

Message Series: The Holy Bible

Message Title: The Authority and the Author

Key Scripture:

John 5:38–44 NLT

And the Father who sent me has testified about me himself. You have never heard his voice or seen him face to face, 38and you do not have his message in your hearts, because you do not believe me—the one he sent to you.39“You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me! 40Yet you refuse to come to me to receive this life.41“Your approval means nothing to me, 42because I know you don't have God's love within you.43For I have come to you in my Father's name, and you have rejected me. Yet if others come in their own name, you gladly welcome them. 44No wonder you can't believe! For you gladly honor each other, but you don't care about the honor that comes from the one who alone is God.

Message Summary

There are two things to avoid when thinking about how the authority of the bible applies to our life.

1. Taking the author out of the authority. We are not a religion of the book, where we look to tick the boxes we think the bible presents, the bible should lead us to the life of Jesus – we don't use the bible to tell us we are getting our live right, we use it to show us what the life of Christ in us is like
2. Taking authority away from the author. We are on dangerous ground when we disregard texts we don't like, because “that doesn't sound like Jesus”! Jesus is both the author and the authority – He is the word! And so when texts challenge and trouble us – we understand that Jesus is speaking as much in those moments, as when He is doing things in the gospels that we love!

How does applying this message affect our:

Fellowship – experiencing healthy relationships with other people

Historically the bible has been read in community, not solely individually – how might reading the bible out loud together affect our fellowship with one another

Discipleship – growing in Christ both in thought and deed

What are the scriptures or ideas in the Bible that you find challenging? What bits of its authority do you find difficult to live out?

Ministry – Discovering and using our God-given gifts and abilities

How has the bible spoken to you over your christian journey about ways in which you serve God. Do you have any key scriptures you come back to time and time again to guide you in how you use your gifts and abilities?

Evangelism – Reaching out and sharing the love of Christ with unbelievers

In a world that more and more doesn't wish to accept the authority of the bible, how can we respond, when others challenge us about the authority of scripture, what might we say in defence of how we view the bible?

Worship – Surrendering our heart and life to Christ on an ongoing basis

Is reading or listening to the bible part of our regular worship time, both corporately and individually? How might we become more devoted to the word?