



## Introduction

- Personal Autonomy = self-directing freedom and especially moral independence<sup>1</sup>
- Only God is truly autonomous – Daniel 4:35
- Autonomy is composed of *auto*, which comes from Greek and means *self*, and from the Greek word *nomos*, which means *law*. So, autonomy is self-law.

## The Source of the Lie of Autonomy

- Genesis 3:1
- Genesis 3:4–5
- The one who has the knowledge of good and evil is the one who knows right from wrong. The one who knows right from wrong is the one who has authority.
- Genesis 3:6
- Adam boldly took the fruit and ate with the hope he would now know good and evil like God, thus attaining autonomy.
- Adam was mankind’s representative so his guilt and corruption were passed to all his progeny.
- Autonomy and idolatry are inexorably linked.
- The combination of autonomy, idolatry, and identity produces a multitude of little gods running around demanding worship.

## Tower of Babel

### The People’s Rebellion

- Genesis 11:1–9
- The people have an identity that is separate from God.
- The ability to communicate easily facilitates sinful human beings joining together in rebellion against God.
- They moved away from God.
- They sought to create apart from God.
- Genesis 11:4 – The people want to build a city and a tower so they can make a name for themselves and not be dispersed over the face of the whole earth.

### God’s Response

- Genesis 11:5 – the Lord came down.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/autonomy>



- Genesis 11:6 – God’s judgment and common grace are seen.
- Our autonomy is no threat to God.

## Babel to Babylon

- Babylon is emblematic of opposition to and independence from God.
- Isaiah 14:10–17 – the wickedness of Babylon is personified.
- Daniel 4 – Nebuchadnezzar acknowledges that human autonomy is a lie.
- In Acts 12 God judges Herod.

## Babylon Today

- The desire to supplant God is still very much with us today—the spirit of Babylon.
- We still try to undo God’s judgment at Babel, but the effort continually fails.
- Cooperation is great if we have the same goal, but if your goal conflicts with my goal, then you must bow to my autonomy.

## The End of Babylon

- Isaiah 47:8–11 – The judgment of Babylon that occurred in the past is a type of the judgment of Babylon that will occur when Jesus returns.
- Revelation 17 – Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth’s abominations.
- Revelation 17:6 – Babylon persecutes the Church.
- Revelation 18 The ultimate judgment of Babylon.
- Revelation 20:7–10 – Babylon is judged when all the wicked join together one more time.

## Conclusion

- Adam did not achieve autonomy for mankind, but slavery—slavery to sin that results in death – Romans 6:15–23).
- Jesus, as the God-man, did not live autonomously – John 5:19.
- We are free in Christ – John 8:36.