

THE LEON VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

Elders: Gerald Clanton
Mike Gentry

Deacons: Craig Clanton
David Foster
V.O. Speights

Preacher: Warren King

WHEN WE MEET

Sun:	Classes	9:30 A.M.
	Assembly	10:30 A.M.
	Assembly	6:00 P.M.
Wed:	Classes	7:30 P.M.

WHERE WE MEET



From I-35, take the Midway exit (# 297). Go south (toward Austin) on the feeder road for almost one mile. Turn right at the DPS Drivers License office. We are on the left.

All articles in Simple Truth are written by Warren King unless otherwise stated.
Contact the Leon Valley congregation at (254) 939-0682 (leave a message).



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SIMPLE TRUTH

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BY WHAT AUTHORITY?

“When He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, ‘By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?’” - Mt 21:23

In rabbinical circles of the first century, ‘authority’ was understood to be conveyed from rabbi to rabbi. No one could speak ‘authoritatively’ unless they had first studied in some respected rabbinical school. Of course, Jesus had no such training, so they challenged Him.

It is interesting to note that Jesus never answered their challenge. Some may interpret this as a statement by Jesus that authority is not important. But, that is clearly not the case. Jesus later claimed to possess “*all authority*” (Mt 28:18) – a meaningless claim if authority is unimportant. Jesus ignored their challenge because He had already established His authority – and they had refused to accept it (21:14).

Today, the question “*by what authority?*” is still a valid question. But, divine authority is not established by clerical succession, ecclesiastical mandate, popular opinion (vox populi, vox Dei), or centuries of religious tradition. And, it is not founded upon feelings. Divine authority is established upon a simple “*thus saith the Lord*” (1 Pe 4:11a). Without it, we have no authority.

Pride Goeth Before What?

Pride, in itself, is not wrong. Without it we wouldn't take care of ourselves—physically or spiritually. Pride is part of who we are. It spurs us to get an education, it sparks our progress, inspires a legitimate competitive spirit, and it brings self-confidence. But pride that is not restrained can bring trouble—lots of trouble.

Excessive pride causes many—if not most—of our problems. It grabs hold of a man and makes him do things he wouldn't do if his humility were intact. It makes a person say things he wouldn't say if it weren't for his own pride. It breaches friendships and splits churches. It brings misery to families and causes heartaches and problems in what were thought to be firm and committed relationships.

I've seldom seen what commonly are called 'church problems' where pride was not involved in some way or another. Oh, I know there are usually doctrinal issues that are presented to excuse the 'split,' or to pardon the intensity of the verbal exchanges that commonly accompany such a division. But, an honest evaluation of the problem most of the time involves pride—pride among people that brings about the final segmentation and causes all the hard feelings.

I'm not talking about compromising truth. I'm talking about when pride won't allow for open investigation or won't tolerate some difference of opinion. It's right to stand for truth, but not with a prideful disposition.

– Dee Bowman (edited)

Just Thinkin'

'Never miss an opportunity to shut up.' The book of James is more tactful, but makes the same point: *"Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath"* (1:19).

And, why is this admonition so important? It's important because our speech betrays us. On a superficial level, for example, a southern drawl betrays a southern heritage (Mt 26:73). But, more importantly, our speech betrays what is in our heart. As Jesus said, *"...out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks"* (Mt 12:34).

Our speech will betray our ignorance (2 Ti 2:23), our arrogance (1 Sa 2:3), and our worldliness (Mt 12:34). It will betray our emotions, like anger (Ja 1:19-20), jealousy (Ac 13:45), and even apathy (Re 3:16-17). If we are playing the hypocrite, our tongue will eventually give us away (Ja 3:10).

Of course, words can also be used to reveal hearts of wisdom, humility, and compassion. But, until we actually possess these qualities, the best advice – however you put it – is simply to 'shut up'. Think about it.