

“Let’s Get Down To Brass Tacks”

“The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men?”

Matthew 21:25

In Matthew 21, the scribes and Pharisees came to Jesus asking Him where He received His authority to teach. He posed a question for them and in that question, we see the origination for all authority: from heaven or from men. Authority from heaven is contained in the words of the New Testament. Authority from men is contained in the words of parents, preachers, friends, and feelings.

There is an old expression used when men want to be explicit and certain, “Let’s get down to brass tacks!” Merchants used to measure their bolt goods on the counter by driving two brass tacks one yard apart into the counter. So the expression has continued to live long after its origin has been forgotten. Men ought to be certain about right and wrong, and especially in matters of faith in God. They ought to “get down to brass tacks.” This can be done only by following the Bible.

Searching the scriptures is commendable if it is obeyed. Acts 17:11 says, *“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”* In John 5:39, Jesus adds, *“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”* Men can know the will of God. John 7:17 says, *“If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.”* If men know God’s will, then they should obey that will.

The story is told of a highly respected merchant passing on and a son took over his father’s business. For some reason one day he measured the space between the brass tacks on the counter and found that for many years his father had unknowingly measured one-half inch short. What should he do? Should he set the tacks right, or out of respect to his father’s reputation should he continue the old erroneous practice of his father’s? An honest man could do only one thing, regardless of his father’s practice -- move one tack thirty-six inches from the other. When an honest man “gets down to brass tacks” in religious practice he will do that which is scriptural regardless of what his father did.

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