

# BIBLE AS SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY

John 14:15-26



## SYNOPSIS

We continued our sermon series on the Word of God with the idea of the Bible as authority in our lives. In our cultural moment, authority can be something that we have an allergic reaction towards. Why is it so difficult to trust the Bible and allow it to be the authority in our lives? We realize that sin plays a factor in our rejection of authority. To a degree, all of us live in rebellion to God's commands, and the scriptures give us the paradigm that sin is the root issue we might not want to submit to scripture.

Another example given was the idolatry of self that has become so commonplace in our culture. Because freedom has become such a prized commodity, we aren't comfortable with authority (especially structural authority) dictating what we think or do. We have come into such agreement with this that we resist anything outside of us that confronts and challenges our way of living. We can also be so caught up in our tribes that pay attention to certain things at the neglect of others. This results in us becoming more tribalist rather than truth seekers. And finally, there are difficult passages in the Bible that are particularly troublesome to the modern person that we don't feel like we can submit to.

But as we take a step back and re-examine scripture, we need to answer the question: Why do we trust the Bible? Why do we submit to scriptures? And simply put, we trust the Bible because Jesus trusted the Bible. Second of all, the Story of the Bible is true for us, and we live within the parameters of this drama that is unfolding. As we continue learning about the Story of God, let's be people that think through these difficult questions and allow the authority of scripture to guide us and lead us, no matter how difficult it may be to submit.



## AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

### 1 WHY IT'S DIFFICULT TO SUBMIT

1. Sin - We don't want to be told what to do and live in rebellion to the commands of God.
2. Ways of the World (idolatry of self): We live in a post-freudian world where we are told that we should not repress our inner desire, but even more so, we shouldn't allow others to oppress our inner desires.
3. Tribe over Truth: We become more tribal than truth-seekers, and we pay attention to the faults of other tribes rather than the truth of God.
4. Difficult passages in the Bible: We have so many questions of the difficult passages, commands, instructions that are given in the Bible.

### 2 WHY WE DO SUBMIT

1. Jesus trusted the Bible. For the Old Testament writings, it was already affirmed as scriptures in the time of Jesus. For the New Testament writings, the early church saw Paul as commissioned by Jesus (and Peter considered Paul's letters to be scripture). Ultimately, Jesus commissioned his apostles to write these letters that have become scripture.
2. The Story of the Bible is true. It's not just true because it's in the Bible, it's in the Bible because it's true. We need to learn to read the Bible as a Grand Narrative, and as we read it, understanding how we fit into the story of God. One theologian puts it as the five acts of the Story of God being told - the first 4 acts set the tone and the boundaries for the 5th act (the one we're in).



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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

What parts of our culture or society do you feel are against Biblical teaching? Do you find it difficult to oppose those aspects of our culture?

2

Do you find yourself having an allergic reaction towards authority? Where do you feel that comes from?

3

Are there stories in the Bible that you struggle coming to terms with?

4

How do we distinguish rules that we're supposed to keep in the Bible and what we can let go?

5

How does the Bible change by viewing the totality of it as a single unified story that leads to Jesus?



## BIG IDEA

We can struggle with the Word of God as spiritual authority in our lives for various reasons. But as we come to know and love Jesus, may we come to trust the leadership and authority of scripture because Jesus trusted the scriptures. As we come to learn and know the Story of God, may we come to trust and follow the parameters of the Story of God (even in the moments where it doesn't fully make sense to us).