

Questions for Discussion: Practice

1. Women should be submissive to their husbands; but when should they disobey?

2. Where are “men’s breakfasts” in the Bible?

John 21:4-13

But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes. Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea. And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes. As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

3. (a.) Luke 15:25

Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard musick and dancing.

Does this condone “music and dancing”?

(b.) Genesis 24:47

And I asked her, and said, Whose daughter art thou? And she said, The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor's son, whom Milcah bare unto him: and I put the earring upon her face, and the bracelets upon her hands.

Ezekiel 16:11

I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck.

Do these verses condone the use of jewellery?

4. Romans 13:8,9

Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

This only mentions the second table of the law. Therefore, does this mean that the magistrate only has jurisdiction over the second table of the law and not the first?

5. Lawful Oaths and Vows:

(a.) Is the vow of the Nazarite still for us today?

(b.) Is it lawful to make human vows, e.g. the vow of the Rechabites (Jeremiah 35).

6. (a.) Is it right or wrong to use for-profit public transport on the Lord's Day?
(b.) Is it wrong to use other for-profit services, e.g. electricity, gas etc. which also employ staff to run their power stations on the Lord's day?
(c.) Is it wrong to use the Forth Bridge, if payment is to be automatic by CCTV camera with the bill coming in later?
(d.) Is it wrong to get a seven day bus pass, paying for it in midweek but using it to get to church on Sabbath?

7. (a.) People who "feel a call" to the ministry just fancy themselves. Discuss.
(b.) Acts 20. Is it not a little arrogant to declare that "*I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you*" (v.20) or "*I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.*" (vv.26,27)? Should Paul not rather be mourning over not having done enough and fallen so far short? Or is he, as an apostle, infallibly assured that these statements (now enscripturated) are true (which we cannot be nowadays)?
(c.) Whether women can preach or not depends on whether you see preaching as "having authority over the man" or not. The Bible is where we get all our authority from, so preaching is authoritative as much as it sticks to the Bible (so it is the Bible that is authoritative, not the preacher). So can we have women preachers?

8. When called on to pray in congregational prayer, should we pray in the first person plural or third person plural when giving thanks for spiritual blessings, knowing that some of the congregation will be unregenerate?

9. Is it right in an emergency service to have a clause in our job contract to be allowed to not work on the Sabbath? Or is it a case of "Let the gentile dogs do it"?

10. If we truly believe in the total depravity of man (i.e. ourselves):

(a.) Should we not want to socialise at church, rather we should just want to walk away after each service and hide away from people because we are so vile?

(b.) Matthew 23:27

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

Is not sackcloth is a more appropriate dress for church than a suit and tie?

(c.) *Westminster Larger Catechism*

Question 144: What are the duties required in the ninth commandment?

Answer: The duties required in the ninth commandment are, the preserving and promoting of truth between man and man, and the good name of our neighbour, as well as our own; appearing and standing for the truth; and from the heart, sincerely, freely, clearly, and fully, speaking the truth, and only the truth, in matters

of judgment and justice, and in all other things: Whatsoever; a charitable esteem of our neighbours; loving, desiring, and rejoicing in their good name; sorrowing for, and covering of their infirmities; freely acknowledging of their gifts and graces, defending their innocency; a ready receiving of a good report, and unwillingness to admit of an evil report, concerning them; discouraging talebearers, flatterers, and slanderers; love and care of our own good name, and defending it when need requires; keeping of lawful promises; studying and practicing of: Whatsoever things are true, honest, lovely, and of good report.

How can we have a “*charitable esteem of our neighbours*” when the Bible teaches us that we are all totally depraved?

11. How is it that Jews and Muslims can be so consistent in purging idolatry from their places of worship, but those who call themselves Christians can't do it?

12. Isaiah 38:20

The Lord was ready to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord.

Psalms 98:5

Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm.

Do such verses condone singing songs of human composition accompanied by musical instruments in the worship of God?

13. Can lying ever be justified? cf. Rahab (Joshua 2:4); Jeremiah 38:27.

14. (a.) If the punishment for murder is the death penalty, why did the Lord not kill Cain?

(b.) Genesis 9:6

Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.

Is this an imperative? Or is it a similar phrase to:

Matthew 26:52

....all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

which is not an imperative?

15. Zechariah 8:19

Thus saith the Lord of hosts; The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love the truth and peace.

(a.) Is God here approving of uncommanded festivals?

(b.) If the church has the right to ordain special days (e.g. day of humiliation and prayer, fast day, preparation day of a communion etc.), then what is the difference between this

and ordaining Dec 25th to commemorate the incarnation of Christ (and the rest of the "church calendar")?

(c.) Why do we celebrate New Year's Day on January 1st? The pope decreed this as the festival commemorating the circumcision of Christ, a week after his birth (which Protestants do not generally celebrate).

16. The exhortation of Christ "*This do in remembrance of me*" is, in our circles, explained as an exhortation to all of the Lord's people to go to the Lord's table. But Roman Catholics interpret it as NOT applying to all Christ's people, but only to the apostles, and through them by apostolic succession to their priests. Christ saying "This do" is namely a reference to His just having broken bread with the words "This is my body." So here we get the idea of the priestly class alone being given this exhortation (obviously also going along with their erroneous idea of transubstantiation).

Similarly, I have always understood Christ's "*Ye are the salt of the earth*" and "*Ye are the light of the world*" as referring to all believers, but William Perkins (and probably other good theologians too) refers this to mean the apostles only, and through them the ministers of the gospel only. Quote: "*In this verse, and the rest to the 16th, Christ propoundeth the second branch of this sermon, touching the office of the apostles, and in them of all ministers; wherein, His intent is to move them to diligence in preaching the will of God to all people.*"

So, are all Christians required to fulfil the Great Commission, or only the ministers? Should we all be out there preaching on the streets and distribute tracts and such, or only ministers? Some reformed churches would say that only ministers should evangelise; and we pew sitters are merely to bring others into the church to hear the gospel there.

So the question is: When do we interpret a passage to apply to only a small group of people (e.g. ministers etc.) and when do we interpret it to apply to all believers?

17. Democracy is the worst form of government. Discuss, especially in the light of:

(a.) "Give us Barabbas" (Luke 23:18)

(b.) The choosing by lot from a shortlist (Acts 1:21-26)

18. In the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches, to show real faith one becomes a priest, monk or nun. In Protestantism, one "goes into full-time Christian work." Discuss.

19. Is forcing people to do things against their will, Christian?

e.g. passing laws on Sunday trading, outlawing homosexuality, etc.

20. Leadership:

(a.) Exodus 32:19,20

And it came to pass, as soon as he came nigh unto the camp, that he saw the calf, and the dancing: and Moses' anger waxed hot, and he cast the tables out of his hands, and brake them beneath the mount. And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strawed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it.

How is it that Moses could get the people to do what he wanted, but Aaron couldn't?

(b.) 1 Samuel 2-4. Eli couldn't keep his two sons under control.

(c.) 2 Samuel 3, 15 etc. David couldn't control his armies the sons of Zeruiah and Abner. Not even his own family, Absalom etc.

2 Samuel 3:27-30

And when Abner was returned to Hebron, Joab took him aside in the gate to speak with him quietly, and smote him there under the fifth rib, that he died, for the blood of Asahel his brother. And afterward when David heard it, he said, I and my kingdom are guiltless before the LORD for ever from the blood of Abner the son of Ner: Let it rest on the head of Joab, and on all his father's house; and let there not fail from the house of Joab one that hath an issue, or that is a leper, or that leaneth on a staff, or that falleth on the sword, or that lacketh bread. So Joab and Abishai his brother slew Abner, because he had slain their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle.

2 Samuel 3:39

And I am this day weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me: the LORD shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.

If people under your rule (e.g. in the family, church etc.) won't do what you tell them, what do you do? How does leadership work?

21. (a.) Which is the correct answer:

Q. "Do I need to give up smoking to become a Christian?"

A1. "Yes."

A2. "You need to repent and believe in Jesus first, become a true Christian in your heart, then let God deal with the rest." [We can't repent or change. We need the Lord to do it all for us.]

(b.) Replace "smoking" in the above question with sinful things, e.g. gambling, homosexuality, etc.

(c.) Replace "smoking" in the above question with things not intrinsically sinful, e.g. gossip magazines, sports, music etc.

22. (a.) Not giving thanks before meals is against the seventh Commandment "*Thou shalt not commit adultery.*" Discuss.

(b.) Is gluttony against the sixth (John Gill) or seventh commandment?

23. People are the problem:

- Everybody is so cocky and confident.
- Everybody is so full of themselves.

Discuss.

24. Don't go out in the street. There'll always be people who'll annoy you. Discuss.

25. Evangelism without brokenness. Discuss.

26. Genesis 28:20,21

And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the LORD be my God

"If God will do this, then He will be my God." This implies that He won't be my God if He doesn't do all these things. Is this the right attitude?

27.