

SYLVIA'S CORNER

WHERE DID YOU GET YOUR AUTHORITY

This question is often asked by Mormon missionaries and church members. Mormons claim that all authority left the earth with the disciples, thus creating the need to restore the gospel. They claim that John the Baptist was sent to confer the Aaronic priesthood upon Joseph Smith to restore this authority. They also claim that Peter, James, and John came back to earth to visit Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery. They told Joseph and Oliver to expect that at a later date the Melchizedek priesthood would be conferred upon them.

Both Joseph and Oliver claimed that these personages gave them the "keys" to restore the gospel to the earth. (For further documentation, see the title, "The Restoration in the Missionary Discussions Handbook and doctrines of Salvation Vol 3 pg. 88). In *Doctrines of Salvation*, Vol. 1 pg 4, Joseph Fielding Smith says that God and Jesus appeared to Joseph Smith. The Bible, however, clearly states in Exodus 33:20; there shall no man see me and live." We must ask ourselves here to question this contradiction. Here's something else to ponder. If Peter, James and John appeared to Joseph and Oliver, why does it say in *Doctrines of Salvation Vol 3* that the apostle John is still living on the earth in a translated body waiting for Christ? According to this John is still on the earth. In 3 Nephi, 28:7, it says that there are also 3 Nephites that never died, but are waiting for all things. So lets see--one and three-- that makes four people that according to Mormons that remain on the earth. Wait a second! Four people with authority still remain on the earth, so the gospel would not have needed to be restored. Can you see the discrepancy? Let's check the Bible to see what it says about people remaining here on earth.

In 1 Corinthians 15:22 it says; "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Then in Hebrews 9:27 it reads; Just as a man is destined to die once."

But what about Enoch in Genesis 5:22-24, you might

ask. Wasn't he translated? Yes, but is he on the earth? No! He was taken to Heaven by God. And Elijah? In 2 Kings 1:17, Elijah was taken up by God in a whirlwind, but he is in heaven also. He is not on the earth. These two people were taken by God in order to show what it is going to be like for believers that are on the earth when Jesus returns.

But enough of that. Back to John the apostle. Did he die? According to Foxe's Book of Martyrs, Christian persecution took place by the emperor Damitian, brother of Titus, after Jesus died. Damitian exiled John to Patmos where he wrote the Book of Revelation. When Domitian died, John was released. He then went to Ephesus for a year to govern the Churches in Asia. There he wrote his gospel and lived to be about 100 years old.



What would you do if someone asked you, "Where do you get your authority?" Simply tell them you get it straight from Jesus Christ! The Bible is the place to start. John 1:1 states that "In the beginning was the Word." (Jesus is the Word.) Jesus was "made flesh and dwelt among us." (John 1:14) Jesus died for all of us who accept His work on the cross. When He died, He provided us the opportunity to invite Him to be the Lord of our lives. He promised **never** to leave us or forsake us. He confirms this in three places in the Bible. Joshua 1:5, Hebrews 13:5, and Deuteronomy 31:6. Romans 13:1 tells us that there is no authority except that which God has established. "There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." In Matthew 28:18 and in Luke 5:24, Jesus claims that all power in heaven and earth was given to Him. In 1 Corinthians 15:24 Jesus delivers the kingdom to God and puts down all rule and authority. In the 15th verse of Titus 2, it tells Christians to exhort and rebuke with all authority. Authority, including our authority rests only in **JESUS CHRIST**.

Let's take a look at Hebrews 7:24-28. This passage shows that Jesus is different. He has an unchangeable priesthood. He has the power to save, to make intercession for us, He is holy, undefiled, harmless, separate from sinners, and higher than the heavens. This is not the authority of sinful man, but of God. Hebrews 7:24-28 shows that man as high priests had infirmities; they had to make sacrifices to cover both their sins and

believers have authority to teach, not just a select few. You can confirm this by reading Matthew 28: 18-20. Another thing to ponder is the belief Mormons have about who in their religion carries this authority. According to them, only male Mormons with the priesthood have it, but in the Bible, in Galatians 3:28, it tells us that males are not the only ones. Galatians reads; neither Jew or Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male or female, for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. In Hebrews 1:1-3 it shows that authority does not have to be passed from one to another. Jesus is the only one we need to get it from in these last days.

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus promises that the gates of hell will not prevail against His Church. In Hebrews 12:28, we see that we receive a kingdom that cannot be moved. In Ephesians 3:21 it reads; "Unto him be glory in the church by Jesus Christ throughout all ages, world without end." It was never taken away.

the sins of the people.

Jesus is different. Once He offered himself as a living sacrifice for all our sins--past, present, and future - it was done once and for all. In the Christian faith all