

Final Authority

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[0 : 00] Final authority. Final authority. We have need of plain speaking in these days that we live in. In these times. And the Lord Jesus tells us of authority.

He is the authority. The authority. He spoke with authority. And one of the greatest tragedies of our time is powerless preaching. We have need to be straightforward.

To be telling it like it is. Straight shooting. Preaching. To not pull any punches. Pray for me that I be such a preacher.

We have need of preaching. With authority. Preaching without apology. Uncompromised preaching. And standing forth rightly for the truth.

In days where error seems to prevail at every quarter. And these are also some things that need counteracting in these times. We have great need of spiritual discernment.

[0 : 56] We know there's well-meaning people that are in Christian-like circles that are putting people under bondage and deception and cult-like. This is a real danger for our world today.

Well-meaning people. But fooled and fooling others. Deceived and being deceived. We must try the spirits. Whether they are of God. And test everything.

Prove all things. As we read in the scriptures. It says prove all things. Hold fast that which is good. 1 Thessalonians 5.21.

Paul says prove them. Test them. Check it out. Test it. Try it. See if it's true. The question is for all of us. What is your final authority?

What is it? What is your final authority? In our teaching and preaching we must not hold back from addressing issues that matter. We have to tell the truth.

[1 : 53] Speak the truth in love of course. Speak it nevertheless. And as a preacher I have a God-given duty to warn and to protect the flock.

Now that's hard for me. Sometimes I've got to have some honest talks with people. And I've got to raise things and check things. And urge God's people to deeper devotion.

Not out of putting them under my thumb or under bondage. Or weighing people down with man's rules. Or tying them up with men's ideas.

But the fact is that one day I will give account. Here's a scripture. Now some like to use this one because they like to say obey me. It says in Hebrews 13, 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves. For they watch for your souls. As they that must give account. That they may do it with joy and not with grief.

[2 : 54] For that is unprofitable for you. Now there's needful authority that we come under. And as a church there's authority within the church. But it's not an authority to put people under bondage.

But to set people free. It's an authority to release people into ministry. It's an authority to encourage and uplift and send out. This is the authority.

And the authority that's incumbent on me is to warn the flock. To protect the flock. To raise alarm about wolves and warning about doctrine that's obscure.

And to protect the flock. It's a loving authority. It's an authority to protect. To encourage. To uplift. And why? Because one day this bunny here has to give account to the almighty God.

About what I have done. What I have done. What I have said. What I have taught. My preaching. My teaching. My doctrine. As to how I've led this fellowship. As the under shepherd.

[3 : 53] Before God. That is a big call. That is a hard ask. There is a heavy responsibility here. That I face. And I pray.

Pray for me. That one day I may give account for your souls. Not with grief. But with joy. To see people nourished up.

And encouraged. And growing. And vibrant. And serving. And faithful. And blessed. Not those that. I have to give account with.

Tears. With grief. Because people have backslid. And stumbled. And fallen. And gone off. Here there. Or what not. And so there's a heavy responsibility. And it falls on me. Before God. And I bear that responsibility. The Bible says. That there's a heavy responsibility. On those who would be. Teachers. And preachers.

[4 : 50] And so. There's a need for me. To be faithful. In preaching it like it is. In telling you the truth. In at times rebuking. And reproving.

They're strong words aren't they? To rebuke. Means to say that's wrong. To reprove. That means. Stop doing that. Don't do that. It's not good for you. It's. Best to leave that off. Get off of that. Stop doing that. To reprove. To rebuke. To counteract error. To expose it. And speak the truth. This is a heavy responsibility. So pray for me. Pray for everyone who preaches. That we faithfully deliver before God. What we must. Paul says to Timothy. Preach the word. Preach it. Be instant. In season.

Out of season. Says do this. Don't hold back from doing this. Here. There. At all times. He uses these same words.

[5 : 46] Reprove. Rebuke. Exhort. So reprove. Stop it. Don't do it. Rebuke. That's error. Exhort.

Encourage. Lift. Comfort. Bless. With all longsuffering. And doctrine. So faithfully. Resolutely. Day by day. Sunday by Sunday.

Moment by moment. Hour by hour. With all longsuffering. And doctrine. With teaching. We need to preach doctrine. There's need for doctrine. Because we know.

As we've heard. About false doctrine. About false cults. And false religions. And false. Leanings. False spirits. False prophets. And many of the popular TV preachers.

Are very doubtful. Some of them. Not saying all of them. But some. And we're living in a day when it's a consumer culture isn't it? Oh.

[6 : 42] I don't like what Andrew said today. I'm going down the road next time. I'm not going to hear him again. Because we're living in that consumer culture. It's the post-modern culture. Where people church shop.

And church hop. We do the church hop. We do the church hop. It's like a little dance. A little jig and jive that they do. Oh. I'm going to go down the road. Because I don't like. He's saying it too.

He's cutting too close to the bone. He's a bit too heavy. He's a bit too hard. He's a bit too strong. And people rate churches don't they? They rate them. Oh.

I'll give it a six and a half today. You know. They rate the church. Whatever it be. The music. Oh. That's got to be a one today. You know. The song leading.

Oh. That's less than one. You know. They rate churches. They rate pastors. They rate messages. They rate sermons. As if they give them a score. Whoa. You know. I've got to get my marker out.

[7 : 37] And you know. What do they do? I'll write it down. And I'll hold it up. You know. That's what they're like. Isn't it? In some places. In some churches. It's the consumer culture. It's how we are today.

We score everything. We rate everything. You know. It's a wonder they've not got an app for it. Isn't it? You know. You're a trip advisor. You rate the trip. And now you rate the church. You know. Makes you wonder.

How would they rate Jesus? How would they rate the Lord Jesus? We've got such an array of choices today. So many multiple TV channels. You know. If you don't like this one.

Just press the button. And go to the next one. And some would rather stay home as well. And channel surf. For their favourite preacher. And the latest ear tickling message. Rather than make the effort to attend church.

After all. We've got social media. We've all got some kind of screen or other. To obsess us. And distract us. There's TED Talks. There's YouTube. You name it.

[8 : 34] If you don't like what you hear. Just tune out. And change channel. That's how we program today. Isn't it? Find something a bit more palatable. Something a bit more easy listening. Something a little bit more comfortable.

That kind of tickles where I scratch. Or scratches where I itches. Or vice versa rather. But maybe a bit of Christian rock perhaps. Depends what mood we're in. Doesn't it?

That people like to kind of change the channel. As it were. And maybe we even tune out of Christian truth. Altogether. And find something more secular. After all. That's even easier listening.

Isn't it? Just tune out of Christianity. Altogether. Maybe something new age. Maybe something Eastern mysticism. Maybe just go. Om. Or whatever your fancy is at the time.

And friends. The ignorance is palpable today. Isn't it? I visited one professing Christian of late. And front and centre. As I walked into the lounge room. Was a Buddha sitting on the mantelpiece.

[9 : 31] A Buddha sitting on the mantelpiece. A professing Christian. Many are ignorant in these days. Amen. Graven images. What does it say? I had one experience where.

There was a Christian man I knew. And someone gave his little children a Santa. It was like a little statue of Santa. And he went and smashed it on the ground. Because I'm not going to have any graven images.

Sometimes we can get a bit radical about these things. No. I'm not going to have a bar of that. Because that's a graven image. You know. Maybe we need to get a bit radical. Instead of being ignorant.

Think about the ignorance these days. Some will revere a man. Who they call the Pope. The Pope. They call him their final authority. You know. When he speaks ex cathedra.

He speaks as it were. The very living words of God. Uttered from his mouth. That's how they revere. The so called. His holiness. But when you grasp.

[10 : 31] And realize what. He actually stands for. This so called. Holy father. Is actually. One of the. Most.

Evil. Men. On the planet. Because of what he stands for. He is. An anti-Christ. He is a fraud. He is the ultimate con artist. Representative of a system. That is anti-Christ. Counterfeit. Christ. Yet some would uphold this man.

They might even have his photo on the wall. And tune into his. Sayings as if they were. Divinely. Inspired. Uphold him as a man. No. Authority.

Brethren. We have gone astray. We have gone astray. In the church. As. As it is at large. Where many. Evangelicals. And Protestants.

[11 : 30] Even. Promote the Pope. It's a sad. Situation. Truly in these days. With many false prophets. Posing as Christian leaders. We must raise our voices.

And expose. Reprove. Rebuke. Reject. Their dangerous teachings. Tell it like it is. Tell people. What it is. Smash the idol.

Smash it to bits. Obliterate it. You know. Back in the. Old days. When the reformers. And revivalists. And revivalists of old. Came into some places. They had an iconoclasm.

Iconoclasm. What did they do? They went into churches. And they smashed the statues. They. Smashed the crucifixes. And the crosses. And everything.

That was raised up. As an idol. That people would bow down. And venerate. And worship. The icons. The statues. The pictures. The holy pictures. Because they were. Icons. Idols.

[12 : 30] We should have none of it. None of it. And so. Rather. Let us be. Scriptural people. Amen. And so. Reject. Dangerous teachings.

Reject that. Which is. Contrary. If it's contrary. To the word. The Bible says. Don't have a graven image. Get rid of it. Burn it. Smash it. Pulverize it. A question.

In all of this. Is authority. It's authority. That's at stake. It's the basis. Of our authority. The basis. Of authority. That is a question. And it lies. At the foundation. Of it all.

Is this. Subject. Authority. Now. Paul. Writes. In 1 Corinthians 3. From verse 10. According to the grace of God. Which is given unto me.

As a wise master builder. I have laid the foundation. And another builder thereon. But let every man take heed. How he buildeth thereupon.

[13 : 24] He says he's laid a foundation. And he says. For other foundation. Can other. No man lay. Than that is laid. Which is Jesus Christ. Paul says. This is the foundation.

Jesus Christ. There's no other foundation. This one. This one. Only. These are days that call for the serious soul searching. Of.

The planet. Of the population. Of planet earth. Soul searching. To find the truth. And. Search for it. And find it. And grasp a hold of it.

And don't let it go. And our Lord Jesus used a parable to tell. Of foundations. He tells us how. In Matthew 7. And that familiar one. You know. The rains came down.

And the floods came up. But the house on the rocks stood. Firm. He tells how. There was a man. A wise man. Who built his house. Upon a rock.

[14:20] And he says. The rain descended. The floods came. The winds blew. And beat upon that house. And it fell not. Why? For it was founded. Upon a rock.

And everyone that heareth these things of mine. And doeth them. Not. Shall be likened unto a foolish man. Which built his house. Upon the sand.

The shifting sands. And the rain descended. And the floods came. And the winds blew. Upon that house. And it fell. Crash. Bang. Wallop. And great was the fall of it.

Verse 28. And it came to pass. When Jesus had ended these sayings. That the people were astonished at his doctrine. This was shocking stuff. Why? For he taught them as one who had authority.

And not as the scribes. It's needful that we look only to the word of God as our foundation. He says. These sayings of mine. This word. Build your life on it. This truth. Be grounded in it.

[15:23] Upon it. Planted. Firm and sure. We need look no more. To anything other than the word. As the foundation. Of sound doctrine. Of prophecy.

Of the way of living. Of faith. Of conduct. Of doctrine. So we must do this rather than trusting in our own experiences. Because they're fickle. Rather than trusting in men.

They're faulty. Sometimes. Or even our own understanding. Don't even trust that. Don't trust yourself. I can't trust me.

So don't trust me. Paul told Titus. These things speak and exhort. And rebuke. With all authority. There's that word again. Let no man despise thee.

What was Titus to speak with all authority? These things. These things. The word. What is the basis for our authority? That's a big question. Authority. What is authority?

[16:22] Here's one definition of authority. Now there's different authorities. There's police.

They've got an authority. There's governors and governments. Governance of all kinds. There's teachers.

There's parents. There's husbands. There's authority structures all over the place. Here is one definition of authority. To have authority is to have a right to rule.

And a claim to exercise control. As a church we stand resolute. We believe wholeheartedly this book. We believe it. From cover to cover. I even believe the cover.

It says the Holy Bible. Amen. I believe it. Amen. I believe it. That's what it is. It's God's inspired word. And we can believe it wholeheartedly. The Bible is a supernatural book.

We believe it is the very word of God. It is a sacred validity. It is God's sure holy word.

[17:24] And so when as soldiers of the Lord we march into battle. We can enter in with this slogan. Thus saith the Lord.

Not. Not. Yea. Hath God said. Hath God said. What does the footnote say? Ooh.

Not in certain manuscripts. Yea. Hath God said. Or. Thus saith the Lord. Thus saith the Lord. Truly we live in a Bible rejecting world.

Here's a recent and shocking news report. Now this happened in the nation that was formerly known as Great Britain. It's not. It's not great anymore.

Far from it. This nation. Great Britain. Shocking. A recent news report. Here's some preachers. This was headlined as a news article.

[18:20] London street preachers convicted of quoting the King James Bible. Shock. Horror. Tuesday March the 7th. 2017.

Last month. They were convicted. They actually quoted the King James Bible. And this was very, very shocking to the authorities. Michael Overt and Michael Stockwell, two British street preachers, have been convicted of a public order offence after quoting parts of the King James Bible.

The prosecutor claimed that quoting the King James Bible should, I quote, be considered to be abusive. And is a criminal matter. The quote goes on, Although the words preached are included in a version of the Bible in 1611, said prosecutor Ian Jackson, this does not mean that they are incapable of amounting to a public order offence in 2016.

So this book, 1611, 2016, you're not allowed to say it anymore. 2017, I think they meant to say there.

During the four-day trial, Mr. Jackson, Oh, actually, the offence might have occurred in, offence might have occurred in 2016. But during the four-day trial, Mr. Jackson also said this, quote, To say to someone that Jesus is the only God is not a matter of truth.

[19 : 50] To the extent that they are saying that the only way to God is through Jesus, that cannot be a truth. End quote.

That's shocking, isn't it? They're saying that Jesus is not the only way to God. They're saying that cannot be a truth. How sad it is. These are legal people.

And the two were found guilty. Here's a picture of them. Again, like they're being hauled off here. And at the time, the crowd was cheering. They were on their feet. And cheering the police on as they were dragged away.

Now, I don't know the content of all that they said. You know, a question could be asked of that. Granted. But the point is, they were faithfully delivering as they saw it.

Quoting the Bible. And they dragged off the street and hauled away. And here's the two chaps here. And so, we know that these two were found guilty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 at Bristol Magistrates Court.

[20 : 57] So, the case raises questions. It raises concerns about the state of freedom of speech, freedom of religion in the UK. At least the Bristol Court considers the Bible itself to be a form of hate speech.

That's what it is now. Hate speech. And the media have commented, today's ruling, in effect, states the Bible is offensive and contains illegal speech which should be, not be shared in public.

Should not be shared in public. End quote. So, we know the godless world looks at the Bible like this and us like that and considers the Bible offensive, hate speech and that it should be banned.

And the authority of Scripture is under attack, people today. It's under attack. Everyone who believes this book, we are under attack. Hath God said, is this the truth?

Or we're living in a world where your truth may not be my truth. Who's to say what is the truth anymore? Hath God said.

[22 : 05] These were the first recorded words of Satan. His very words. First recorded. As he sought to question the very words of God.

And his modus operandi is still the same. He's still the same. He's still got the same sneaky, sly speech. Hath God said. He wants us to not believe and not hear the words of Scripture.

The very words of God. He wants us to question the authority of the Scriptures. Now someone has reckoned we face many enemies of the truth and they reckoned some six of them.

Some enumerated some six enemies of the truth. If you like, these are rival authorities. God says this is the authority. Our world says we've got some different authorities.

Some rival authorities. So let me just touch on those. Philosophy is one. Philosophy. The authority of man's greatest wisdom. As Paul said, Beware lest any man spoil you.

[23 : 07] Through philosophy and vain deceit. After the tradition of man. After the rudiments of the world. And not after Christ. Philosophy. Paul came to Athens and there were certain philosophers there.

And they said, what will this babbler say? Others said, he seemeth to be a set of forth of strange gods.

Because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection. Philosophers. There's lots of philosophies today. Isn't there? Secular philosophy. Humanist philosophy.

Philosophies. Some set that as their authority. Then we have tradition. Tradition again. I like to that first one I read there. As to men spoiling you.

Taking you, captured. Capturing you. Through philosophies. Taking you, hauling you away as a prisoner, as it were. Through philosophy. And tradition it talks about.

[24 : 08] Man's long time practice. You know, the Roman Catholic Church is one. They say that tradition is just as valid an authority. Just because they've done it this certain way.

And they've got these certain practices. Tradition. Some regard that as their authority. Then we have another one is science. The authority of observable facts and repeatable physical laws.

Now we're not against science. True science. We know that factual science is not contradictory to the Bible. It actually substantiates it.

It actually supports it. The evidence of the scriptures accords with the evidence of science. But we know for some there's oppositions of science falsely so called.

Some are so high and mighty that they think they can deny the Bible by some scientific applause. Then we see another one is scholarship.

[25 : 06] The authority of academic learning and agreed upon knowledge. The Bible speaks of those who are ever learning yet never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Scholarship.

Now we're not against scholarship per se. We can be academic and intellectual. We can put all of this that I'm saying to you in quite a an academic thesis structure.

And we can give you evidence after evidence and citations after citations. I could write you a thesis of a university level standard to support what I'm telling you today.

We're just really capturing it in a brief form. But there's nothing anti-intellectual about Christianity. It is actually reasonable. It makes common sense. It makes reason sense.

It accords with man's sense. Yet some would rate scholarship and use scholarship as a way of denying the Bible. Then we see another one is pragmatism.

[26 : 09] The authority which of what brings the desired results. Whatever works. That's the authority. So, you know, just chuck everything out and whatever works, whatever pulls a crowd, whatever people want to hear, I'll give them that.

Because that's my authority. It's whatever works. That's what some people think, isn't it?

Pragmatism. Don't care about honouring God.

They just want whatever brings the desired results. And there's churches like that all over our city, all over the world. For the preaching that crosses foolishness to them that perish.

But unto us which are saved, it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.

Pragmatism. It's not whatever works. It's whatever God wants. That's what matters. That's what we want to search for and find and do. We still preach Christ crucified. That is still the message.

[27 : 15] It is the message. There is no other message. Christ and Him crucified. I've determined to know nothing except this. And it's still not a popular message.

You can get locked up, jailed, sentenced, fined, as we see in contemporary times. But God will destroy the wisdom of the wise.

This is still not a popular message, but it is the wisdom of God. It is the power of God. It still is. So pragmatism is no authority. And so another one is experience.

Here's a good one. I just had such a at that church. It must be God.

I've got all these tingles up and down my spine. I've got all these goosebumps. I've got all these feelings. Experience.

[28 : 14] For some that's their authority. Or they come and hear a preacher who says, Oh, yesterday I went to heaven and such and such an angel talked to me. And I had such and such a vision.

And I had such and such a revelation. And God told me this to tell you. Or God said to me, God told me this. How do you argue with someone like that?

If that's what they think. Wow. I'm amazed when I meet people like that. People of God. Especially when, Wow, that's contrary to the scripture.

Are you sure that was God? How dare you question my experience? Whoa. For I bear them record that they have a zeal for God.

A zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. It's not according to this. Which is the beginning of wisdom and knowledge. And so, for they being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

[29 : 21] They're not under authority. And so, for some indeed, many who profess to be Christians, they follow after. What's the latest buzz? What's going to give me those Holy Ghost bumps?

Those goose bumps? Or those feelings, those experiences, and those practices that have no scriptural basis at all? Why are they doing it?

You know, you could think of many other authorities. I was thinking earlier, like, the media. For some, that's the authority. Well, I tuned into the news last night, or I watched this doco, and they said this about the Bible, or about Christianity.

They tune in. Oh, that's my authority. Today, Tonight, or whatever it be, or the latest documentary, the latest Hollywood wisdom, social media.

For some, that's their authority. How long is it since you checked your phone? You've not heard what the latest news is. You know, there's statistics about, well, I see you're checking your phone right now.

[30 : 27] Has World War 3 started yet? Has that, has that big man in North Korea pressed that big red button yet? Guys, you've got to keep watching and listening, don't we? Every few minutes. Are we going to miss it?

Authority. For some, it's that. Social media, the media. You name it. And so, when you want answers, you go to the authority. You go to the source. That's where we have to go. That's what we have to go to.

The authority. The source. If you want to know God, go to God's book. Go to his book. You know, people today, it's like we're living in a world where men are not valiant for the truth.

They won't stand up and tell it how it is. They won't, well, they won't be valiant for it. Bold and brave and courageous. They will not speak the truth. The fact is, today, we've got a problem.

People have got a problem with final authority. Final authority. What's final authority? Final authority means that there's this standard by which to judge all else.

[31 : 31] Now, I happen to work in a bit of a bureaucratic department in my day job. And you get questions raised from a very ground floor. What about this?

And then they ask their supervisor, and then they ask their manager, and then they ask their manager, and then they ask their manager, and then it goes to the senior manager, and the regional manager, and then it goes to the director.

And someone has to make the call. They have to say, the buck stops with me, and this is what it is. This is how it is. It's like when something goes to court. It goes to all the local courts, and then the state court, and then the supreme court.

And if it might be a question of interpretation, or a question, someone's got to make the call.

Someone's got to make the decision, and say how it is. And the supreme court justice, they say, this is my ruling.

And that's it. That's final. Talking about final. Final. Final authority. Amen. Final authority. Where the buck stops. Where the truth is. And nowadays, everything is rubbery, isn't it?

[32 : 35] It's all rubbery. It's all slippery. It's all relative. It's all shades of grey. It's all a bit uncertain. A bit unclear. This is the inclusive age.

The age of tolerance. Hey, let's just cut them a bit of slack. Let them do this or that. I mean, who's to say that incest is wrong? You don't believe this book?

Why is incest wrong? Who defines morality and immorality? If you don't follow this book, then it's whatever you feel like, isn't it? You are the authority.

That's another source of authority, isn't it? Me. Ego. I'll decide what's right and wrong for me. Who's to say what is male and female?

For goodness sake. Isn't that obvious? Isn't that obvious? That is just so obvious. But this world says it's not obvious anymore.

[33 : 37] Who defines what is marriage? Who cares about marriage? What is wrong with bestiality? If it feels good, do it.

You don't care about this book. If there is no final authority, then what? Who's to say what's right and wrong anymore? People of God. Who says cannibalism is wrong?

There's stuff like that on the media lately, isn't there? I saw a picture of a chicken in a pan next to a baby, sat in a little thing, and says cannibalism.

Who's to say it's wrong anymore? People don't want any rules today, do they? No rules. No accountability. We see that. They're ingrained in it from the school, from kindergarten now.

The teacher can't tell these kids anything anymore. It's as if everything can be questioned now, and no one has the answers. Because for many, the majority, there is no final authority.

[34 : 40] They've thrown it out, haven't they? Good is being relabeled as evil. Evil is good. It's rebadged. Just change the label. The authority is questioned of parents now.

The authority of government, of laws, of police. The authority of a husband. The authority of elders. These are long-established, God-given authorities. They're established by God, that we should uphold.

Now, of course, there's limits, and there's guidelines, and there's established foundations to how all these things work.

We know a husband can be totally out of order. And that authority is negated. God has ordained certain authority. And the authority of the very word of God is at stake.

It's a question. I put to you, we can be unswerving without being arrogant. We can be unwavering. We can say, this is the truth, without getting arrogant about it.

[35 : 39] You know, some, some, some get arrogant. There's a way of doing it, isn't there? We can say, right is right, and wrong is wrong. We can have an authority that dictates what truth is, and what error is, that we can refer to.

And friends, I put to you that the Bible, it isn't just holy and helpful, it is the final and absolute and ultimate authority. There must be one, surely, the final authority.

There is one. Thank God for that. He's given it to us, the final authority. It means the last word. He's given it. And the question boils down to, who is in charge?

Who ultimately is in charge? This Bible is not just authoritative, it is the authority, the authority. Now, there was a man, a governor of Massachusetts, called Christian Herter, and Mr. Herter was a governor of Massachusetts, and he was running hard for a second term in office.

He'd been working hard, you know, knocking on doors, pressing the flesh, kissing babies, and, you know, having all the things that people do when they want to get elected. And one day, he'd been busy chasing votes that morning, and he'd not had any lunch, and so he arrived at a church barbecue, he thought, oh, I'll go and see some church people.

[36 : 57] I'll head to this church barbecue. And it was late afternoon, and Mr. Herter, he was famished. And as Herter was moving down the serving line, they lined up like we do, and everyone gets a supply of food, and he held out his plate to the woman serving chicken, and she put a piece on his plate, and turned to the next person in line.

And Governor Herter said this, he said, excuse me, do you mind if I have another piece of chicken? Sorry, the woman told him, I'm supposed to give one piece of chicken to every person.

But I'm starved, the Governor said. Sorry, the woman said again, only one, to a customer. And Governor Herter was a modest and unassuming man, but he decided he'd, just this time, just put a little bit of weight, throw a little bit of his weight around, and so he said, do you know who I am?

I am the Governor of the State. Do you know who I am? The woman said. I'm the lady in charge of the chicken.

Move on, mister. It's about the authority, isn't it? He's got the authority. If the woman who's serving the chicken has got the authority, then that's all there is to it. Amen. If God says this is the truth, that's all there is to it, people of God.

[38 : 25] Amen. He's in charge. It's about who is in charge. Do we respect authority? Let's face it, we're living in a lazy, zombie, video game obsessed generation.

There's kids who don't know how to read anymore. They know how to tweet, maybe, or to do the, whatever they call it, the emojis, or whatever they call it. And so we're a godless nation, people. We're out of shape. We're in a bad shape. Why so? Because the world can't sit under authority. Who's to tell me what to do? And the Lord Jesus says, no man can serve two masters.

The problem is final authority. You can't serve two. Make a decision. Step over the line. Stop playing games. It's about authority.

It's about final authority. And there's powerful authority here. Final authority. God's word. And it tells us in the word that we're to tremble at this book. To this man will I look.

[39 : 26] The one who's going to tremble at the word. Tremble at my word. It's powerful authority. We do well to tremble. The word of God is the highest authority.

And I just can only urge you to take it as read. Of course we know there's some that's written more for us. For our learning and example.

Some that is written to us. We've got to discern that. There's that. Naturally we don't. We're not held captive to the dietary laws of the Old Testament and the Sabbath and what not.

There's that which is addressed to us. And that which is addressed more for us. For our learning. For our application. But truly we need God's word in a godless world. We must hold fast the word of God.

As Paul told Titus he said holding fast the faithful word which had been taught. That you might be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and convince the gainsayers.

[40 : 27] Hold it fast. Paul says get a grip and keep on holding it. Hold it fast. And secondly he says hold it forth. Hold it forth. For such a darkening world as this we must resolutely hold forth the word of God.

As Paul told the Philippians he said you're in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation. Shine as lights in the world he says and he says holding forth the word of life.

Hold it forth. We must hold it forth. Declare it. Firmly. Resolutely. Boldly. Unashamedly. This mission. This message. It's too important.

And he's given it to you. Not just to me. This is not just about the preacher. It's about all of us as shining lights in this darkening world to hold it forth to declare it to pass it on to communicate it. We must not deviate. We must not get sidetracked. This message must be shouted out from the rooftops from the mountaintops. And if need be such that we'll faithfully declare it even at the risk of our lives and our liberty.

[41 : 33] Only an absolute authority can give absolute truth. There is no other. We can reckon on all these authorities that our world talks about but this is the final authority.

God's word. It's absolute. Other truth is relative and changeable but there is a source of truth and authority. We're drawing to a close shortly now. I think I've got only a little bit more to go.

Psalms 119 it says I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right and I hate every false way. That's radical isn't it? That's a bit intolerant.

I hate every false way. Do we do that? If it's false we should hate it. Don't toy with it. Honestly. Time is too short.

God says some things are true some things are false if it's false hate it. The truth is under attack and it always has been. Jeremiah said of some that they perverted the words of the living God.

[42 : 36] From the beginning of creation Satan says hath God said attack the authority of God's word with this diabolical question. And we today we must stand fast for the word of God.

It is pure. It says every word of God is pure. As a church we uphold the authority and power of God as written for us in the holy word of God.

It says the grass withereth and the flower fadeth but the word of the Lord the word of our Lord God shall stand forever. The word of God. People of God. We've heard about reading it or memorizing it or digging deep into it.

We must. We must. It's our final authority. It's without error. It's perfect. It's complete. And it's incorruptible which means it cannot perish.

The psalmist said in Psalm 119 all about the word of God Psalm 119 that would be a good one to start with. Read Psalm 119 it's all about the word of God it says thy word is true from the beginning and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever.

[43 : 43] The word of God is under attack. We see in Bristol great Britain the word of God is under attack. It's under attack in our nation.

The devil hates the word of God and there's rival authorities he wants you to follow instead. People are turning all over the place of rival authorities even in the church. Pragmatism in the church it's mind boggling what's going on.

God takes his word very seriously. He's even magnified his word above his name. Psalm 138 verse 2 but despite all of Satan's efforts to destroy the word of God God has preserved his word.

Now it's again something I could labor on more in detail but time escapes me here but the greatest group of Bible and language scholars ever assembled rejected the corrupt Alexandrian text.

It was available to them. These so called modern these so called more older versions those older manuscripts it was available to them when they did the translation but they chose to follow the traditional text the majority text that was more abundantly evidently used of God and preserved of God through the ages to produce what we call today the authorised the King James Bible.

[45 : 07] So God's word has been preserved for English speaking people in this book and it's the most trusted and treasured document that the English language has produced. and so we can take it as read and believe it every word the Bible is the only means of knowing God that's the reality and the Bible has proceeded from God and it is our authority from Him alone not from men you know people ring me sometimes and they say they read this verse in the Bible and they ask my opinion well I can only give my opinion my understanding I can't speak ex-cathedra like the Pope can I can say well this is what I believe it says take it as read don't try to twist it or turn it just take it as read and we've got the good news today amen this is great news glad news the gospel it's a saving act of the cross and the world says that's foolishness they always have said that they always have our world reckons this book hates speech they always have they've always hated the word of God and Satan still denies it tries to delete it and pervert it and draw big black marker lines through some of the words and take them out and pervert the word of God with flaky substitutes such that people

scarcely have a Bible anymore it is the holy Bible it's full of holes because Satan likes to do that we have to learn to stand alone if we must and friends the Bible shows us what is right what is right these are deep unalterable eternal truths and this book it can affect a meaningful change it is the final authority people that's what it is it can affect a meaningful change in the soul of man if we will but heed its message he that has ears to hear let him hear heed it abide its message its final authority and regain that sense of the urgency time is short where is that big fella going to press that big red button in North Korea how close is his finger and what then bedlam will break loose right through the whole planet there is potential for absolute devastation right across the globe this is what the world is saying this is what people are honestly thinking is a very possible reality so we must regain a sense of the urgency of the hour these matters are serious and pressing and we must have the undiluted uplifting word of God and hold it fast hold it forth and get aggressive such that we contend earnestly for the faith once delivered watch and pray maintain that close walk with the Lord and know his ultimate victory there is full atonement we have full assurance let's have that full surrender full surrender nothing less than full surrender full surrender lay down your arms wave the white flag oh

I surrender all all all that's what we must do people of God come to Christ and get settled get it settled get it settled today let us pray Lord God we know that your word is magnified above your name it's forever settled in heaven there's no changing of it it's settled Lord let it be settled in us today that full assurance that full atonement that full surrender that we will come entirely and completely to full faith full assurance of faith Lord to know the grace that is beyond human terminology Lord to know the mercy that you extended and still extend Lord amazing grace how sweet the sound Lord we pray for each one to know that today and as believers let us walk in that assurance let us walk in that that faith that we believe your word we believe you we believe your work at the cross and we know Lord that we can take our entire trust and place it entirely on you where our sin was laid at the cross entirely upon you and our trust is laid entirely upon you Lord help us to have that foundation of life that we'll build a life on your word we'll declare it we'll live it we'll hold it fast we'll hold it forth as lights in the darkening world let us be such a people Lord in Jesus name we pray Amen