rome. Pope John Paul has declared this a holy year. Anyone taking a pilgrimage to Rome can earn a plenary indulgence.” McCarthy continues: ...Catholicism maintains that every sin incurs a penalty, called *temporal punishment*. The Church teaches that the sinner must pay this penalty either through suffering while alive on earth or after death in purgatory. There is one other option. Rome claims that it is the steward of a vast reservoir of credits earned by Christ, Mary, and the Saints. It dispenses from this reservoir credits, called indulgences, which cancel the debt of temporal punishment. A partial indulgence takes away a portion of the person’s penalty. A plenary indulgence, like the one Sister Teresa was attempting to obtain, cancels all temporal punishment that a person has accumulated up until that time.

Pope John Paul II..., was offering Catholics visiting Rome that year a

plenary jubilee indulgence. Pilgrims were required to receive the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist, visit the basilicas of Saint Peter, Saint John Lateran, Saint Paul, and Saint Mary Major. At each location [image] they had to pray for the pope’s intentions (his personal prayer requests). Those Catholics meeting these requirements would receive a complete remission of the temporal punishment of their sins.

I couldn’t let Sister Teresa’s admission of reliance on such an unbiblical practice to get her to heaven pass without comment: “I thought that you said that Christ had died for your sins, that salvation was through trusting Him.” “Christ has done His 99 percent,” Sister Teresa answered. “We have to cooperate by doing our 1 percent.” ... Apparently, Sister Teresa had no qualms about adapting the explanation of her faith for my evangelical ears. ...

Now, having lost most of its ability to terrorize dissenters with threats of spiritual damnation, torture, and execution at the hands of civil collaborators, the Roman Catholic Church has changed its tactics.... The one time heretics have become the *separated brethren*.... The spirit of the day is ecumenism.... Wherever people are responding to the true gospel, the Church is donning an evangelical disguise. This has proven so successful that even some well-known evangelicals have been fooled, convinced by the Vatican’s ecumenism that the leopard has changed his spots. ... Rome has not changed, and it is not about to change. ... Read the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the writings of Pope John Paul II, and current Catholic periodicals. ... There you will find a false gospel of infant baptismal justification, good works and sacraments that improve one’s standing before God, a merit system whereby Catholic’s working in cooperation with grace can earn eternal life, and a reaffirmation of purgatory as a place where Catholics must atone for

their sins. Roman Catholicism rejects justification by faith alone through the imputed righteousness of Christ. ... Bible-believing Christians should know better than to be fooled [deceived] by Rome’s ecumenical façade. ... the Roman Catholic Church can imitate true Christianity, but only so far. Its false gospel cannot bring forth genuine spiritual life to dead sinners.”

So concludes Chapter 10 of *Conversation with Catholics*.

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed (Ga. 1:8-9).

So what about our Catholic friends? The Apostle Paul never added 1% or any % of anything to salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone (Eph. 2:8-9). If anyone leaves this world trusting in anything added to the gospel to get them to heaven then hell will be their eternal abode.

Believers need to be discerning about what is going on in Christianity today and not just in Roman Catholicism. What about Protestant Christianity? Is evangelism and worship by the church today geared to the secular culture around it? Who is standing behind our pulpits? Is the word of God being proclaimed or just some feel good religious/social/works advice for those in the pews. Such advice can be and often is deceptive. What about the music used in our worship services? Does the instruments and doctrine bring our heart to and exalt our sovereign Creator or is it simply entertainment. Does it move us to God and away from just feeling religiously satisfied? Does our congregational worship exalt the Creator even as we present our needs and seek His blessings?

Be careful! Satan is a Master at deception.

He Is Lord

(Continued from page 1)

reestablishment of His authority over rebellious human beings whom He calls out of darkness into the kingdom of His Son (Acts 26:18; Colossians 1:13). The whole purpose of Jesus' death was to "redeem us from all wickedness [that is, from rebellion against His authority] and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good [to live under His authority]" (Titus 2:14).

Bringing people everywhere under the authority of Jesus Christ is the essence of His Great Commission to the church. Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:18-19). I first learned this passage from the King James Version, which reads "all power" instead of "all authority." Since power connotes authority, I originally understood Jesus' statement to be what I called the "enabling cause"—that He was saying, "Since I have all power, you will be successful in carrying out My commission."

Authority, however, speaks

primarily of the right to command, although it carries with it the idea of the corresponding power to enforce that command. *To make disciples, then, is to bring people under the sway of Christ's authority.* It is to teach them to obey everything He has commanded us.

Baptist commentator John Broadus wrote this about Jesus' words:

*To disciple a person to Christ is to bring him into the relationship of pupil to teacher, "taking his yoke" of **authoritative** instruction, accepting what he says as true because he says it, and submitting to his requirements as right because he makes them....We see then that Christ's intimated **authority** is not only the basis of our duty to disciple others, but the basis of all true discipleship. (emphasis added)*

Everything Jesus teaches us to do is, of course, wise and good, and the more we grow in the Christian life the more we see this to be true. But we obey Him not because we judge

His commands to be wise and good, but because He is God and has a perfect right to be believed and obeyed. We do not, to use a popular expression, "make Christ Lord of our lives." He is Lord. Our duty is to acknowledge His Lordship and submit to His authority.

Ask yourself this question: Do I wholeheartedly acknowledge God's authority, both in His precepts and His providences, in my life? Do I resent or question any of His providential circumstances in my life?

Taken from *I Will Follow You, O God: Embracing Him as Lord in Your Private Worship* by Jerry Bridges. © 2001
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Colorado Springs, CO 80921.
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