

ACADEMIC AUTHORITY

AUTHORITY FROM SCIENCE AND LEARNED MEN

“Let no man deceive himself.
If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world,
let him become a fool, that he may be wise.”

~ 1 Corinthians 3:19

1. Academic Authority

- a. Our purpose is not to tear down every authority, leaving us with nothing
- b. There is authority in tradition, creeds, and academics, but it is not final
- c. The pride of the “modern” world is science, reason, experts, academics, doctors
- d. We know truth and reality by what the experts tell us (*who’s an expert?* Heb 5:14)

2. Secular Wise Men

- a. The hubris of the wise is as old as humanity – Rom 1:22, 1 Cor 1:20-21
- b. Their “truth” is corruptible, relative, and subject to change based on new research
- c. Modern scholarship rejects the knowledge of God – Psa 111:10; Col 2:3; 1Cor 2:13
- d. “The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise” - 1 Cor 3:18-21
- e. Philosophy is the best humanity has to say about reality – Col 2:8
- f. Science is not a source of truth, it is limited discovery based on past observations
- g. Science and academia are like blind men feeling in the dark – Luke 6:39
- h. Ultimately, the authority is a person, or group of persons, albeit smart persons
 - i. “What is your degree?”; “Where did you go to school?”
- i. Measuring themselves by themselves they are not wise – 2 Cor 10:12-13

3. Religious Wise Men

- a. “What has divinity science done for the world?” – P. Cartwright
- b. Paul warns against those who have a zeal for God without knowledge – Rom 10:2
- c. If we don’t follow creeds/ councils, then we follow textual critics and theologians
- d. Theology is merely religious philosophy, and is not always based on the Bible.
- e. Theology is man’s word about God. The Bible is God’s words to man.
- f. Much of the attack on the Bible comes from these “authorities”, beware – Phil 3:2
- g. Paul did not seek certification from men, but of Christ – Gal 1:10-11, 1 Cor 2:2-5

4. How We View Academics

- a. We need better education, but not necessarily training, universities, doctors
- b. There is a biblical duty to study, to learn, but that from God – Ecc 12:12-14
- c. Academic study should be done with belief in God’s words of truth
- d. Study the word of truth for ourselves – 2 Tim 2:15
- e. Abound in knowledge *and* judgment – Phil 1:9
- f. Be filled with the knowledge of his will – Col 1:9
- g. Be able to exhort and convince gainsayers – Titus 1:9
- h. We preach not ourselves (as wise), but Christ Jesus – 2 Cor 4:5-6, Col 2:3
- i. Scholarship is necessary, but scholars are not our final authority