

## How to Tell What Pleases God

### Introduction:

- A. Cry of the day: “We do lots of things without Bible authority!”
- B. We must not! - Colossians 3:17
- C. But we have a problem: How can we tell whether or not a doctrine or practice is authorized by the New Testament?
- D. How does the New Testament authorize any practice or doctrine?

### I. Definition of “Authorize”

- A. “Authority”: “the power of one whose will and command must be obeyed by others” (Vine); cf. Matthew 8:5-9
- B. “To authorize” and “to teach” are not equivalent.
  - 1. The New Testament teaches that Peter denied the Lord three times, but that does not authorize us to deny the Lord. - Matthew 26:69-75
  - 2. “To authorize” is to give the right to act. - e.g., authorizing son to drive car
  - 3. “To teach” is to impart knowledge and understanding. - e.g., teaching son how to drive car

### II. The New Testament authorizes things in three ways:

- A. **declaration** - Acts 20:27
  - 1. statement - Romans 6:3-4
  - 2. command - Acts 10:48
- B. **approved example** - Philippians 3:17
- C. **necessary implication** - 2 Timothy 2:7
  - 1. This recognizes the application of logic to Scripture study. - Acts 17:2-3
  - 2. It is the only way to apply the Scriptures to ourselves. - Acts 2:38 (How can we apply this to people today?)
  - 3. It is not to imply that all inferences drawn by men are scriptural. - Acts 16:14-15

### III. Examples of Three Methods

- A. Jesus used these three methods of establishing authority when He resisted Satan’s temptations. - Matthew 4:1-11
  - 1. approved example - Matthew 4.4; cf. Deuteronomy 8:3
  - 2. necessary implication - Matthew 4:5-7; cf. Psalm 91:11-12; Deuteronomy 6:16
  - 3. declaration - Matthew 4:8-10; cf. Deuteronomy 6:13-15
- B. Controversy Over Circumcision
  - 1. approved example and necessary implication - Acts 15:6-11
  - 2. approved example and necessary implication - Acts 15:12
  - 3. declaration - Acts 15:13-19; cf. Amos 9:11-12

### IV. Application of Three Methods

- A. Baptism
  - 1. necessity: declaration - 1 Peter 3:21
  - 2. proper subject: approved example - Acts 18:8
  - 3. element: necessary implication - Acts 10:47-48

B. Lord's Supper

1. necessity: declaration - 1 Corinthians 11:23-25
2. when: approved example - Acts 20:7
3. frequency: necessary implication - Acts 20:7; cf. Exodus 20:8

Conclusion:

- A. A faithful application of these principles will lead us to be pleasing to the Lord and to have scriptural unity.
- B. Will you not determine to do so?