

POSITIVE DIVINE LAW AND MORAL LAW

OR

THINGS MORALLY RIGHT BUT RELIGIOUSLY WRONG

INTRODUCTION:

1. MORAL LAW relates to that which is right in itself.
 - (1) Moral law has to do with that which has always been right, and requires things to be done because they are right.
 - (2) The things moral law requires can be seen to be right in the reason and fitness of things.
 - (3) Some things are wrong within themselves:
 - a. Lying has always been wrong.
 - b. Stealing has always been wrong.
 - c. Murder has always been wrong.
 - d. Committing fornication and adultery has always been wrong.
 - e. Drunkenness has always been wrong.
 - (4) People who are guilty of such are IMMORAL.
2. POSITIVE DIVINE LAW is law that makes things right only because God commands them.
 - (1) Most of these commandments have to do with our relationship to God.
 - (2) They are a test of man's faith, and many of them are contrary to human reason -- Gen. 22.
 - (3) Positive law is the greatest trial of faith; it tests man's piety and devotion to God.
 - (4) It is obedience to God SOLELY because God commands it.
 - (5) Many will obey moral law, but will reject positive law because they cannot see any sense in it.
3. In religion we "*walk by faith, not by sight*"...II Cor. 5:7
4. A thing may be morally right, and at the same time religiously wrong-- Mk. 7: 3 - 7
 - (1) We must respect God's positive or religious laws, as well as His moral laws.
 - (2) Many fail to comprehend worship to God and service to Him because they look at everything from a moral viewpoint only.
5. Let us now illustrate the principle in our lesson.

I. THE PASSOVER

1. Ex. 12: 1 - 13

2. A lamb was required to be slain and the blood sprinkled on the doorposts of all the houses in which the Israelites were dwelling in Egypt.
3. The PROMISE: Ex. 12: 12 -13 -- The Lord would pass over every house where the blood was sprinkled on the doorpost and leave the firstborn alive.
4. No man could see any connection between the thing commanded and the end in view.
5. This was a POSITIVE law of God that had to be obeyed if the firstborn was to live.

II. THE FRUIT OF THE TREE IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN.

1. Gen. 3: 1 - 11
2. It was not morally wrong to eat fruit -- Gen. 3: 2 - 3
3. But, God gave a POSITIVE law that the fruit of the tree in the midst of the garden was not to be eaten by them -- Gen. 3:3
4. No act of immorality was committed by eating the fruit from the tree in the midst of the garden.
5. But, sin was committed because POSITIVE law of God was transgressed -- Gen. 3:11; I John 3:4

III. NADAB AND ABIHU OFFERED STRANGE FIRE BEFORE THE LORD.

1. Lev. 10: 1 - 2
2. No act of immorality was committed by offering strange fire, yet it was sin.
 - (1) What God had commanded -- Lev. 16: 12; 6: 12 - 13
3. They just offered fire that God had not commanded -- Lev. 10:2
 - (1) God had given instruction as to what kind of fire to offer.
 - (2) This prohibited every other kind of fire.
 - (3) When the Lord says nothing we must respect His silence -- Heb. 7:14
4. This violated POSITIVE law.

IV. SPRINKLING FOR BAPTISM.

1. Sprinkling water violates no moral law.
2. But, to sprinkle water as a substitute for baptism (immersion) is to violate POSITIVE or religious law of God, and is sin -- Rom. 6: 3 - 4

V. INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

1. Morally speaking, it is not wrong or immoral to play an instrument.
2. But, the New Testament is not silent on music in worship.
 - (1) We are commanded to sing -- Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16
 - (2) Instrumental music is another kind of music, and is therefore excluded.

(3) To use it is a sin -- it violates God's POSITIVE law, or religious law.

VI. OMITTING THE LORD'S SUPPER ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK.

1. Those who fail to partake of the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week are not immoral because they have violated no moral law.
2. But, they have sinned because they have violated POSITIVE or religious law, by leaving off something the Lord authorized each first day of the week -- Acts 20:7

VII. CHURCH FURNISHED ENTERTAINMENT

1. It is not immoral to eat, play games, and to have fun together.
2. There is no scripture that authorizes churches to do this, therefore the church is forbidden to do this.
3. For the church to furnish entertainment is to violate POSITIVE law, or religious law -- II John 9; I Cor. 4:6
4. Church furnished entertainment is vain in the sight of God because it is a religious service God has not commanded -- Matt. 15:9

CONCLUSION

1. Many people have not learned that the Bible has MORAL and POSITIVE (or religious) laws.
2. They do not know the difference between the two.

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