God's Expectation for Mankind

Simply put, God's expectation for mankind is that they would be holy even as He is (see Leviticus 11:44; Matthew 5:48; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 4:17 to name only a few passages). God has equipped humanity with the tools to achieve a state of holiness. The two tools are divine revelation (2 Timothy 3:16-17) and the blood of Jesus Christ (Hebrews 9:22). When man meets God's divine expectation he or she is in rout to a peaceful eternity. Though it is God's will that all men meet His divine objective it is not within all men to achieve said expectations (Matthew 7:13; 2 Peter 3:9). Man, after all, was created with a free will to choose his direction in life.

The Bible reveals God's divine and high expectation for mankind. We examine Bible book after Bible book and learn of God's expectation for man's absolute perfection. God vividly paints a picture of His divine will for man and we are left to achieve His objective of flawless perfection. The flow of words from book to book speak so vividly of personal perfection that it comes to take a natural place within the minds of men. We begin to realize that perfection in holiness is the natural course of life (Genesis 6:8-9). When man does those things that are unholy he is actually working against God's natural order for mankind.

The Bible has much to say about the natural order of things. It is the natural order of things that man gain understanding and knowledge (Proverbs 8:9). It is the natural order of things that a beautiful woman have discretion (Proverbs 11:22). It is natural for kings to rule with justice and equity (Proverbs 8:15; 16:10). It is the natural course of life that a gray headed man be righteous (Proverbs 16:31). As we examine God's expectations these same objectives become ours. I should expect my government leaders to be just, that gray haired men be wise, and for women to have
discretion. It goes against God's natural order of creation for these people to be otherwise.

Yet we find that man has a free will and often performs acts against God's natural order of things. We discover, as we observe our surroundings, that often the wicked are justified and the righteous are condemned and punished for good deeds (Proverbs 17:15, 26). We observe a fool possessing luxury and servants ruling princes (Proverbs 19:10). We find men laying sexually with other men and women with women (Romans 1:26-27). God's natural order of holiness is rejected by many.

The natural course for a child raised in a God fearing home would be that of a life of faith (Proverbs 22:6). Yet the book of proverbs proves that Godly parents are often "shamed" (Proverbs 17:2; 19:26-27), filled with "sorrow" (Proverbs 17:21), and feel the sting of "grief" and "bitterness" (Proverbs 17:25) due to an unruly child's behavior. These proverbs infer that the parent has raised the child in the way he or she should go yet that child has rejected these teachings. The parent's hope is that by taking the rod to the child he or she will be changed for the better (Proverbs 19:18). Ultimately, it will be the child's own "doings" that determine whether or not they will stand just or unjust before Jehovah (Proverbs 20:11 see also Proverbs 13:1). Unfortunately, many are not men or women of Biblical integrity even though they were taught to be so.

God's expectation is that if a scoffer is punished he will learn prudence (Proverbs 19:25). Yet far too often the scoffer wants nothing to do with correction (Proverbs 9:7-8; 13:1, 12). We could examine more but the examples stated should suffice. There is hope for all. If there were no hope the Lord would not have delivered the following divine objective of the book of Proverbs, "To give prudence to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion:" (Proverbs 1:4). God has set the bar high. God has equipped man to obtain His divine expectation. Will you and I take advantage of God's tools and attain unto that high expectation of perfection and holiness?

John C. Robertson
Establishing Bible Authority
How Authority works in the New Testament

Introduction:

This is the second of two lessons dealing with the subject of establishing Bible authority for all that we say and practice. The first lesson examined authority from the Old Testament perspective and this lesson shall examine the same subject from the New Testament.

I. Review of Establishing Bible Authority from the Old Testament:
   A. Jehovah's words are absolute truth and never are they subject to change.
   B. God has given the great responsibility of absolute perfection and holiness to man.

II. The Sovereignty of Jehovah in the New Testament:
   A. The Lord is creator of all things and thereby all flesh is to obey his every word (Rev. 14:6-7).
   B. There is no higher authority that Jehovah God (see 1 Tim. 6:15-16).

III. The Standard of Truth as Depicted in the New Testament:
   A. The association of the Lord's name with his divine standard (Colossians 1:25-2:3, 8).
   B. Consider Colossians 3:17

IV. The Nature of Man as Revealed in the New Testament:
   A. The sovereign position of Jehovah places the identity of the natural order of things upon His divine being (1 Peter 1:15-16; 2 Peter 1:4).
   B. Those who go against the natural order of creation sin against their created purpose.

V. Man's Responsibility Toward Divine Authority in the New Testament:
   A. God demand's man's perfection of life and obedience seeing that He is perfect (remember, He is the standard that we must meet).
   B. Christians have the responsibility to put all doctrines to the test seeing that God expects our absolute perfection as defined by His name (the standard of truth).

VI. Man's Attitude Toward Divine Authority in the New Testament:
   A. The faithful child of God will know his or her place before Jehovah.
   B. Such a one will "honor" Jehovah is all areas of life (1 Timothy 1:17; 6:15-16).

VII. Man's Approach Toward Divine Authority in the New Testament:
   A. I am to endure all things rather than drinking the wine of Satan (i.e., persecution, worldliness, and false teachers) (Hebrews 10:32-39; 1 John 2:16-17; Revelation 14:9-10).
   B. The spirit of antichrist is alive and well today as it was during the days of the apostles.

VIII. The Consequences of Godliness or Rebellion against the Authoritative Word of God:
   A. God has appointed a day in which all who ever lived upon the earth shall be judged.
   B. The rebellious will be cast into the eternal fires of hell (Matthew 7:22-23; 13:39-43).
   C. The rewards for a faithful life of reverence and respect will be eternal glory and peace

IX. Establishing Bible Authority for all that we Say and Do:
   A. Such a study accentuates the importance of having authority for all we say and do.
   B. Let the Christian find direct command, example, inference, silence, general, and or specific authority for all things done and said. Let the Christian also consider matters of expediency.

Conclusion:

After laying the groundwork for Bible Authority we are left to say that it is no wander that Paul wrote, "Whatsoever you do in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (Colossians 3:17).