

You Expect Me to Believe That?

By Phil Grear

➤ In the beginning there was nothing. And suddenly for no reason nothing exploded and created everything. You expect me to believe that?

➤ At some point, by chance the right chemicals happened to float together at just the right moment to be struck by an electrical charge and become life. You expect me to believe that?

➤ Somewhere two non-human mothers each gave birth to a human child. They were born at the same time and in the same place, one was male and one was female. These two new "humans" gave birth to the human race. You expect me to believe that?

➤ One of the descendants of these first humans was born with a knowledge of right and

wrong. No longer driven by instinct, this person suddenly was making decisions based on a morality for which there is no real explanation. You expect me to believe that?

I'm sorry. I don't have that much blind faith. It's all just too farfetched to be anything more than a fairy tale. I can't believe intelligent people claim it is "science" (cf. **1 Timothy 6:20**).

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (**Genesis 1: 1**). I can believe that without stretching my imagination into the realm of the impossible. The universe was created by an all-powerful, all-knowing God. That I can believe!



Classes this Week

Kid's Class at the Building at 5:15 All Are Invited	College Class at the Davis' on Sunday Night with Jonathan Perz Teaching	Monday Night Men's class at the Davis' at 7PM	Saturday Night Class at 8 PM at the Rouse's on Communication and Personality
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Sick

Fran Snyder (Mother of Carla Humphrey)	Pam Dial (Laura Weldon's Mother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Ruby Johnson (Erica Seymore's Grandmother)
Adriana Mininno (Haley Chittam's Cousin)	Dave and Betty Bradford
Ed Mort (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	"Grandmama" Odessa Wyatt (Dyle's grandmother)
Gerald White (Christopher's and Wesley's Father)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)
Marty and Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Carrie Chavers (Friend of Sharon Bailey)
Johnny Adrian (Friend of Sullivanne's)	Lori Holloway
Chick Wade	Jared Nixon

News and Notes

- ☑ Let's remember our expectant mothers: Laura Weldon, Anna Miller and Nicole Pender.
- ☑ We are thankful to have the Burton family a part of the University church. Here is their address:
Jared and Terria Burton, Grant and Kenlee
2927 Opelika, AL 36804
- ☑ Jonathan Perz will be our guest speaker tonight. He will also teach the college class after services tonight at the Davis'.
- ☑ All are encouraged to use and share our website.
www.aubeacon.com
- ☑ Audio CDs of Today's Sermon will be immediately available.

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The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (**Matthew 5:16**)

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Borrowed Arguments

By Larry Rouse



Thought to Ponder

The easiest person to deceive is one's own self.

Do You Have a Bible Question?
Call (334) 734-2133 or
E-mail:
LarryRouse@aubeacon.com

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday
Bible Class 9:30 AM
Worship 10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM

Wednesday
Bible Classes..... 7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

I recently was asked by a brother to look over an e-mail discussion he was having with a friend who was also an experienced preacher. As I looked at the discussion I was impressed with how the preacher had steered the study away from an honest application of Bible authority to a series of emotional and disconnected statements and arguments that would do little more than confuse and intimidate. This preacher was not a man that understood Bible authority. He was not committed to giving "book, chapter and verse" for his practice. In fact his words were very strange when taken in the context of the immediate discussion. He kept bringing things up that seemed to come from "out of the blue" making extreme charges about what a position would lead to and making sweeping generalizations about the beliefs of others.

Why would a man do such a thing as he attempted to discuss the Bible with another? In this particular study, I knew this man

There was a time in years past where brethren believed in having authority for all of their practices (**Col 3:17**). It was debaters like this that completely undermined this stand. When men learn that practices can be justified by carnal tactics and those who try to reason from authority are labeled as "radicals" and "cast out of the synagogue," then the next generation will use these same tactics.

was reading material and debates from a series of controversies in the 1950's and 1960's. In many debates the goal of the debater was to make the opponent's position look so absurd and confusing, that the listener would just turn off their minds to the discussion. This was a particularly effective technique when you had "power" from a political and numerical side of a question. If a majority of members, churches, preachers and influential

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institutions wish to continue practicing something without authority, then the easiest way to keep others "lined up" is to shut off the discussion by these approaches.

How would the Lord view such a "successful" strategy? "Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor 4:1-2).

When one is touched by the grace of God that comes from the pure truth of the gospel, he puts away the tricks and the strategies of men. A basic honesty and sincerity will produce a principled and consistent approach to the study and application of God's word.

When you handle God's word in this manner, then you will see the fruits that God intends to produce. If people disagree and leave, or people repent and stand from such a study, then both results will bring glory to God. Please do not become a "peddler" of God's word to meet human goals (2 Cor 2:14-17).

When one is serious about the power of God's word, he will make statements affirming an openness to study and a willingness to change in order to be in harmony with that word. You will also see a gentleness that will lead the mind of one towards the gospel rather than use the personal, emotional intimidations of a slave driver. There are weapons that Satan will use in such a battle that the servant of the Lord must never touch (2 Cor 10:3-5).

This preacher was, in effect, parroting another man's arguments. He was employing the arguments, tactics and language of debaters in years past. He talked about Christians allowing babies to starve, caring more

about a church lawn than helping a child be protected from the elements, and would ask if everyone was "going to hell" if they disagreed with the personal belief of this brother.

As I read this discussion I was saddened from several standpoints. I thought back to the generation that allowed these kinds of arguments to stand. There was a time in years past where brethren believed in having authority for all of their practices (Col 3:17). It was debaters like this that completely undermined this stand. When men learn that practices can be justified by carnal tactics and those who try to reason from authority are labeled as "radicals" and "cast out of the synagogue," then the next generation will use these same tactics. The present generation among mainstream "churches of Christ" has completely discarded any belief in Bible authority and is now following the lead of "church colleges" in their attempt to become another denomination amongst the denominations.

The other thought that saddened me is that this preacher is actually attempting to stop the apostasy of this present generation. He needs desperately to teach others about respect for the Bible and how to handle it. Today, He, and those like him, are in a position where they are in a great minority and are being labeled and misrepresented with the very same kind of tactics.

Let us all examine our hearts and make sure our stand is firmly upon the Lord and His word. As we open God's word, let our only motive be to find His truth. "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God." (John 3:19-21)



The Matter of Authority

By Bill Crews

On the question of the necessity of authority for religious practices there are but two positions that one can take. Either we must have authority or we do not have to have authority for all that we do in religion. Any position in between would be ridiculous and impossible. If someone should insist that one must have

authority for some things, but not for all things, by what standard could he possibly distinguish the things for which he must have authority from the things for which he does not need authority? And how could he condemn anything merely because it was unauthorized in the Scriptures?

May God pity the man who calls himself a gospel preacher and who makes such statements as: "Why we do many things for which we do not have authority"; and "We do not have to have authority for everything we do in religion." Such a preacher would have neither right nor grounds to condemn any of the religious practices around us, which, though without authority, are not expressly forbidden in the Scriptures. On what basis would he show that instrumental music, infant baptism, choirs, missionary societies, quarterly or annual communion, etc., are wrong?

Some "gospel preachers" have offered this sort of quibble: "Why if one must have authority for everything, where did Noah get the authority for the tools he used in building the ark since God did not specify any tools." This is nothing more than a dodge, a smoke screen to cover up the fact that many churches today are practicing things for which they have no authority--either general or specific.

Authority falls into two categories: general and specific. Some things are specifically authorized: baptism, singing, Lord's Supper. Other things are authorized because they are embraced in and necessary to the performance of things specifically authorized: (Some things may be used as "aids" in carrying out a command as long as no Scriptural principle

is violated); a baptistry, songbooks, containers.

To say that one must have authority for all that he does in religion is a far cry from saying that one must have specific authority for all that he does in religion. Some "gospel preachers" have offered this sort of quibble: "Why if one must have authority for everything, where did Noah get the authority for the tools he used in building the ark since God did not specify any tools." This is nothing more than a dodge, a smoke screen to cover up the fact that many churches today are practicing things for which they have no authority--either general or specific. Certainly Noah had authority in that tools were necessary to carry out the injunction to build the ark. Had God specified the tools, he would have been limited to what God specified.

