

By What Authority

From time to time I have a tendency to reflect on the days of my youth. Among those memories is a question I hear my siblings ask me, “Who told you to do that?” The answer I gave was probably not the answer they were seeking. The question has to do with permission. Permission can only be granted by the proper authorities. The question could have been asked this way, “Did momma or daddy give you permission to do that?” When it came to authority in the home, the Dedmon kids understood who was in charge. However, there was one of the five who seemed to be clueless in this authority business.

I see the need today to ask the question to religious leader across the country. “Who told you to that in your worship services?” Jesus was asked this question by the chief priests and elders, “And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?” (Matthew 21:23). We know from Scripture that Jesus had God’s approval and permission for all He did. Jesus was doing the work the Father sent Him to do. “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do” (John 17:4).

There are many things being practiced in the *so-called name of Christ* today that does not have Heaven’s permission to practice.

In the business of salvation, “Who told you that salvation comes by faith alone and praying ‘the sinners’ prayer’”? Where is the authority for such practice? If praying this prayer, *"God, I know that I am a sinner. I know that I deserve the consequences of my sin. However, I am trusting in Jesus Christ as my Savior. I believe that His death and resurrection provided for my forgiveness. I trust in Jesus and Jesus alone as my personal Lord and Savior. Thank you Lord, for saving me and forgiving me! Amen!"*¹ This is not from God. The Bible does not record on single instance where a person was told to pray in order to receive salvation. If prayer saved the alien sinner, don’t you think Paul; the chosen apostle to the Gentiles, would have if anyone could? But notice, “And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: but rise, and enter into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do” (Acts 9:5,6). When Saul arrived in the city of Damascus he was baptized for the forgiveness of his sins (Acts 22:16). There is an instance where someone was told to pray for the forgiveness of sin, “Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray the Lord, if perhaps the thought of thy heart shall be forgiven thee (Acts 8:22). However, Simon had believed and was baptized prior to this (Acts 8:13). This is a Christian who is praying for forgiveness of sin, not an alien sinner.

What we teach and ask others to believe must be in the name of the Lord, by His authority. The only way we can know it is by the Lord’s authority is to read it in the Bible.

Bill Dedmon – 1/21/2007

¹Got Questions Ministry – gotquestions.org
