

“Loopholes”

Christian: It’s Not What You Think, Part 7

November 12th, 2017

Christians **LOVE** loopholes

As Christians when we run into something we don’t really want **TO DO**, we find someone who agrees with us, or say that doesn’t apply anymore, it’s cultural, etc...

Loophole Christians really love theology – you can build a barricade that keeps you from having to do what the **BIBLE** actually says

Disciples of Jesus don’t look for loopholes; they ask a completely different set of **QUESTIONS**

It’s **DANGEROUS** to be a loophole Christian

Christians often ask, “How close can I get to sin without **ACTUALLY SINNING?**”

Religious people often have rules to keep people from **BREAKING** the rules

Matthew 15:1-2 (NIV) “Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, ‘Why do Your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don’t wash their hands before they eat!’”

Matthew 15:3-5 (NIV) “Jesus replied, ‘And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition? For God said, ‘Honor your father and mother’ and ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’ But you say...”

The religious leaders took theology and twisted it to allow them to do the **OPPOSITE** of what God commanded

They are all about the commands and not the **COMMANDER**; they forgot the **INTENT** of the law

Matthew 15:5-6 (NIV) “But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is ‘devoted to God,’ they are not to ‘honor their father or mother’ with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition.”

Matthew 15:7 (NIV) “[Jesus replied] You hypocrites.”

Jesus doesn’t like it when we use His Father’s **WORDS** to avoid doing His Father’s **WILL**

A loophole Christian just **IGNORES** whatever is **INCONVENIENT**

John 13:34-35 (NIV) “[Jesus said] A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another.”

Loving each other as Jesus had loved them became the **FILTER** through which the early followers of Jesus made every relational decision

1 John 4:11 (NIV) “Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”

Romans 13:8a (NIV) “Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another...”

You have a **CONTINUING** debt of love to love others as Christ loved you

Romans 13:8b-9 (NIV) “...for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. The commandments, ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not covet,’ and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Mark 12:28-31 (NIV) “[Jesus was asked] ‘Of all the commandments, which is the most important?’ ²⁹ ‘The most important one,’ answered Jesus, ‘is this: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” ³¹ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

Jesus said – love one another the way I loved you – everything else is **SECONDARY**

We dare not take a Scripture verse or passage and use it to UNLOVE someone else

For a disciple of Jesus the question we must ask of every situation is “What does love

REQUIRE OF ME?

Living and loving this way is much HARDER and more COMPLICATED than being a loophole Christian

The answer to this question will draw us out of our COMFORT zone into new kinds of

RELATIONSHIPS

It will create MIDDLE GROUND (dialogue, conversations, open doors) in our relationships

When we love this way, Scriptures become a MIRROR instead of MACE

Aren't you glad God didn't look for a loophole when it came to His LOVE FOR YOU

Jesus doesn't like it when we use His words as an excuse to MALIGN and MISTREAT the people He died for, and you never met ANYONE He didn't die for

My Next Step Today Is:

- I will make loving others the way Jesus loved me the filter through which I make all my relational decisions
- This week each in every situation I will begin asking the question, “What does love require of me?”

Next week: Join us as we conclude this series by examining “Working Out.” Invite a friend!

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