

# But it doesn't say, "Thou Shalt Not"

## A Study of Bible Authority

### Introduction

How many times have you studied with a co-worker or friend and have them say, "But the Bible does not say that we cannot do it." A proper understanding of Bible laws in relation to God's authority will help us to answer such a statement properly. This study shall examine God's eternal sovereignty that qualifies him as one who has the right to command. Secondly, we will examine the methodology in which God commands (i.e., law) and thirdly we shall examine our individual responsibility to submit to His sovereign will.

### I. A Brief examination of the Sovereignty of God

- A. Sovereign(ty) = "Paramount; supreme... Having supreme rank or power... Supremacy of authority or rule as exercised by a sovereign or a sovereign state... Royal rank, authority, or power" (AHD 1169) (consider Isa. 9:6-7).
- B. What gives God such supremacy, power, royal rank, and authority in this world?
  - 1. Because in the beginning was God (ever existing) (Gen. 1:1).
  - 2. God is omniscience and omnipresent (Jer. 23:23-24).
  - 3. By God's omnipotence He created the material expanse of the heavens and earth by simply speaking these things into existence (Ps. 33:6-8).
- C. As the creator He naturally occupies a position of supreme authority over all the earth as the "*almighty God*" (Gen. 17:1; 35:11; Ex. 6:3). The prophet Jeremiah states, "*Ah Lord GOD! behold, thou hast made the heaven and the earth by thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee:*" (Jer. 32:17).
- D. God thereby makes the sovereign choice to:
  - 1. Save mankind through the shedding of blood (Lev. 17:11-14; Col. 1:20-22; Heb. 9:22).
  - 2. One comes in contact with the saving blood of Jesus through baptism (for the remission of sins) (cf. Acts 2:38; 22:16; I Pet. 3:18-21).
- E. To this point we recognize the great power, all knowing, and all seeing nature of God. We recognize His sovereignty and respect His authoritative choices for man to keep His laws.

### II. A Closer Look at God's Laws (His methodology of Command):

- A. God gave law at Mount Sinai saying, "*What thing soever I command you, that shall ye observe to do: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it*" (Deut. 12:32).
- B. The Mosaic Law was to serve a purpose and then be abrogated:
  - 1. Identify Sin (Rom. 7:7)
  - 2. remember sin (Heb. 10:1ff)
  - 3. Bring men to see their need for Christ (Gal. 3:19ff).
  - 4. Never intended to be an everlasting law (Jer. 31:31) because of its weakness and unprofitableness (cf. Heb. 7:18-19; 10:1-4).
- C. When Christ came into the world, preached the gospel of the kingdom, and willingly went to the cross a new kingdom with new citizens and new law was established (cf. Col. 1:13; 2:11-15).
- D. The Law of Christ has the power to remove sins (cf. Rom. 1:16).

### III. I must understand God's commandments before I can Submit to them

- A. God gives direct commandments (Phil. 2:2).
- B. God gives us examples to follow (Phil. 4:9).
- C. God speaks by necessary inference (I Cor. 7:26-28).

D. God does not have to say, “thou shalt not” for every question that the history of mankind can come up with. When God gives a command, example, inference we should respect His will and not try to add or take away from it simply because the subject is not touched. God has commanded instructions for His church and we should be content to follow His will. Consider the silence of the scriptures argument (Heb. 7:11-17).

#### IV. Sin and its consequences:

A. To sin is to violate a principle of God’s commandments (law) (cf. I Jn. 3:4).

B. There have ever been consequences of man choosing to violate God’s laws:

1. Adam and Eve eat of that which God had forbid them to and so suffered death (Gen. 2:16; 3:1ff).
2. God commanded that Noah’s descendants to be fruitful and multiply on the face of the earth; however, they stayed together (Gen. 9:7; 11:1ff). God confounded their languages and caused them to be spread out over the earth.
3. Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:1-2).
4. God’s sovereign will is that man be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). Those unwilling to comply with God’s commands will die in their sins (Jn. 8:24).

#### Conclusion:

The apostle John writes, “*And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that should be written*” (Jn. 21:25). The fact of the matter is that if it was God’s desire, books upon books could have been written that said, “thou shalt not...” Such an infinite volume does not exist because God has revealed those things necessary for man to be saved from the consequences of sin. Each of us must understand the sovereign nature of God, His subsequent authority, be willing to fear and obey Him, and know that when God commands by direct statement, example, or inference that we are not at liberty to do otherwise. The worship, work, organization, and teaching of the church must have its source in divine revelation. Those who so submit to God are promised a heavenly home.