Bible Authority: Specific and Generic

Greg Kline · Matthew 28:18–20

INTRODUCTION

- May we never grow so comfortable with God that we stop trying to be the best that we can be, that we stop trying to serve him to the best of our ability.
- What Christ has said, we must do.
- There was division over what man was saying is important to God, rather than taking what God had said and making that important to man.

1 Specific Authority and Generic Authority

Genesis 6:5–17

- This is where an act is required, and the means of obeying is expressly specified.
- Generic authority. Where an act is required, but the means of obedience is not expressly specified.
- Make yourself an ark of gopher wood, make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch.
- He had to build an ark, and he had to use gopher wood.

2 The Disciples Must Go

Matthew 28:18–20

- The disciples were told to go, and they were to teach. That's specific.
- Is walking, sailing, or riding an addition to the Word of God.
- He didn't say go sail, walk, or ride to all the nations. He simply said, go.

3 The Law of Specificity and the Law of Silence

- Why do we do what we do if the Bible doesn't say so? And that answer is it is under generic authority.
- Law of specificity. If God says something, you must do it, period.
- When Noah was told to build an ark of gopher wood, that specific command outlawed oak, pine, cedar, other types of woods.
- There's a difference in that which changes or alters the requirement that is specific, and those which help us obey that specific requirement.

4 The Lord's Supper

1 Corinthians 11:23–26; Luke 22:19

- This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.
- What is the specific authority? The bread and the cup.
- Aids would be things like cups. Trays, and yes, even servers would be an aid.
- Whether you are replacing elements or adding elements, you have altered the commandment of Christ.

5 Singing Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs

Ephesians 5:19

- Addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.
- We have two specific commandments there to sing and what we are to sing.
- What scripture authorizes playing? Until that scripture is produced, singing is all that we do have listed.
- Unless the scripture can be produced that we must have instrumental music, it is an addition.

6 Church Buildings and the Command to Assemble

1 Corinthians 11:17–34; 1 Corinthians 14:23–26; Acts 19

- Church buildings are authorized because the church is authorized and commanded to assemble together.
- Generic authority is to rent, borrow, or buy.
- If we are doing things like having pews, electricity, and classrooms even, those are aids.
- A social hall, a kitchen, a swimming pool speaks to purposes that are not those of the church expressly.

THE CHALLENGE

Let us prayerfully and carefully consider what the will of God is and how we can understand it and to be consistent in how we live out the commandments of God.

MY NOTES