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Service Times

Sunday

Bible Class: 9:30 A.M.
Worship: 10:30 A.M. & 5 P.M.
Sonshiners: 4:45pm

Wednesday

Bible Study: 7 P.M.

Preacher:

Russ Earl

AM Sermon:

Relationships (Eph 5:31-33)

PM Sermon

Amos – lesson 1

Sunday AM Bible Class:

Living on the Lord's side, Lesson 4
– R. Earl

Wednesday Bible Class:

5th Wednesday Singing

The Gospel of Christ TV Program

on Saturday @ 7:30am on Channel 53

BibleWayMediaMedia.org

Daily podcasts available on our website
& mobile app

The Oologah church of Christ only uses
the **KJV, NKJV or ASV** translation of
the Bible in classes & sermons.

The Oologah Informer

March 28th, 2021

God's Law of Exclusion

By Toney L Smith

Have you ever wondered just why there are so many religions in the world? There are untold numbers of religious concepts and patterns of worship. Each of these institutions has its own particular beliefs and standards by which they are governed. When asked why they practice certain things which are not found in Scripture, they often answer, “but the Bible does not say don’t.” The Bible is not a book of only dos and don’ts! It is a book that contains principles and laws which man must never presume to enhance upon (Deuteronomy 4:2; Revelation 22:18-19). Man must not add to His word or subtract from what is written. There is also a great problem when we make substitutions. Obedience to God depends on how we handle His word. We must ask ourselves, “Am I obeying the Lord if I change it in any way?” Of course, the answer is clear. I would not be obeying the instructions given if I made changes, which I felt would be better.

There is a law that is often set aside when considering Biblical matters. That law is known as the Law of Exclusion. “What is that?” you may ask. We all live by this law daily, whether we can define it or not. The definition of the Law of Exclusion is: “That which is not included is excluded.” Some examples that illustrate our use of this law would be the posted speed limit. We see a sign that might read: Speed Limit 65. You never see one that reads: Speed Limit 65, not 66, not 67, not 68, etc. When the limit is set at 65, anything above that limit is excluded! Or maybe you go to a restaurant to have a meal. You are given a menu from which you will make your order. You order certain items from the menu, but you are not required to say, “but not any of the other items listed on the menu!” When we specify what we want, all other items are excluded! You can make many other illustrations that apply to the Law of Exclusion.

We must ask the question, “Does God use this Law of Exclusion?” Must God list everything we cannot do in conjunction with what He commands us to do? Of course, He does not. By stating what He requires, He eliminates (excludes) everything else.

Notice some examples which we find in Scripture. In Genesis, God commanded Noah to build an ark. Noah was told, “Make thee an ark of gopher wood...” (Genesis 6:14). When gopher wood was specified, all other kinds of wood were excluded! God did not need to say, “Not oak, not pine, etc.” Noah understood what was commanded, and he obeyed (Genesis 6:22; Hebrews 11:7). In 2 Kings 5:10, Naaman, the leper, was told to dip in the Jordan River seven times. Seven times excluded any

other numbers. He was cleansed of the disease when he obeyed the exact instructions. In Ephesians 5:19, we read, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." God has commanded singing as the method for making music. Singing and making melody in one's heart excludes any additional methods for making music. This would exclude any mechanical instruments of music that men might add. No man has the right to add to or take away from God's commandments.

Some might wonder why we need to observe this principle. In fact, we often hear people say, "God does not care as long as we love Him." The truth is, we do not truly love Him if we do not keep His commandments, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Obeying the Lord completely is the only way we can be fully obedient. What I think only matters when what I think is the same as what God thinks concerning matters of obedience. Naaman was told what to do, but he became angry and said, "Behold I thought..." (2 Kings 5:11). Paul said, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts 26:9). In fact, strict compliance with commandments is the only way to demonstrate obedience. We would do well to remember what inspiration says about this subject: Isaiah 55:8 "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD;" Jeremiah 23:10 "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

Jesus died on the cross long ago to bring salvation to all of mankind (Romans 6:23). Yet, contrary to popular belief, there is something that man must do to receive this gift. The Hebrew writer addresses this topic: "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:9). The passage in Hebrews states that salvation is available to all who OBEY HIM. This statement emphasizes the Law of Exclusion. Salvation to those who obey Him without adding to or subtracting from His instructions. We would all do well to remember the words spoken by the mother of our Lord, "His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it" (John 2:5).

When faced with having to make choices in our lives, we should remember the Law of Exclusion. Ask yourself, "Am I doing as God has commanded, or am I trying to make changes or trying to substitute to allow for what I think would be just as good." Obedience is the difference between being saved and being lost: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).