

## COMMANDS, EXAMPLES AND NECESSARY INFERENCES

Dear Bro. Waddey: Can you help me learn how to determine what God wants us to do? Stew

Dear Bro. Stew: Hopefully the following thoughts will assist you in your studies:

\* The question is, How Do We Determine the Will of God? Everyone has a Bible, but obviously not everyone knows how to identify God's will for specific questions they face in life.

\* There are some preliminaries even before we get to commands, examples, and necessary inferences. For example, We must first distinguish between the two great covenants. Many young preachers have been erroneously taught by advocates of a "new hermeneutics" that no such distinction need be made. We must determine who is speaking? to whom he is speaking? and of what he is speaking? when we seek the meaning and application of a verse. We need to be very careful to determine the context in which the particular verse is found...lest we apply words meant for one subject to one totally different. We must properly understand the words and the message being spoken by the inspired penman? If we miss the writer's meaning, we will almost certainly misapply the application.

\* All must concede that there has to be a method by which we can determine God's will on subjects not specifically spelled out in Scripture. Those who would question the old approach of looking for commands, examples or necessary inferences, are obligated to produce a better, more Bible way. My impression is that those who question or reject the old approach prefer to lean on subjective feelings, personal opinions or the general opinion of the religious (denominational) world.

\* I might add that we can learn much about God's will from the simple statement of truths in Scripture. These statements may not be couched in the language of a command but they show us what God expects of us.

\* Obviously no one can question the authority of a command of God. To do so would be rebellion. In considering examples we must always determine if we can find behind the example a divine command or instruction to do that. Otherwise, it is just one way of doing a thing. This is illustrated in the use of an upper room for worship. It is not often that we look to inferences to determine whether or not a thing is authorized or expected of us. It is not enough that a thing be inferred, it must *necessarily* be inferred to be authoritative. This tool does help us in interpreting some verses of Scripture.

\* Of great importance is the principle of our obligation to respect the silence of Scripture. This is set forth in II John 9 and I Cor. 4:6 in the American Standard Version. This concept is under broad attack by those who wish to be free to do anything they wish so long as the Bible does not specifically forbid it. Of course this is the approach of virtually all denominational teachers. JHW