

## By What Authority?

Acts 4:1-12

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## I can be my own boss

- There is an appeal to not have to answer to anyone
- This can be a slippery slope leading to destruction
  - We see this in the time of the Judges
    - Judges 21:25 – “everyone did what was right in his own eyes”
    - Their behavior went from bad to worse to wretched
  - It remains popular with young adults ... rebel against limits

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## Those in power have different ideas

- People in power tend to want to hold onto it
- The Jewish rulers demanded to know the authority of the apostles to teach their doctrine
  - Acts 4:5-7 – “By what power or by what name have you done this?”
- What were they asking?
  - Power (definition) – “*dunamei* – force, strength, power ... ultimately, authority”
  - Authority (definition) – “*exousia* – authority, right, power”

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## Those in power have different ideas

- What were they asking?
  - By what power ...
    - Apostles' power could not have originated in men
    - Jesus demonstrated power that could only originate with God
      - Acts 2:22 – “attested by God to you ...”
  - It meant God was backing Jesus
    - John 3:2 – “... unless God is with him ...”

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## Those in power have different ideas

- What were they asking?
  - By what power ...
    - Jesus had promised His apostles power
      - Acts 1:8 – “... you shall receive power ...”
    - They preached with power
      - I Corinthians 2:1-5 – “in the power of God”
  - The Jewish leaders were asking who is the authority behind the miracles they were doing

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## Those in power have different ideas

- What were they asking?
  - By what power
  - By what name
    - What authority was backing their teaching
  - Jesus stated that He came with the authority of His Father
    - John 5:31-47 – “... in My Father's name”
      - Some claim authority in themselves
      - Not a single miracle to back them up

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## Those in power have different ideas

- What were they asking?
  - By what power
  - By what name
    - Jesus promised the disciples they would act with His delegated authority
      - Mark 16:17 – “these signs will follow those”
      - The apostles were to appeal to His authority
        - John 14:11-14 – “If you ask anything in My name”
      - The Jewish leaders asked who gave them the right to teach these things

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## Those in power have different ideas

- What were they asking?
  - By what power
  - By what name
  - The answer was “Jesus”
    - Acts 4:10 – “by the name of Jesus Christ”
    - The apostles were acting as Jesus had authorized
  - Simon the sorcerer meets Peter/John
    - Acts 8:17-19 – “he offered them money”
    - Authority: “*exousia* – authority, right, power”
    - Authority is not bought, it is granted
      - Acts 8:20-23 – “... the gift of God ...”

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## The need for authority

- Rest Stop
- Principles of authority replaced with emotional, irrational desires to do as one pleases
  - Selfishness, pride, evil desires
- Salvation can only be gained through the one authorized to give it
  - Acts 4:12 – “there is no other name ...”
    - There is no authority other than Jesus
    - Jesus inherited a more excellent authority
      - Hebrews 1:4-6 – “a more excellent name”
    - Jesus has the highest authority
      - Philippians 2:9-11 – “above every name”

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## The need for authority

- God teaches the need for His authority in every aspect of our lives ... via Jesus Christ
  - Colossians 3:17 – “do all in the name ...”
  - Jesus was given all authority
    - Matthew 28:18 – “All authority has been given to me ...”
  - Jesus' authority is above all others
    - Ephesians 1:19-23 – “head over all things”
  - Our conduct must have His prior approval

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## Examples of recognizing authority

- Moses spoke to Pharaoh in God's name
  - Exodus 5:23 – “... speak in Your name”
    - Moses spoke only God's words
- Nadab and Abihu offered “profane fire”
  - Leviticus 10:1-2 – “He had not commanded”
  - Their actions did not honor God
    - Leviticus 10:3 – “I must be regarded as holy”

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## Examples of recognizing authority

- Uzzah was struck dead for trying to steady the ark
  - II Samuel 6:6 – “Uzzah put out his hand ...”
  - He was struck down for his irreverence
    - II Samuel 6:7 – “God struck him there ...”
  - They had not followed God's orders
    - I Chronicles 15:13 – “because we did not consult Him ...”
    - They had not carried the ark per God's instructions
    - By doing it their own way, they showed no respect for God ... followed man's authority (King David)

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## Examples of recognizing authority

- A centurion's comment on the need for authority
  - Matthew 8:5-9 – “But only speak a word”
- The Jewish leaders questioned Jesus' authority
  - Matthew 21:23 – “who gave You this authority”
    - Jesus answered that there were only two options
      - God or man

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## Everything we do must come from God

- When we speak, speak as the oracles of God
  - I Peter 4:11 – “that in all things God may be glorified ...”
- We are not to think beyond what is written
  - I Corinthians 4:6 – “that none of you may be puffed up ...”
  - Galatians 1:8-9 – “preach any other gospel”
- We are to examine everything carefully
  - I Thessalonians 5:21-22 – “Test all things”
  - Including those things stated in the pulpit

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## Everything we do must come from God

- Churches have introduced unscriptural practices
  - Excuses:
    - It meets our needs
    - It gets more people involved
    - It brings in a lot of people
    - It generates enthusiasm
    - It allows us to get things done
    - We really like it
    - It keeps our young people's interest
    - It creates a warm, accepting environment
  - These are not necessarily bad
    - But we must have Book, Chapter, and Verse

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## Everything we do must come from God

- We must do what is right
  - Acts 10:35 – “fears Him and works righteousness”
- We cannot cross the boundary of what's allowed
  - II John 9 – “... does not have God”
- There is only one way
  - John 14:6 – “No one comes to the Father except through Me”
- There is no other authority
  - Acts 4:12 – “... there is no other name under heaven ...”

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