

Where Does It Lie

by A.W. Tozer

A.W. Tozer's sermon explores the nature of authority in religion, emphasizing that true authority resides in God and Christ, not in tradition, numbers, or human instincts.

Duration: 42:36

Scripture: Isaiah 1:2, Isaiah 2:22, Matthew 16:24, John 14:15, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, 2 Timothy 3:16

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker uses a metaphor of a ship carrying valuable cargo to illustrate the dangers of being led astray by false teachings and sinful behaviors. He emphasizes the importance of staying true to the word of God and not being swayed by worldly influences. The speaker also shares a personal anecdote about a confrontation with a policeman to highlight the need for authority to meet certain conditions and for individuals to stand up for their rights. He concludes by emphasizing the importance of seeking truth and avoiding traps that can lead us away from God's path.

Transcript

I have two talks I want to give on the same theme, and I want to talk about where the final ultimate authority resides in religion. I think my text will probably beg the question, but I want to nevertheless deal with it in some detail. I spoke a couple of years ago about Christ being the final authority, but rapid developments make it advisable that I speak again tonight and next Sunday night on this topic.

A few things will be repeated, but the whole thing will be developed much further. And now my text is for tonight and next Sunday night, Isaiah 1-2. Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for Jehovah has spoken.

Now, tonight I want to talk about authority in religion, and do what is absolutely necessary to do, and that is to clear away a little of the false views of where it lies, in order that we may establish authority and have place for it when we have found it. Now, one of the questions, one of the few major questions, thank God life doesn't have very many questions, but it has a few that are tremendously important. And one question that life forces upon us is this one, is there somewhere a supreme authority? Is there somewhere an authority which we may trust implicitly, which we may take refuge in with complete assurance, and which we are obliged to obey? Now, if that authority doesn't exist, and some people think it doesn't exist, if it doesn't exist, then of course there isn't any reason why I should be here, or you should be there, or any of us should be discussing it.

But we can't dismiss it with a shrug, because it's one of those recurring questions that keeps coming back at us, and we've got to deal with finally. Now, I have said, and I'll repeat, that would be an overwhelming calamity, a cosmic calamity bigger than the fall of worlds. If there were such an authority somewhere, and we missed it, or ignored it, or denied it, or flaunted it, and yet we would be forced to report to it at last.

Now, if we weren't forced to report to any authority, then we might easily deny that there is any authority, and get away with it, because it would only be a theory anyway. But if there is such an authority, and we are of a nature that we must report to it finally, then I say after a lifetime of rebellion against it, to be forced to report to it, I say it would be a tragedy that Aeschylus never could dream of, nor Shakespeare. For it would be the tragedy of a soul, a soul made in the image of God, a soul more like God than anything else in the universe, a soul like a ship sent out from the shore laden with rich cargo, and required to bring it into port somewhere, and the captain gets drunk on board, and the second officer takes dope, and their crew members play cards, and the ship goes on the rock and sinks with all of its rich cargo and its human passengers.

Now, the human soul is like that, it's laden with the riches of eternity, and if that soul has got something on board somewhere, if it's chargeable and answerable to some authority somewhere, and out of foolishness, or carelessness, or drunkenness, or worldliness, or unbelief, it sinks itself in the sea of time, then I say that would be a tragedy too great for the human mind to encompass. Now, I'm like you on this, I don't take too kindly to men who want to push me around. I, there was a little parade, a little group carrying some signs down on 42nd street, 43rd street in New York City, and I was down there a couple of weeks ago, and I came out of the New York Times building, another fellow, and we walked out, and here they were moving back and forth, I think it was an anti-Castro demonstration, I don't know what they were doing there, but were police all around the place, and being a country boy and curious, when I saw them there, I stopped and was gawking across the street, and a policeman half my age comes up and says, get moving, get moving.

I admit I didn't like that at all, I don't like authorities, and I don't like people pushing me around. He turned his back on me and walked away, I think that he and I had a little talk, because I'd have said, mister, I can watch a parade across the street if I want to, being a citizen of this country, and never having been arrested or put in jail or convicted of a crime. Of course, I might have got a billy, I might have gone away with a bump on my head, but I at least would have had it out.

Now, I don't take kindly to authority, but if there is any authority anywhere, if there is an authority, it's got to meet certain conditions. That authority has to tell me a few things. It has to tell me where truth is to be found.

What is truth, said Pilate, and wouldn't wait for an answer, Bacon wrote. And truth has been found here or there or elsewhere, but it's not been true. If that authority says to me, now you listen to me, then I say to that authority, why must I listen to you? I'm a seeker for truth, and if you can't tell me where it is, pass along.

I have no interest in you. It's got to tell me what I believe, and it's got to tell me what I must do to be saved, and it's got to tell me how I get rid of my sins. And it has to have an authentic and trustworthy answer for all the questions I ask it about my soul.

It's got to have the answer about death and about judgment in heaven and hell. It isn't enough for this authority to say to me, you go do so and so, because there's something in my heart that says you and who

else? Just exactly who gave you that authority? Push me around, and if they can't come up with my answers, then I'll have nothing whatsoever to do with that authority. I've got to ask, where did you get your authority, and what are your proofs of it? I want to see your credentials.

I want to know. Now, there are some authorities that have pretended to be authorities down the years, and some still think they are, and I want to mention a few of them as I go along briefly. For tonight I want to clear away the ground and show what you don't have to worry about in order to show next Sunday night where the glorious authority lies.

But tonight I want to tell you that tradition is not a safe authority. Tradition, of course, is history that can't be supported by facts and practices and beliefs that are based upon that history. But if I say I believe in tradition, a tradition of the fathers, then I ask what fathers? Do you mean the Roman tradition, or the Greek tradition, or the Jewish tradition? Do you mean the tradition of the West, or the tradition of the East? Just what tradition are you talking about? And they all claim to be right.

But tradition, you know, is the dustbin of history. It is the attic of the true chronicle. When something comes along that can't be supported and probably isn't so anyhow, they sweep it upstairs and they call that tradition.

And there are some people who go up and dust it off and fill their house with it and live in it for the rest of their life. They think they do anyhow. But tradition is subject to error and downright falsehood and mistakes and bad memories.

If you have to trust your memory, brother, God help you, because it isn't very good. You ever think you had a thing down and find you didn't after all? That you had the wrong thing and that your memory had failed you? And tradition is what grandpa's grandpa remembered, and it's come down from mouth to mouth and it's changed as it's come. Now that's tradition, but yet some people say that tradition has an authority and that I am subject to it.

I've just got it to do. I've got to obey it. Then numbers.

Some people trust in numbers, and they say, well there's authority in numbers. The size of the organization, or the size of the church, or the size of the party, give it authority. But the masses are never right.

Now I said that, and I don't apologize for it and put any footnotes in to water it down. I mean that exactly. It has been the history of the world that the masses are never right.

The masses were wrong at the time of Noah's flood. It was only Noah and his family and Noah the eighth person that were right. Only they were right.

Numbers don't make an error true. Poor young people, they say, well everybody's doing it. Why can't I do it? It must be all right because everybody's doing it.

Well one man believes that two times two makes seven, but he's wrong. One hundred men hear him speak on the corner of the street, and he convinces them that two times two makes seven, and they all believe it, but they're all wrong. And one million men joined the party and gave it a name, and they, one million men, put on shiny garments and marched to a brass band, and everywhere the signs are up two times two equals seven, but they're wrong.

And if you add to that the population of Canada and the population of Mexico and the population of the United States and the population of Europe, and they publish their magazines and write their books and sing their songs and have their conventions all dedicated to the proposition that two times two is seven, they're still wrong. Error doesn't become right by having numbers added to it. So let's remember that.

Don't look around and see what the biggest church is or what the biggest denomination is and say, well I'll run in there for refuge, they must be right. If they believe two times two is seven, they're not right, and I would rather be one lonely man standing out somewhere and saying, I don't believe it, I believe two times two makes four, and have them laugh at me or send a psychiatrist around to give me an examination to see whether I'm right or not. But I'd be right and know I was right when they came to Athanasius and somebody said, Athanasius, the whole world's against you.

Then he said, Athanasius is against the world. One man standing has always been God Almighty's order, and then a few whose eyes were open followed him, and the masses always go the wrong way, if not in their beliefs, at least in their practices. Well then there are those who say, well nature, the native instinct, that's the place to find authority.

You go by the instinct within you. There was an American writer by the name of Ralph Waldo Emerson. He was the bane and bore of all high school kids, I suppose, because they all had to read one of his essays on self-reliance.

Well, he taught, of course, and went down to his death teaching, that you ought to obey the thing that's inside of you, the instinct within you, the native instinct. Now, that is the error of the humanist. I wish that some scholar that could do it.

I might be able to do it if I took six months to do research, but I don't have time to do the research. I wish that somebody could show us how much humanism there has gotten into the church of Christ these times, even into the evangelical church. For humanism makes the human spirit the ultimate test of authority, and the ultimate test of truth.

That's the error of the humanist, and it's the error of the transcendentalist, of which, of course, Emerson was one. So, we say, trust in the light within you. And Jesus said that the light within you is darkness.

They that sat in darkness saw the great light of truth. But when we start trusting to the light within us, and to the native instinct, if you trusted to your native instinct, we couldn't live with you, brother. If your mother hadn't started changing your native instinct when you were about three days old, you'd have been absolutely impossible, and so would I. My mother did the best she could with me, and the Lord took on later and helped a little, but there's a lot to be done yet.

But our native instincts, brothers and sisters, they just won't do. They just won't do. The beatniks try to know.

They look sad and far away, and stroke their stubbly beard with patches of skin where it doesn't grow yet, and write weird poetry. They are in rebellion. I saw a cartoon somewhere of some fellow standing around a bar.

One of them said, I resent the 20th century. And for that matter, I resent the 19th century. I don't know where he'd go from there.

But, you know, that instinct within us, we're just resenting everybody and everything. Well, the beatnik, of course, is the greatest. He conforms more than anybody else in the whole world.

I've seen them in New York. Girls, it would be pretty if they'd been clean. But they weren't, and they were running around there with blue jeans on, their hair all goofy, and trying to show that they cared for nothing and anybody.

They were living by their native instincts. You know, I read somebody went to the trouble of making a little survey on what happens to a beatnik when he grows up. Well, they found that a good many of them had gotten married, and their first baby killed their beatnikism.

First baby, they found they were human beings after all, and by the time they got poor little Junior's teeth cut and had him fixed up and got him so he could stand alone, they'd forgotten all about their native instincts and all the rest. Well, the error of the humanist is, and the error of the transcendentalist is, you trust the light within you. Well, there's a good deal of that in some contemporary teaching, the essence of which is, concerning the Bible, that the Bible is not a totally inspired book.

The Bible is a book that has patches of inspiration in it, and if it inspires you, then it's inspired. Now, some people teach that, and they've got big names and all the rest, but it's the same old error. It is putting man above God, and putting the human spirit above divine revelation.

Then others say, well, reason is the place of authority. We go over reason for it. That is philosophy.

Philosophy, of course, is the finished product of which reason grinds out. Well, if philosophy is the ultimate authority, then I would ask which philosophy? Would you go to spiritualism, which says that all things are made of spirit, or naturalism, which says that the idea of spirit's ridiculous and all things are natural, or to idealism, which says that all things are just the idea inside of your head and there's nothing real, or to realists who say that ideas don't matter, that everything is just what it is, or to materialism, which says all things are made out of matter and can be explained by matter, or would it be humanistic philosophy or theistic philosophy, or what? So, you see, you'd have a hard time if you're going to go to philosophy for the ultimate authority. You're going to have to say, well, which one, and you won't be able to answer, and then somebody else says, now wait a minute, I'll take you a step further.

Religion, that's the place of final, ultimate authority. Well, then I want to ask you which religion? The eastern or the western, the monotheistic or the polytheistic, or what religion are you talking about? And because there is contradiction in the religions of the world, no religion has the authority over me to say, now you be good boy, or I'll handle you, because I say, well, which religion are you? Eastern, western, or just what kind? Do you believe in angels, or don't you believe in angels, or are you influenced by naturalism or materialism, or are you a theist or a polytheist, or just what are you? So, religion can't be the authority. It must lie somewhere else, and I'm sure you're already guessing from my text where I think it lies and where I know it lies.

That is, in God, in Christ, hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken. Now, I want to talk a little bit about religious organizations and how they grow. You know, religious organizations may grow in age and numbers and wealth and prestige.

Some people want to go to a church that is old. They say, I like age, I like tradition, I like age. Oh, some people love age.

I know American people and Canadian people don't go back so far, and so we don't go so much by age, but Europeans, they tell me that nothing's worth anything if it's new. Got to go way, way back to get anything. You know, a building that's merely a hundred years old is just a puppy in some parts of Europe, you know.

They go back to the 12th and 11th and 10th centuries, and that building there was built by so-and-so in the 10th century. Never affected me. Personally, I'd rather have a new building because the old ones smell.

They've got a moldiness about them, and I don't think there's anything that can cure it. The older the building, the more mold. But anyway, some people love old things, and then, as I've said, some go in for numbers and some go in for wealth.

It's always been an odd thing for me. I've never been able to understand it, why people who say that they want to be followers of the man who was born in a manger, and had not where to lay his head, and died with one garment, and they took that away from him, and then he had none, and was buried in somebody else's new tomb, and had not even a place to lay his head after he was dead. They say they follow him, and yet they want to go to the church that has the greatest amount of that which he never had and never wanted, and which he warned against.

They say, oh, I know that's a wealthy church. I know it's a wealthy church, but I wonder if the man who had not where to lay his head never had anything at all much, and died finally naked on a hillside without anything. I wonder if he's in it at all.

Then some like to go where there's prestige. They say that if the authority I would go to, the church I would want would be the one with prestige. I notice in a lot of our evangelical magazines they're just playing it hard these days, the big shots, the fellows that amount to something there in that church.

Well, Paul says, you know your calling, brethren, that not very many mighty, not very many noble, not very many of the great of the world believe in Christ. But he has chosen the weak of the world to confound the mighty. Well, after a church or a religious organization has gotten age and numbers and wealth, and has succeeded in getting members that have prestige, then it increases its authority century after century, of course.

And those who knew it when it was little and common and didn't have much, they're all dead long, long ago and are sleeping these many centuries. And succeeding generations never knew a time when that church was not, and they've taken it for granted. You know, all of this gives authority to an organization.

Then it keeps its power and increases its awesomeness by a number of ways. One is by custom. No one dares challenge custom.

And if they did it a certain way, they do it that way. I knew one church that was split and never amounted to anything afterwards. I don't know that this was the only factor, but this was one, over whether they should have individual cups for communion or one cup.

And they just split over that. Now, when custom gets old enough, if you know who started the custom, you can question it. But if the fellow that started it has long been asleep and the history about him has turned brown and gotten all mixed up, and it goes back and is lost sight of, then nobody knows why you do anything.

We have a lot of things that are simply customary. People do them because they're custom. They throw rice because that's custom, a lot of other things.

They wear something new and something old and something blue because that's custom. Nobody knows why, but it just is. And you feel like an atheist, you know, or a communist or an anarchist if you question it.

So when things like that, I just never question it. I go along with the rest. I scrape more rice out of my collar.

You know what it is because they throw rice. Really, I think that goes back to paganism. I think that goes back to the goddess Ceres, the goddess of cereal and grain, and they throw this grain at the bride.

Well, that's the suggestion that she ought to be fruitful. She'd probably take care of that without all that waste of rice. Not even the birds will eat it the next day.

But anyway, we still do it, and since it doesn't cost much and everybody likes it, it'll be all right. When our son in Chicago was married, they were all standing out waiting for the bride to change so they could go on their way, and there was a whole line there waiting, and I had a handful of rice somebody gave me, and I got tired waiting and threw it down my daughter-in-law's neck. And she wasn't the one who was married.

She'd been married and had four children, you know, and all that. But I just wanted to get rid of it. And custom.

Custom is something that you do, you know, and that gets in religion, and nobody dares question it. And then special dress. I've often smiled about that.

The special dress is given authority that never should have had. Anybody with good sense would straighten up and say, now just a minute, I know where he got that, I know how he made it, and I know what he would look like without it on. So that special dress that would be plain comical if we dared look at it, did you know? If you dared be free inside.

I'm for freedom. I'm for free Christianity, a free man, free woman, person, free to think in Christ, and therefore I can look without any awe. I never bow my head and cross myself when I see any of these fellows wearing the garments that they date way back into the dim past.

Well, that special dress doesn't affect me at all. Nobody can put on a garment and then tell me, now obey me. I say, go take that thing off, Buster, and we'll see whether we'll obey you or not.

So if it lies in your garment, if it lies in your dress, it isn't authority. And yet there are millions of people all over the world that will bow down to a man and serve him and all the rest because he has a certain kind of a garment on. I confess, when I see him all dressed up in a certain kind of garb and with a cigarette all lighted here, I sort of have mixed emotions.

Then there's pageantry, of course, the pomp and solemnities and rites and honorifics and the pretense of great gravity. I tell you, that has tremendous effect on people. They say, oh, he must have authority.

They must have authority. Look how they're marching. Look at the things they've got on there.

I sat beside the fellow and he showed me all of his trappings. Now, I don't mind them. I've preached in trappings myself, but I don't think that made my sermon any better at all.

I've preached in suits, \$18 suits, and I preached just as well as I did when I had my robes on. So I don't believe that your trappings, and I won't be taken in by pageantry and the marching parade and the solemn music and the dignified old boys with two chins leading, I won't be taken in by it. I want to know, is this man, does this man have the credentials? And he says, sure, look at him, all wrapped up in them.

Those aren't credentials for me. I don't accept them. And then, of course, we get authority by intimidating.

We intimidate people, purgatory and excommunication. Then there's economic pressure, and you don't have to go to Rome to find that. A religious body that starts like the Christian Missionary Alliance, it won't have been in operation for 25 years until economic pressure gets on, and a fellow's brought into time because he's got equity in the thing, and he doesn't leave it because he loses equity.

You know the way they licked that in the early days of the Christian Missionary Alliance? They trusted God for their salary, and so nobody owed them anything, and nobody could boss them around. If some treasurer or deacon or elder or somebody came to the young pastor and said, I don't like the way you're preaching, why, he just smiled at him because he wasn't paying him, he was getting his money from heaven. It was nice while it lasted, and the Alliance lived like that for quite a long while.

But we get the economic pressures on, and I tell you, they all help hold a church together, and that's what gives it authority. It's authority. But you know, all of this is simply human.

It's of the human, belongs to the human. He that is of the earth is earthy. And I want to know, when I look at a man or when a man rises to speak to me, if he's going to bring me under his authority, I want to know whether he's speaking from God or not.

I don't want him to take me back in tradition. I want to know now whether he's speaking from God or not. But you say, why are you all so excited about that? I'll tell you why, because there's a movement on toward one church-ism, and slowly and surely the squeeze is on, and as the Russia seeks communistic world of monolithic authority, that is one authority, so the great top-heavy church is trying to bring us all in.

I'm reading the newspapers, and I'm listening to the news, and I'm reading the news magazines, and I'm gathering all the information I can about this effort to bring us all under. I prophesy that within the next five years there will be moral and psychological pressure so tremendous to get us all into a great single church, and then that great single church will face the east, and we'll all come together, and we'll become one great church. Those who would do this, do it in order that they might bind us.

They'd bind us with the golden chains of religion, but remember, if you're bound by the golden chains of religion, you're just as much a slave as if you're bound by the iron chains of Nazism or communism. Whatever binds you, binds you, and so they want to bind you, and they come to you pleading, and they plead in the interest of economy and efficiency, and they plead in the name of Christ and of love and of brotherhood, and they embrace us while they enslave us. But the Bible says, in vain is the trap set in the sight of a bird.

Even a poor fellow birdbrain wouldn't get caught in a trap he can see. You and I can see those traps. I remember about reading something.

I don't know whether this belongs to Aesop or not, whether he wrote it, but I remember years ago reading about this fellow. It was an old lion, and he lost his teeth, or at least they weren't sharp anymore, and he lost his enthusiasm and his bounce. He couldn't spring anymore, but he still had to eat.

He was long awake and dead. So he sent out a request. He said he'd been converted and was feeling better about things now, and they didn't have to be afraid of him anymore.

They said, I'd like to have a conference. He said, won't you come in my cave and have a conference? And so the animals of the forest, taken in by his smooth talk, one after the other went into his cave, and the news went around. Have you heard Mr. Leo the Lion likes everybody now? He's not the old boy he used to be at all.

And let's go on in the name of brotherhood and the solidity of the forest, Glenn, let's all go and talk it over with him. Let's have a conference. So they went in to have a conference, and then one day there was an old goat, sharp old boy, and he was being talked into going in.

He said, I'll go look it over. So he went over with a group of other animals of various sorts, and they all stood around, and he stood up. He said, now listen.

He said, I noticed something here maybe none of you have noticed. He said, it's this. I have noticed an awful lot of animal tracks here leading to the cave.

And they said, yes, quite a number of them. He said, the conference is getting big. Yes, he said, but I noticed they all lead one way.

They don't lead out, they all lead in. And over the last months the animals have all been going in, but it just strikes me none of them have been coming out. And when they finally woke up, the old fellow in the cave, he'd had it.

After that he just lay in there and starved to death and wondered what had happened to that bunch of goats outside. Well, you see, if you listen to the old lion who said, oh, we're willing to have the mass in vernacular so you Canadians can understand it in old-fashioned English, and we're willing to judge you, we're willing even to let you Protestants have your confession. Oh, isn't that wonderful? He's willing to let me come and confess to him.

I think about dear Bud Robinson. Bud Robinson was one of the holiest men that ever lived on this continent. I couldn't go all the way with him on all of his stay.

But he was a godly man, and he got knocked down by an automobile and all smashed up. They put him in a hospital and said to him in the Catholic hospital, and Father came in and tried to get a confession out of him, and he wouldn't confess. He said, is there anything you want to confess? Yes.

He said, I want to confess that I'm saved and full of the Holy Ghost and ready for heaven any minute. Father backed off and said, if there's anything else you need, send for me. But dear old Bud never sent for him.

He got all right, you know. So they're very nice to let us confess. But I want to warn you, the old lion may have lost his teeth, but the tracks all lead one way, and I, for my part, my number 11's double E's, triple E's, they're not going to lead in, by God's grace.

I don't believe authority lies there. I don't believe authority lies in tradition. I don't believe authority lies in vast numbers.

I don't believe authority lies in human instinct. I don't believe it lies in human philosophy. I don't believe it lies in any of the great religions of the world.

I believe that authority lies somewhere else. It lies, in case the Lord would come between now and next Sunday, I'll tip you off and say it lies in the word. It lies in the word written and the word incarnate, and I want to prove that from the scriptures next Sunday night.

Full authority, supreme authority, lies in the spoken voice of God. The spoken voice caught in print in our Bible, and incarnated in the womb of the Virgin, and they called his name Emmanuel. There is where authority lies.

It doesn't lie in tradition, nor numbers, nor nature, nor reason, nor religion, and it doesn't lie in custom, nor spatial dress, or pageantry. It lies in God and in his word. Now the time is coming, I have no doubt, when we Christians can't take our Christianity for granted anymore, nor be quite so casual as we are now.

You know what they did, somebody said, down in New York when Adlai Stevenson and Zorn were having that terrible argument there in the United Nations, and it was on everybody's TV, and the world was worried and excited for fear that nuclear bombs would begin to fall. They said the radio stations were swamped with calls from people who demanded they get their junk off and put Death Valley Days back on. They wanted to see a Western instead of know whether they could live another 24 hours or not in the world.

That's the way people take politics, millions of them in the States, and I suppose Canada too. And we take our religion in the same way. Some people are plain bored by a talk like this.

They say, I don't know why I should bring this subject up at all, I'd rather something else. I want to tell you the day is coming when you're not going to be able to take your religion for granted, nor take it casually, nor turn it off. You're going to have to face up to something.

You may have to stand up and be counted in this very generation that is now extant here on this continent. And I pray that when that hour comes that we will not be soft-soaked into going into the cave and accepting a single monolithic authority and bowing to it. There's only one authority, there's only one man before whom I'll bow my creaky knees, and that is the man Jesus Christ God's Son.

And there's only one book that will finally have my loyalty, and that's the book I preach out of every time I preach. So my dear brother and sister, let's remember there is an authority. 450 some years ago a man walked up and nailed his 95 theses on the door and told the round world, we've found religious authority in the wrong place.

It isn't where we said it was. It isn't in Rome, it's in the book. And the result is we have Protestantism, and now we're half ashamed that we're Protestants.

They brainwash people till they're ashamed to be patriotic. I think I find more patriotism in Canada than I do in the States, and I'm ashamed for it. Ashamed.

There was a day when a boy wasn't ashamed to stand straight up and salute when the stars and stripes went by, but they brainwashed people until they're ashamed to be patriotic. You Canadians never be ashamed of your country. You've got nothing to be ashamed of but sin.

You've got a noble history, and you ought not to be ashamed to stand straight up and say, I'm a Canadian. I'm not ashamed to stand up and say, I'm an American. I believe it's good to be patriotic, to love your country that gave you everything you have under God.

And I believe it's also good to be a Protestant. I believe it's good to know we're Protestants, that we stand for something, that Protestantism isn't something that somebody did away back there, but it is a positive doctrine. It's not a negative thing.

It's a positive doctrine. It is the statement that we have supreme authority. We know where it is.

We know how to get to it. We know how to check our beliefs by it and on it and at it, and we're not on our knees to anybody. We're not begging from anybody, and we're not running to any man with funny robes on to find out whether he believes.

Now, he might believe all this and still have funny robes. I don't mind that. That's all, I don't mind robes.

Put on all you can possibly stand in hot weather and it'll be all right with me. But be sure that you stick by the fact that your authority does not lie in the number of your robes or your chains, but it lies in the book and in the man. God's word incarnated in God's word in print.

I'm glad I'm a Christian. Are you glad you're a Christian? And I'm glad I'm a free Christian. Are you glad you're a free Christian? Glad I'm not on my knees to somebody over me, except that one man who won his right to authority by dying just for the unjust that he might lead us to God.

A lot of these who claim authority over the poor sheep, they've never spent five minutes working with their hands. They've got no calluses. They bleed the sheep and skin them and live high off of them, and then say, no baby, I have authority.

I do nothing of the sort. I'll obey the man who loves me till he dies for me. I'll love the man and follow the man whose footsteps are bloody, and Jesus Christ is that man.

He has a right to say to me, you do what I tell you. I say, oh yes, Lord, yes, Lord, yes, Lord, because in his hands are the nail pricks and on his forehead the thorns. He has a right to my obedience because he is God, and because as a God and man he gave his life for me.

I can do no less than be obedient to him. Well, that's my Reformation Day sermon, and I'm going to have a better one next Sunday night because I'm going to give the glorious, positive, happy side of all this next Sunday night. God will.

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