



The Good News

August 8th, 2021

Volume 21, Issue 31

Viewing God's Commands with Reverence

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When God gave His commands to the children of Israel, He told them in **Deut. 4:2** not to add or take away from any of the commands that He had spoken. We find later, in the New Testament, that the Jewish elders and leaders had done precisely what God had commanded them not to do, commanding obedience to the traditions of men as if they were commandments from God. We find on numerous occasions that Jesus called them hypocrites because they did exactly the opposite of what they claimed to do in following the Mosaical Law. We can see that the scribes and elders of the people became more interested in promoting their own agenda than holding the commands of God in the highest esteem and reverence. Many people today are not all that different. While we are under a New Law with different commands, people will often go out of their way to justify doing exactly what they want, regardless of what God says about it. Consider with me three categories where the people of the world often decide that they want to add or subtract from what God has said:

Sexual Conduct: God makes His commands very clear through Paul as he writes to the Corinthians in **I Cor. 6:9-11**. Among the individuals that Paul says will not inherit the kingdom, he identifies fornicators, adulterers, homosexuals, and Sodomites. A fornicator is a non-married person who has physical sexual interaction with a married or non-married person. An adulterer is one who is married that has physical sexual interaction with someone other than their spouse who may be married or non-married. As we come to homosexuals and Sodomites, some may ask "What the difference?" The term "Sodomite" represents those who engage in physical sexual interaction with those of the same gender. The term "homosexual" is defined as "effeminate", or those who act and conduct themselves as if they were the opposite sex. In considering this list, we find that society views these activities as being perfectly normal and acceptable. Society is no longer shocked or appalled by those who engage in such sins. Those that consider these acts to be unacceptable are derided,

persecuted, and parodied by most in society and media. And yet, God makes His views clear concerning these activities. In **I Thess. 4:1-8**, Paul makes it clear that "homosexual by birth" is no excuse as we are expected by God to control our feelings and desires to be in submission to God.

Worship: In **John 4:24**, Jesus tells the Samaritan women that those who wish to worship God must worship Him in spirit and truth. The New Testament goes on to command, describe, and provide approved examples regarding how the church that belongs to Christ is to conduct itself in its worship and work. Yet some take the elements of worship and turn them into something God never authorized. They turn singing into playing musical instruments, they turn preaching into a woman standing in the pulpit, and they turn the Lord's Supper into a production designed to feed and/or entertain. Many churches in the world have embraced organizational doctrines that are never authorized in the New Testament, and many people all around the world are embracing religion as a matter of convenience and entertainment rather than worship and service to God.

Salvation: In **Acts 8:12**, Phillip taught the Samaritans what they needed to know to be saved: details about the Kingdom of God and details about the Son of God. These details included: belief (**Mk. 16:16**), repentance (**Acts 2:38**), confession (**Acts 8:37**), baptism (**Acts 22:16**), and newness of life (**Rom. 6:4**). And yet, so many in the world think they know better than God what is necessary for salvation.

In the end, there are tons of different reasons that people will try to use to justify why they do not adhere to the commandments of God. They do this to their own destruction, as God will not care what excuse they use...God will simply examine their life to see if they were obedient; no cries about their emotions, lack of knowledge, or "I was born that way" will save them in that dreadful Day. We can do precisely what we want to do: will we obey God and pursue righteousness or follow the devil and the desires of our heart? The choice is ours...