



The Voice of Truth



October 28, 2012

Are You Homophobic?

By Jimmy Pettigrew

How many times have you heard on the TV, or have read in the Newspaper that “We need to be tolerant of other people”, especially when it comes to homosexuality. All one needs to do is type the word “homophobic” on “Google” of his/ her computer to see what I’m talking about. Some say that all need to have a broadminded approach, and accept this lifestyle. We should stop being so judgmental, and stop these hate crimes. On and on it goes. Many in the world convey the idea that being not tolerant of this sin is wrong, and unloving, that you are hater of same sex romantic love. Well, I have learned that those who advocate “tolerance” are not too tolerant to you, if you disagree with them. And that non-judgmental folks are quite judgmental when they judge us for judging!

“Homophobic” is now an established term for prejudiced against homosexuals. I say **YES, we ought to be homophobic** – not that we should ever treat someone in an aggressive way because of their sin. Rather, we ought to fear God’s judgment concerning this sinful lifestyle. We as God’s children should “*hate every false way,*” (**Psalms 119:104**). Many people are shocked to find that divine hatred fills many pages in the Bible. We are taught by the God of love (**1 John 4:7-8**) to: abhor evil (**Romans 12:9**), hate evil (**Psalms 97:10**), hate iniquity (**Hebrews 1:9**). If we do not hate evil, we will some day embrace it!

The homosexual agenda is everywhere. Schools are supposed to teach reading, writing and arithmetic, but have been altered into institutions of social production. The homosexual agenda is in our schools, in the work place, in our homes through the television and has been embraced by the world. When we stand against evil and love the good (**Amos 5:15**), we are going to be hated, and labeled as meaning unloving. In our country, homosexuality was first despised, but then tolerated, and now it is embraced. And you’re such an unloving person, if you speak against this sin. Remember, “*The fear of Jehovah is to hate evil ...*” (**Proverbs 8:13**).

In the first book of the Bible God condemns homosexuality. This was demonstrated originally in the creation of the first human beings: “*Male and female created He them*” (**Genesis 1:27**). Both Jesus and Paul repeat this same understanding (**Matthew 19:4-6**; **1 Corinthians 7:2**). God created male and female. The marriage was composed of a man and a woman. “*Let marriage be had in honor among all, and let the bed be undefiled: for fornicators and adulterers God will judge*” (**Hebrews 13:4**). A husband and wife are authorized by God to engage in sex. Fornication, adultery, homosexuality, and all other forms of sexual perversion, are sinful. From the beginning we know what is the intention and plan of God.

Homosexuality was strongly condemned in the Law of Moses. “*Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is abomination*” (**Leviticus 18:22**). “*If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death ...*” (**Leviticus 20:13**). The physical acts between those of the same sex is that which God calls being “against nature” (**Romans 1:26-27**). We suggest that a person would need help to misunderstand these passages. Under the Law of Moses, you need to note that God of heaven, sympathetic to all sickness and affliction in man, still decreed death for those practicing homosexuality (**Leviticus 20:13**). **WHY? Because it was SIN!** God condemns homosexuality.

What of Sodom and Gomorrah? “*Even as Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about them, having in like manner with these given themselves over to fornication and gone after strange flesh, are set forth as an example, suffering the punishment of eternal fire*” (**Jude 7**). “Fornication” here “implies excessive indulgence” or “to commit much fornication.” “Strange” flesh here means “out of the order of nature,” “contrary to nature,” “that which was unnatural,” “a departure from the law of nature.” One version reads, “And don’t forget the cities of

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Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighboring towns, all full of lust of every kind, including lust of men for other men ..." Men seeking after men and women after women is "strange flesh" which God has not commanded. It is sin. It is condemn by God!

I wonder how long it will be, since you cannot condemn homosexuality without being labeled as unloving or prejudiced; will it be until one is labeled as being judgmental when one condemns drunkenness, adultery, fornication, stealing or lying? Oh, I believe we're in this vicinity. Just teach what makes people feel good about themselves, saying nothing is wrong. *"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bit-*

ter!" (Isaiah 5:20).

Oh, Jimmy you hate homosexuals. No, I hate the sin! But I get the feeling that people hate people who feel the way God feels about homosexuality being sin! *"O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of Jehovah" (Jeremiah 22:29).* God forgives sins. But for forgiveness, there must be repentance **(Luke 13:3)**. Some Christians in Corinth were former homosexuals, Paul says they were forgiven, they had obeyed the gospel **(1 Corinthians 6:9 ff)**.

Yes, we ought to be homophobic! Yes, we ought to be "phobic" of all sinful conduct! Should we confront sin, or just leave it alone? Should we allow people to stay in the wrong? Or help lead them in the right way? *"We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).* *

Are Examples Binding?

By Jonathan L. Perz

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*

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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

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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.

The Bible, as with all written words, is full of statements of fact, commands, examples and necessary implications. As His followers (or disciples), it is imperative that we learn to interpret these in such a way that we are always "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). To make a claim

to follow Jesus but not follow the examples His words set forth for us is to render any genuine claim to discipleship a lie. We can follow His way (John 14:6) or our ways (Prov. 14:12). However, in the end, we would be wise to remember the admonition of God through the prophet Isaiah, who said, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts'" (Isa. 55:8-9). Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦

What Do I Owe My Congregation? Author unknown

I owe it my loyalty. I must help carry out every good work it undertakes. I should help other congregations in special efforts, but I should not neglect my home congregation. I owe it my dependability. I am depending on it for many things it does in my behalf. It is not fair and right for me to depend on it and not be such that it cannot depend on me.

I owe it my financial support. It takes money to operate the church and preach the gospel. I am responsible to the Lord to give as He has prospered me. My home congregation has first call on my financial ability, for if the members of the church do not support the work of the home congregation, it will not be supported. The expenses go on whether I am there or not, so I should make up my contribution when absent.

I owe it my presence. If everyone stayed home there would be no worship of God. I am responsible as anyone to attend all of my congregation's services. I must not be a parasite.

I owe it the influence of a godly life. The life I live either helps others to obey the gospel or makes it the harder for them. How I live affects the work of the church and the salvation of the lost. I should live in such a way that my life will be blessing to others.

*If a hypocrite is between you and God,
He must be closer to God than you are.*

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3

Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24

Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30

Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21

Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27

Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew

How to Contact Us

Telephone: (920)499-5677
E-mail: hillcrestcofc@live.com



Our Address

1621 Hillcrest Drive
Green Bay, WI 54313



Schedule of Assembly

Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month