
BIBLE TALK

This week the question is: **What is the one non-essential command of God?** In other words, what one command did God give that you don't have to do? What one command did He give that He was not only kidding about? What is the one and only command which you do not have to take seriously, because He didn't mean for it to be taken seriously?

Are you ready for the answer? ***That one command is any command a person wants it to be.*** What I'm saying is, look at how people live their lives. Talk with them about a law of God that they're violating and the reason they're violating it is because they don't think it matters.

- **Talk to a fornicator about fornication** and somehow, in their mind, they have it all figured out that God didn't mean what He said about fornication and, in the end, they will be allowed into heaven anyway.
- **Talk to an adulterer about adultery** and about divorce and somehow, in their mind, they have it all figured out that adultery is the one command that God didn't mean for us to take seriously.

Matthew 19:16-22

16 Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?"

17 So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

18 He said to Him, "Which ones?" Jesus said, " 'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,'

19 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

20 The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?"

21 Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me."

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

Listen to me. When this young man rejected that last command (to sell all that he had), he demonstrated by that action that he was doing his own will all along. He was only doing what he wanted to do all along!

The same God that said, "Do not commit adultery" and "Do not steal," also said, "Sell all that you have." When he disobeyed this last command, he demonstrated that he would have disobeyed **any** command that was equally distasteful to him.

He was like many people today – he thought, "*Surely the Lord can't be serious about this last command. Surely He won't make selling all my possessions an absolutely mandatory requirement for salvation.*" As far as this young man was concerned, this was the one command of God that he didn't have to keep – or in other words, this is the one non-essential command of God (as far as he was concerned).

APPLICATION

What about you? Are there commands in the Bible which you think are small and don't matter and do you treat them as if they were non-essential?

Let's take this a step further. What about the church you attend? Do they treat some of God's commands as if they were non-essential? Do they in effect actually say of some commands, "*You don't really have to do that*"? I'll give you some examples:

- What about baptism for the remission of sins? **Acts 2:38** teaches that men must be baptized in water for the remission of sins. Does your church teach, "**You really don't have to do what the apostle Peter said there in that passage.**" Is Acts 2:38 treated as if it were the one non-essential command of God? Is it treated by your church as if God didn't really mean it?

Preachers are notorious about bringing up all sorts of arguments and all sorts of reasons why Acts 2:38 doesn't mean what it says, but when they're finished making their arguments, there is still is – still saying, *“Repent and let everyone of you be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of your sins.”*

- What about the command for women to remain silent in the assemblies of the church (**1 Cor. 14:34-35**)? Does your church some how excuse itself for not doing what this passage says? Is this passage treated as if it were the one non-essential command of God?

How far are we going to carry this thing? How many commands will a man or a group of men have to ignore before they make themselves like the fellow of Mt. 19?

Did God actually give any non-essential commands, or was He dead-serious about every one of them?

Psalms 119:172

172 My tongue shall speak of Your word, For all Your commandments are righteousness.

We must respect all of the Lord's commands and not just pick and choose the ones we like while ignoring the rest.

James 2:10-12

10 For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all.

11 For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law.

12 So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.

In other words, this passage is saying when men pick and choose only what they want, they're guilty of violating all of God's law, because in reality, they're only doing what they want to do in everything – just like the young man in Mt. 19.