

THE BOUNDARIES OF GOD'S WORD

Introduction

- 1) **Revelation 22:18-19** – not “add to” nor “take away” from God’s revealed word
- 2) **2 John 9** – warns against “transgression” – *proago* (Gk) meaning “to go onward”
 - a) “goeth onward” (ASV); “goes too far” (NASV); “runs ahead” (NIV); “goes on ahead” (ESV)
- 3) The **boundaries** of divine truth are to be learned and respected, both that which God has authorized and that which God has *not* authorized. We are to abide within God’s revealed word, and not go past the boundaries of God’s word!
- 4) As seekers of divine truth, we must determine what God has said, and beware of the dangers of thinking “beyond what is written” (1 Cor. 4:6; Prov. 22:28)

I) **When God Has Spoken** “*Thus saith the Lord*” (Jer. 2:1-2a) “*It is written*” (Matt. 4:4)

- A) **Precepts** – Facts to believe, commands to obey, prohibitions to keep, promises to accept, and warnings to heed (see Eph. 5:6-14) **TELL**
- B) **Precedents** – Approved examples of individual or church action as instructed by apostolic teaching (see Acts 20:7; 11:27-30) **SHOW**
- C) **Implications** – Necessary conclusions drawn from the words of Scripture **IMPLY**

II) **When God Has Not Spoken**

- A) We must respect the silence of God – silence does not grant permission to act in His name
 - 1) If God has spoken, we must limit ourselves to His word (1 Pet. 4:11; Prov. 30:5-6)
 - 2) If God has not spoken, we dare not teach or command of our own wisdom (Col. 2:20-22)
- B) God has not spoken outside of Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16-17), nor by latter-day revelation (Jude 3)

III) **Some Applications**

A) ***Is baptism a burial [immersion] in water? May we also practice sprinkling or pouring?***

- 1) *Fact*: Greek word *baptizo* means to plunge, dip, immerse
- 2) *Fact*: Buried with Christ in baptism (Col. 2:12; Rom. 6:4)
- 3) *Example*: Went down into the water to be baptized (Acts 8:38-39)
- 4) *Implication*: Enough water for two men to go “down into the water” (Acts 8:38)
- 5) *Conclusion*: One baptism (Eph. 4:5) = *immersion [burial] in water* (God has spoken!)
Any mode of baptism that is not immersion in water is not Bible baptism

B) ***May we use mechanical instruments of music in the worship of the church today?***

- 1) *Fact*: Mechanical instruments were authorized in the Old Testament (2 Chron. 29:25)
- 2) *Fact*: We are not under the Old Testament today (Gal. 3:24-25; Heb. 10:9)
- 3) *Fact*: In the New Testament, there is silence as to instruments of music in church worship
- 4) *Fact/Example*: All New Testament commands and examples involve only singing to God in the church (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; 1 Cor. 14:15; Heb. 2:12)
- 5) *Conclusion*: Using mechanical instruments of music in the worship of the church today goes beyond the boundaries of the revealed word of God

IV) **The Danger of Going Beyond the Boundaries of God’s Word**

- A) Doctrines and commandments of men = vain worship (Matt. 15:9)
- B) A perverted gospel (Gal. 1:6-9)
- C) Have not God (2 Jn. 9)
- D) Eternal condemnation (Matt. 7:21-23)

Conclusion

Jesus asked, “***But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do the things which I say?***” (Lk. 6:46). We can know what God desires of us – why would we come up short or go beyond His perfect and divine will? Respect the boundaries of divine revelation and obey God’s word today!