

Noteworthy

Prayer Requests: Jo Anderson (*on-going medical*), Joe Brown (*cancer*), Mildred Church (*shut in*), Linda James (*surgery on Feb. 21st*), Paul Lloyd (*rehabilitation in Toledo, Ohio*), the Marschall family (*exhorting Kirk to faithfulness*), Kirk Marschall (*in need of spiritual encouragement*), Linda McKenzie (*tending to her mother's ailing health*), Butch Morgan (*ongoing medical*), Dottie Reynolds (*back, ongoing medical*).

Family and friends: Scott Bower (*friend of the Lawson's; health*), Leslie Gleaton's family (*friend of the Marschalls; passed away*), Ned Hicks (*Larry Hicks' father, ongoing medical*), Brian James (*cancer*), Rowena Lawson (*health issues*), John Marschall (*Bob's father*), Lindy McReedy (*Cindy Hicks' aunt, terminally ill, under hospice care*), Ardis Tucker (*Paula Sullivan's sister-in-law*). Remember and encourage others who are struggling physically and spiritually.

Group Meeting: Group 2 will meet tonight after the evening worship service.

Kids' Review Class: Will take place next week after the evening worship service.

Ladies Bible Class: Next class will be February 11th (*next week*) at 7PM in Angela Wisdom's home (*Please see bulletin board in foyer for more details*). In preparation, please do lesson number 12 on page 50 in the book provided for the class (*Woman, Her Blessings and Responsibilities*, by Irene S. Foy).

Men's Training Class: The 4th Sunday of each month at 5 pm (*Feb. 24th*).

Winter Study 2019: The next study on how to study the Bible will be Tuesday, Feb. 26th, in the Rice's home (7PM).

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 2/6/19

Song Leader: Jeff Lanning
 Opening Prayer: Joe Brown
 Invitation: Sherman Johnson
 Announcements: Larry Wisdom
 Closing Prayer: Joe Brown
 Recordings: Trent Stevens
 Usher: Larry Wisdom

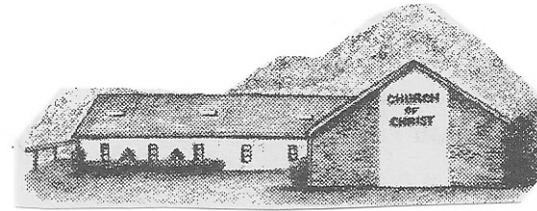
Sunday Evening: 2/10/19

Song Leader: Keith Marschall
 Opening Prayer: Ronnie Henderson
 Lord's Table: Sherman Johnson
 Announcements: Larry Hicks
 Closing Prayer: Jerry Williams
 Recordings: Bob Marschall
 Usher: Gus Johnson

Sunday Morning: 2/10/19

Lord's Table: Sherman Johnson (B)
 Jordan Lawson (C)
 Serving: Trent Stevens
 David Williams
 Song Leader: Colby Sadler

Opening Prayer: Charles Goodall
 Announcements: Larry Hicks
 Closing Prayer: Earl Branham
 Recordings: Bob Marschall
 Usher: Gus Johnson



**Lakeland Hills
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SERVICES

Sunday
 Bible Study 9:00 A.M.
 Morning Services 9:50 A.M.
 Evening Services 6:00 P.M.
 Wednesday
 Bible Study 7:00 P.M.

DEACONS:

Robert Marschall
 Michael Sadler
 Moses Stevens
 David Williams

EVANGELIST:

Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

“Are Examples Binding?”

Fundamental to the topics of Bible hermeneutics (the study of the theory and practice of interpretation) and Bible authority, there are many who would question whether or not we are bound to follow approved examples in the New Testament. This article seeks to answer that question. While this will by no means be an exhaustive treatise on the matter, it will be sufficient to prove that we are obligated to follow approved examples in the New Testament.

First and foremost, it is fundamental to acknowledge that we are commanded to follow approved examples. It is indisputable that when God gives a command, whether it is given directly or given through a medium such as an inspired prophet or apostle, that command must be obeyed (cf. John 14:15; 15:14; Matt. 28:20, et al). God commands us, in a variety of ways, to follow approved examples. In and of itself, this makes approved examples binding.

To illustrate this point, we can observe that the apostle Paul gives the command “imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ” (**1 Cor. 11:1**). By commanding us to do so, he places upon us a burden to follow and heed (i.e., hear and do) his example. There is no ambiguity in his statement. There is no room for interpretation. It is a clear and simple command that must be observed.

In another place he wrote, “be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma” (**Eph. 5:1-2**). Not only does he tell us to imitate him as he imitates Christ, he tells us also to

imitate God. Even in Christ's love there is a pattern for us to follow.

Jesus says, "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples" (**John 13:34-35**). So, not only is loving one another a command, Jesus is our example in fulfilling that command. That makes His example in love a binding pattern for us to follow. Not only does our obedience to Christ's command to love one another demonstrate that we are His disciples (i.e., followers), it proves that examples and patterns are intrinsic to commands. In other words, not only are we told to do something, we are shown how to do it. This makes approved examples binding. Similarly, the same could be illustrated with Christ's example in suffering (**cf. 1 Pet. 2:19**).

From the beginning, God has not only used commands to instruct, He has used examples. The martyr Stephen understood this, when he cited God's command to build a tabernacle of witness in the wilderness in the days of Moses. Stephen recalled, "as He appointed, instructing Moses to make it according to the pattern that he had seen" (**Acts 7:44**). We know that Moses did exactly what the Lord instructed (**Heb. 8:5**), as well as obeyed many other commands that were given with examples. His obedience to these commands rendered him faithful (**Heb. 11:23-29**).

Paul, using comparable language wrote, "Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern" (**Phil. 3:17**). Again we find ourselves given a command to follow an example and pattern. If you were to read on in that particular context, there is a condemnation set forth for

those who do not follow that pattern set forth by the apostles.

Many other illustrations of commands to follow examples could be given, but suffice it to say, we are clearly taught to follow the examples set forth in the New Testament. These commands make approved examples authoritative and imperative.

Another interesting and important point to be considered about the examples and patterns we are bound to follow from the New Testament is that they are consistent. Paul told the brethren in Corinth that he sent Timothy to "remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church" (**1 Cor. 4:17**). There are areas where we are at liberty to exercise conscientious judgments (cf. Romans 14). There are areas where God has not specifically legislated or God has specifically set us at liberty. However, when God has specified a pattern to follow, that pattern must be followed. It excludes all other ways and means. For reasons oftentimes not delineated, God has not only told us that He wants us to do something, He has told us exactly how He wants us to do it.

We can illustrate this with the observance of the Lord's Supper. By our Lord's words, "do this in remembrance of Me" (**Luke 22:19**), we find a command that must be obeyed. What are we to do? What is the "this" of the passage? So, as we look at the context, a clear example and pattern is set forth that gives us some specifics necessary to fulfill "this."

In an effort to "do this" (i.e., observe the Lord's Supper) the way the Lord commanded, we also look to other passages that describe this command. As we do, we will find some

additional specifics regarding this command, as well as detailed examples and even some necessary implications that must be drawn. When brought together, we have one of those "patterns" that Paul spoke of on several occasions—the "ways" he said he taught in every church.

In the book of Acts, we read how they continued steadfastly in the "apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers" (**Acts 2:42**). The breaking of bread is another expression used to describe the observance of the Lord's Supper (**cf. 1 Cor. 10:16; Luke 22:19**). So, we glean that it was something that the early disciples continually kept. We follow that example.

Paul, while traveling through Troas, met with the disciples on the first day of the week, as the passage tells us this is when they "came together to break bread" (**Acts 20:7**). As this is the only passage in the New Testament that speaks of the day in which this observance was kept, we find an approved example, thereby authorizing it. We do not find an approved example authorizing any other day, so we can say there is no divine authority to observe it on any other day of the week. As a matter of fact, we can see that Paul was in Troas for seven days, but it was the first day of the week that was the designated day for this observance. This is an illustration of what makes an example binding.

When asked if they did it every first day of the week, we conclude yes by virtue of the same pattern set forth in the Old Testament for the Sabbath day. The Fourth commandment says to "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" (**Ex. 20:7**). It does not specifically say to keep every Sabbath day, but that was the logical conclusion that was drawn by the Jews. There is

a Sabbath day in each week, so they remembered the Sabbath each week. Likewise, there is a first day of every week, so we necessarily imply that the continual observance of the Lord's Supper is to take place on each first day of the week.

Paul demonstrates this a bit further by his rebuke of the Corinthian brethren for failing to observe the Lord's Supper in "a worthy manner." In reminding them of the manner it is to be observed, he clearly reiterated what Jesus set forth when He commanded it and admonishes them on the consequences for not observing it "worthily" ... which means "in a manner worthy of" the Lord's original command (**cf. 1 Cor. 11:18-34**). Did the specifics of Jesus' pattern and example matter for the brethren in Corinth? Absolutely. So much so, that Paul clearly reiterated them. Was it condemnable to not follow the pattern given? Absolutely! This further illustrates and emphasizes how important it is to pay attention to not only the commands, but the examples given in the New Testament. The Corinthian pattern was unapproved, thus unauthorized. Paul reminded them of what was approved and authorized.

So, let us return to the basic question addressed herein. Yes. Approved examples are binding in the New Testament. If an example is set forth as unapproved, it is sinful. If it is set forth as approved, it is not only authoritative, it is binding. If more than one way to do the same thing is set forth as approved, then each of the patterns can be considered authorized. However, where a singular example is the only approved example, it becomes a binding example, as no other precedent or binding example is provided.