

Written for Our Learning

- When Jesus “*built*” His church, complex commands were needed for it’s work, mission and organization.
- This has resulted in divisions and different opinions.
- When we begin to struggle with the exact way to obey a command, God has given us great wisdom:
- *For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Rom. 15:4*
- When we have studied all the Scriptures God has given in the New Covenant on a doctrine and we still have doubts ... God’s advice is to use the things written before (The Scriptures of the Old Testament).
- The Holy Spirit later explained exactly how to do it.

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

- *Be diligent to present yourself **approved to God**, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, **rightly dividing the word of truth**. 2 Tim 2:15-16*
- The Holy Spirit revealed how important it is that we get it right! We need to rightly divide. In the next chapter He explained the process:
- *from childhood you have **known the Holy Scriptures**, which are able to make you **wise for salvation** through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 **All Scripture** is given by inspiration of God, and is **profitable for doctrine**, for **reproof**, for **correction**, for **instruction in righteousness**, 17 that the man of God may be **complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work**. 2Tim. 3:15-17*

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

- Some commands have created division among “*disciples.*” Baptism, worship, church autonomy, work and mission of the church.
- These are complex. But with commands, examples and necessary inferences we can rightly divide.
- Paul told Timothy he still had vast resources to assess to determine if he had rightly divided:
- All Scriptures written before (OT)
- *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*
- The Old Testament helps make us complete ...

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

- A critical indicator to prove we have rightly divided
- *Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 1Cor. 1:10*
- When we have truly rightly divided, we will have no divisions ... we will be perfectly joined together.
- Unity = rightly dividing
- Division = Someone has **NOT** rightly divided.

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

- If you **abide in My word**, you are **truly My disciples**.
32 And you **shall know the truth**, and the truth shall **make you free**. Jn. 8:31-32
- Jesus' command makes clear that rightly dividing His word will accomplish two important things:
- First, we abide in His word and are His true disciples.
- Second, We will know the truth be free from error.
- Those who do not rightly divide have neither:
- *Anyone who goes too far and **does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God**; the one who **abides in the teaching**, he **has both the Father and the Son**. 2Jn. 9-10*

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

- *For we are His workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus for good works**, which God **prepared beforehand** that we should **walk in THEM**. Eph. 2:10*
- There should be no divisions over the good works God gave to the church. He prepared them beforehand and we should walk in them.
- It should be obvious that if it's not in Scripture it is not a good work God prepared beforehand.

A Work Prepared Beforehand

- *"Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, 18 how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear God. 19 Therefore it shall be, when the Lord your God has given you rest from your enemies all around, in the land which the Lord your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance, that you will blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget. Deut 25:17-19*

God's Anger toward Amalek

- *Then the Lord said to Moses, "Write this for a memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven." 15 And Moses built an altar and called its name, The-Lord-Is-My-Banner; 16 for he said, "Because the Lord has sworn: the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation. "Ex 17:14-16*

Vengeance on Amalek

attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear God

you will blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget.

Write this for a memorial in the book and recount it in the hearing of Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.

The Mission Entrusted to Saul

- *Samuel also said to Saul, “The Lord sent me to anoint you king over His people, over Israel. Now therefore, heed the voice of the words of the Lord. 2 Thus says the Lord of hosts: ‘I will punish Amalek for what he did to Israel, how he ambushed him on the way when he came up from Egypt. 3 Now go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.’” 1 Sam 15:1-3*
- God had prepared this beforehand and entrusted Saul to do what He had decreed.

This was an Act of Vengeance

- *I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.*
- *you will blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget.*
- A Fellowship of “**I** and **you**”
- *attack* Amalek, and *utterly destroy all* that they have, and *do not spare them*. But *kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.*””

Saul had the Means but not the Will

- *And Saul attacked the Amalekites, from Havilah all the way to Shur, which is east of Egypt. 8 He also took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword. 9 But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them. But everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed. 1 Sam 15:7-9*
- It wasn't that Saul couldn't do what God asked him it was a decision that he did not want to do it.

Saul had the Means but not the Will

- Saul attacked the Amalekites,
- utterly destroyed all the people
- But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them.
- Everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed. 1 Sam 15:7-9
- Israel and Saul had a heart problem
- They were UNWILLING to OBEY!!
- They didn't want to do exactly what God said

How God saw Half-Hearted Obedience

- *Now the word of the Lord came to Samuel, saying, 11 "I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments." 1Sam 15:10-11*
- God regretted his disobedience
- *And it grieved Samuel, and he cried out to the Lord all night. 1 Sam 15:11*
- Samuel felt grief and sorrow

How Saul saw his Obedience

- *Saul went to Carmel, and indeed, he set up a monument for himself;*
- *Saul believed he would go down in history as a great man! Wanted a monument to commerrate his Victory!*
- *Saul said to him, "Blessed are you of the Lord! I have performed the commandment of the Lord." 1 Sam 15:12-13*
- *When he met Samuel, his first words were*
- *I have performed the commandment of the Lord."*

Samuel's Question

- *But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?" 1 Sam 15:14*
- *I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven.*
- *you will blot out remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget*
- *utterly destroy all; do not spare; kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey*
- All should have been silent,

The Final Dialogue between Them

- Samuel:
- *Now the Lord sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go, and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.' 19 Why then did you not obey the voice of the Lord? Why did you swoop down on the spoil, and do evil in the sight of the Lord?" 1 Sam 15:18-19*

The Final Dialogue between Them

- Saul:
- *And Saul said to Samuel, “But I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and gone on the mission on which the Lord sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. 21 But the people took of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the Lord your God in Gilgal.”*

The Final Dialogue between Them

- Samuel:
- *“Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. 23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He also has rejected you from being king.” 1 Sam 15:22-23*

The Highest Principle of Scripture!

- Samuel sought to help Saul see it as God did.
- Since we face similar choices we need to see it as well.
- It is one of the highest principles in Scripture.
- It would have saved Cain, Nadab & Abihu and Uzzah.
- It will also save us if we heed it.

The Highest Principle of Scripture!

- Any time we face a choice to obey God's specific command or gain some additional benefit by setting it aside, which gives God greater *'delight'*?
- For Saul it was *'burnt-offerings and sacrifices'* or *'obeying the voice of Jehovah?'* The answer *'to obey is better than sacrifice,'* *'rebellion is as witchcraft'* and *'stubbornness as idolatry.'*
- God saw Saul's response (and Cain's) as rebellion and stubbornness!

The Final Dialogue between Them

- *Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned, for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord and your words, because I feared the people and obeyed their voice. 25 Now therefore, please pardon my sin, and return with me, that I may worship the Lord."*
- *26 But Samuel said to Saul, "I will not return with you, for you have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you from being king over Israel." 1Sam 15:24-26*

What Saul saw as minor changes

- God saw and stated through His prophet:
- *You have rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord has rejected you from being king over Israel." 1 Sam 15:26*
- *the Lord regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel. 1 Sam 15:35*