

Joshua – Who Did as the Lord Bade Him

Dub McClish

Introduction

Joshua was one of the outstanding characters in all of history. The key to his greatness is found in Joshua 11:9: "And Joshua did unto them as Jehovah bade him: he hocked their horses and burnt their chariots with fire."¹ Of course, his greatness lies not in the fact that he was a superior horse-hocker and chariot-burner, but that God told him to do these things and he exactly did them. We find similar indications of the loyal and careful obedience to God that was characteristic of Joshua later in this same chapter: "As Jehovah commanded Moses his servant, so did Moses command Joshua: and so did Joshua; he left nothing undone of all that Jehovah commanded Moses" (v. 15); "So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that Jehovah spake unto Moses..." (v. 23).

The careful adherence to the Word of God seen in Joshua was both expected and accepted by God. The entire Bible record is one long illustration of the truth that God expects and accepts no more, but no less of all men in every age. This beautiful trait Joshua so fully exemplifies has numerous important implications.

Joshua Respected What God Said

God spoke to Joshua in two ways. He spoke to him directly (v. 6), but He also spoke to him indirectly through Moses (vv. 15, 23). The latter means by which God addressed Joshua (through Moses) was no less authoritative than the former. Joshua understood his responsibility to hear and obey God whether He spoke to him directly or indirectly.

God speaks to men today only indirectly. He speaks through His Son. At the Transfiguration, God's voice thundered, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Mat. 17:5). The opening words of the Hebrews letter plainly set forth the fact that, although God has spoken in past times through various men in various manners, He "hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son" (Heb. 1:1–2).

Just as God speaks to us indirectly through His Son, so Christ speaks to us indirectly through His apostles and prophets. On the eve of His crucifixion He promised the apostles that He would shortly return to the Father and at that time He would send the Holy Spirit, "the Spirit of Truth," upon them, Who would guide them into all the truth and declare unto them the things that were to come (John 16:13). Paul wrote that the wonderful wisdom of God was revealed unto them (the apostles) through the Spirit, "Which things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth..." (1 Cor. 2: 6–10; 13). This same apostle

stated that God had set both the apostles and prophets in the church (1 Cor. 12:28) and that the foundation of the household of God consisted of "...the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone" (Eph. 2:19–20). The means by which the apostles and prophets constituted the foundation of the church was through the inspired Word which they proclaimed.

The apostles and other inspired individuals originally addressed the inspired Word of God to men orally as they went from place to place carrying out the Great Commission (Mat. 28:18–19; Mark 16:15–16; Luke 24:46–47). However, by direction of the Holy Spirit they soon began to write down the record of the Truth with which they were inspired so that it might be preserved "unto the end of the world" (Mat. 28:20). To the corrupted Corinthians, Paul thundered his apostolic authority as an inspired mouthpiece of Christ: "If any man thinketh himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him take knowledge of the things which I write unto you, that they are the commandment of the Lord" (1 Cor. 14:37). Note that the writings of the apostle are "the commandment of the Lord."

We must respect the message of God as we read it or as someone faithfully teaches it to us, just as though God were speaking directly to us. Joshua correctly understood this principle and he respected the commandments from Moses, God's faithful spokesman, just as much as he did the commandments that came directly from God (Jos. 11:15, 23). The saints in Thessalonica were commended for doing this very thing:

And for this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that, when ye received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe (1 The. 2:13).

The words of faithful Gospel preachers or teachers are just as much the words of God as if God had directly spoken them to us. Many in the kingdom of Christ either do not know or do not care about this principle. Such will oppose God's faithful messengers to the extent that they will not consent to hear them. They will seek to cause such men to have to move to another place (and they all too frequently succeed), or they will themselves go to a compromising congregation—or drop out altogether.

Let it register clearly: What may seem to be opposition to the faithful messenger is often not that at all. The opposition is most often to the faithful message. If the opposition is to the message and it is God who sent the message, then the real opposition is to God. If one rejects the Word of the Lord, he rejects the Lord himself: "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last

day" (John 12:48). Let all beware of rejecting the faithful messenger of Christ, thereby rejecting the Lord himself.

Joshua received an imperative direct statement from God to hock the horses and burn the chariots (Jos. 11:6) and he did "as Jehovah bade him" (v. 9). One means of establishing Scriptural authority for any doctrine or practice is herein illustrated, namely, by direct statement. These may be expressed positively, as in this case, or negatively, as I shall later demonstrate.

Direct statements may take a variety of forms. While all commands of Scripture are direct statements, not all direct statements are commands. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16) is not in the form of a command (as it is often mistakenly described), but of a simple declarative statement. However, it has the **force** of not only **authorizing**, but also of **obligating** men both to believe the Gospel and to be baptized in response to it if they would be saved. "Repent ye and be baptized..." (Acts 2:38) is a New Testament direct statement in the form of a command, an imperative (as was God's command to Joshua).

Direct statements may be in the form of exhortations which express Scriptural authority, such as in Hebrews 12:1: "Therefore let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." When we are exhorted to a certain course of action by an inspired writer we can be assured that such action is authorized by God.

Closely akin to an inspired exhortation is the expression of the wish of an inspired writer, which, for the same reason as that given for an inspired exhortation, authorizes the fulfillment of the wish. When Paul repeatedly says, "God forbid" (literally, "may it not happen" [e.g., Rom. 3:4; 6:2, et al.]), he is authorizing us to teach and act in harmony with said wish. Direct statements may also be in the form of questions: "Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" (Rom. 6:1) clearly forbids continuance in sin, thus it authorizes certain behavior.

Direct statements from God may be negative in nature (i.e., prohibitions). Joshua 6:17–18 provides an illustration of a negative imperative direct statement (by implication, issued by God) prohibiting the taking of spoils or sparing of lives (save Rahab and her family). Joshua faithfully proclaimed and executed this prohibition. God continues to authorize (and not authorize) certain actions and doctrines by direct negative statements in the New Testament. "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth..." (Eph. 4:29) and "...abstain from fornication" (1 The. 4:3) are samples of many such statements.

It could not be said of Joshua that he "did as Jehovah bade him" had he ignored all or even part of God's positive, imperative direct statement concerning hocking the horses and burning the chariots, thus being disobedient. Neither could it have been said that "Joshua did as Jehovah bade him" had he ignored God's prohibitions, keeping some of the spoils for himself and/or sparing some of the people of Jericho besides Rahab and her family. God's attitude toward Joshua in that case would have been the same as it was toward Achan (Jos. 7:16–26) and toward King Saul (1 Sam. 15:3–23), both of whom brought destruction upon themselves by their rebellion against God's negative direct statement. Likewise, in those areas of direct statement from the Lord **to us**, whether they are positive or negative in nature, we are authorized and obligated to act.

While the foregoing principles have already implied as much, let us now consider explicitly the fact that Joshua's obedience was **complete** obedience. He both hocked the horses and burned the chariots (Jos. 11:9). Would he have obeyed at all if he had decided it was a good idea to hock the horses, but it would be wise to preserve a few of the chariots? Would he have been obedient at all had he burned all of the chariots and hocked most of the horses, but decided to save a few select mounts for his captains to ride? The answer is "No" in both cases! His utter obedience is stressed concerning other orders from God: "He left nothing undone of all that Jehovah commanded Moses" (v. 15). The ASV margin reads, "he removed nothing." Keil and Delitzsch give the literal rendering of the first part of this verse as "...he put not away a word."² Joshua's fullness of obedience is described even further in connection with taking the land: "So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that Jehovah spake unto Moses" (v. 23).

King Saul is the classic example of one who attempted to please God by partial obedience to orders similar to those given to Joshua. God, through Samuel, commanded: "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass" (1 Sam. 15:3). While Saul indeed soundly smote the Amalekites, the record also says that he spared "...Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, ...and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen; and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them" (vv. 8–9). Saul thought he knew better than God and that he could improve upon God's plan. But did he not do almost all that God told him to do? This cannot be denied, but Saul was not thereby excused, even though he argued that he had obeyed God (vv. 13, 20). Samuel, God's prophet, described Saul's behavior as *disobedience, evil, rebellion, stubbornness and rejection of His Word* (vv. 19, 23).

God thus evaluated Saul because "he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments" (v. 11).

It is not different with men now. Men who attempt only partial obedience to the commands of Christ—who think they can improve upon the Word and Commandment of the Lord—are guilty of nothing less than rebellion, yea high treason, against their spiritual Commander-in-chief! We may also observe from Saul that the test of submission to the authority of the Lord is not seen in those doctrines or duties with which we agree, but in those matters with which we tend to disagree, in which we see no sense, which we find unpleasant or inconvenient. In such matters will it be apparent whether we are truly willing to do what God says because He says it, or that we are doing some things that God says because they happen to please us.

God still requires full, unquestioning obedience of men. Under Christ (Who has universal and absolute authority [Mat. 28:18]), men are obligated to observe **all things** He has commanded (v. 20). James laid down the ever-current principle: "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all" (Jam. 2:10). Those moderns, whether in the church or out of it, who rail against the obligation—or even the need—of men under Christ to obey the Law and Commandments of the Lord, utter not only abject folly, but great blasphemy. Christ is (and will ever be) the author of eternal salvation to those who obey Him (Heb. 5:9). We do not love Him if we do not keep His commandments (John 14:15). Our goal must be to follow the example of the completeness of Joshua's obedience—to leave nothing undone of all that Christ commands us.

Joshua Respected What God Did Not Say

Joshua understood that God prohibits by silence as well as by direct statement. He had no authority to hock the horses and burn the chariots of the Egyptians, Assyrians, Babylonians, or any other nation besides the Canaanites. Why? Not because God explicitly prohibited such, but because He was silent regarding such action against the other nations. All of the horses and chariots he was to deal with were included in the direct positive statement of God, and simultaneously, all others were automatically excluded without their being named. Joshua had authority to take the whole land occupied by the Canaanites (Jos. 11:16–20), but he had no authority to launch a campaign against Greece, Egypt, or any other nation. This is true, not because God explicitly forbade it, but because of the implication of God's silence concerning any other territory.

The principle of respect for the silence of Scripture is one of indispensable and inestimable importance in order to please God. In fact, no man has been or will be able to discern what pleases God and what the limit of His will is without respecting this principle, in whatever age he may live. While it cannot be found in the exact words of Scripture, the succinct statement of Thomas Campbell is verily found in principle time after time in the Word of God: "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent."

The principle of being silent where the Scriptures are silent involves the law of inclusion and exclusion. Simply put, this law requires that when God specifies what to do or how to do what He wants done, He simultaneously **includes** what He wants and implicitly **excludes** every other thing **in that class**. People—even children—universally understand and employ this principally daily in secular matters. When an eight-year-old child is sent into the drive-in market for a gallon of milk, he does not expect his mother to say: "Don't buy tomatoes, don't buy soup, don't buy ice cream, don't buy bread, don't buy candy" and thus continue until she names every item in the store. The child understands (and so do all) that only the purchase of bread is authorized. He also understands (and so do all) that any other purchase is implicitly unauthorized without the naming of any other item.

When one buys a new vehicle, he does not expect to be required to name every possible piece of optional equipment available and forbid the dealer to add it. Both the purchaser and the dealer understand that by naming the equipment desired, all unnamed equipment is automatically excluded and unauthorized.

The child may be overcome with temptation (while purchasing the milk) and buy a candy bar with the milk change, but he does so without parental authority. The auto dealer may add a spotlight to the car, but he will do so without the purchaser's authority. In each case that which was stated included all that was authorized and excluded everything that was undesired and unauthorized—without the listing of everything (or anything) that was undesired or unauthorized. Both of these hypothetical cases illustrate man's common understanding and respect for silence and the law of inclusion and exclusion in everyday earthly experiences. If silence does not equal prohibition in these cases, then neither the mother nor the car purchaser would have any ground upon which to object that their respective specifications were not followed.

God began to emphasize the sacredness of the silence of His Word (whether oral or written) very early in the Bible, and this emphasis is consistent throughout. Cain painfully learned the lesson when he offered an unacceptable, rejected sacrifice of "fruit of the ground" (Gen. 4:3–5). While there is evidence and implication that God told both Cain and Abel what to

offer (see Heb. 11:4; Rom. 10:17; Acts 10:34), there is not the slightest inkling that God ever said, "Thou shalt not offer the fruit of the ground." By what principle then was Cain's offering rejected? When God specified the kind of sacrifice He required (i.e., a lamb [Gen. 4:4]), he implicitly excluded vegetables, minerals, and other materials.

Noah understood the significance of God's silence. When God ordered the building of the ark, He specified (among other things) that it was to be built of "gopher wood" and was to have one door and three floors (Gen. 6:14–16). God did not (nor did He need to) list every other kind of wood available to Noah and forbid their use for Noah to understand that gopher wood alone was to be used. This faithful patriarch understood that every other type of wood was automatically proscribed by God's silence concerning them. It was the same with every other possible number of floors or doors; God did not have to say, "Do not put two doors and do not put four floors" for these prohibitions to prevail. Significantly, Moses wrote concerning Noah's response: "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he" (Gen. 6:22), which would not have been so had Noah added things concerning which God had been silent.

Some of our compromising brethren have lately announced that they will no longer refer to the example of Nadab and Abihu to illustrate the principle of respect for God's silence—because men in the Independent Christian Church have expressed their rejection of it. They understandably reject it, because it so forcefully illustrates the truth of God's law of inclusion and exclusion, which destroys their contention for the use of mechanical musical instruments in worship and all the other innovations of this denomination. Instead of referring to this famous incident less, current thinking among brethren and others requires that we stress it more. There is no hint that God explicitly forbade Nadab and Abihu to use the fire they carried in their censers and for which God burned them up (see Lev. 10:1–2). However, the fire they used most surely was prohibited implicitly by God's silence concerning its use for holy purposes. When God told them what fire to use, He thereby rendered all other fire "strange fire before the Lord, which he had commanded them not" (v. 1). Note well the authority of God's silence: it was not "strange fire which he had forbidden them," but "which he had commanded them not"! The silence of God itself was a prohibition.

Other illustrations of this principle exist in Scripture, but these will suffice for the honest and serious student to prove that God operates (and has always operated) on this principle in His dealing with men and that He expects us to understand and respect it. Men have always ignored this principle to their own shame and peril.

We will do well to notice briefly some **applications** of the law of inclusion and exclusion to New Testament doctrine and practice:

1. The Lord said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16). It is really not too difficult to understand that if those who are to be baptized unto salvation are to be believers, then infidels, idiots, and infants are therefore not able to be baptized unto salvation—with no statement necessary in that regard.
2. The Lord specified the elements of unleavened bread and fruit of the vine to be used in the Lord's supper (1 Cor. 11:23-25). These inclusions thereby forbid the use of coffee and doughnuts or any other solid or liquid edible elements.
3. The Lord through His apostles specified the kind of music that His disciples were to employ in worship to God and to Himself, namely, singing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Thereby any other kind of music (including mechanical instruments, whistling, humming, "ooing and aahing," mimicking instrumental sounds with the voice, etc.) was excluded because unauthorized.

In each of the aforementioned illustrations the Son of God stated His will, which included the items he specified and which simultaneously (without having to name a single thing) excluded everything which was not specified. If this principle **does not** apply to the kind of music God accepts in worship, then it likewise does **not apply** to limiting the elements on the Lord's table or limiting who are Scriptural subjects of baptism. If this principle **does** apply to the Scriptural subjects of baptism and the authorized elements on the Lord's table, then it most certainly **does** also apply to the kind of music which the Lord will accept!

I will now suggest some of the ways by which we know this principle of respecting the silence of Scripture (i.e., the law of inclusion/exclusion) is valid.

Ignoring Scriptural Silence Is Unreasonable and Requires That Which Is Impossible

I have demonstrated that in everyday affairs men (indeed, even small children) operate on the inclusion/exclusion principle. It is unreasonable (yea, impossible for men) to specify every possible exclusion when delivering an order or a command. (The mother could not know everything on the shelves of even a small market. The car purchaser could not know every possible option a car dealer might have available.) If we understand this principle in dealing with men and with mundane matters, why should we not understand it in dealing with God's will and spiritual matters? Doubtless, God is able to specify every forbidden thing if He chooses to do so (and He has done so in some regards), but where is the man who could even read and/or comprehend it all? Respecting the silence of Scripture is absolutely reasonable, and to require the specific naming in Scripture of everything that is forbidden and unauthorized is both unreasonable and (due to man's limitations) impossible.

Ignoring the Silence of Scripture Is Disastrous

The cases of Cain and of Nadab and Abihu vividly illustrate the disastrous consequences of presuming upon God's silence. A more recent illustration is the folly and disaster wrought in the church when brethren began to ignore this principle in the mid-19th century. Those who insisted on the introduction of mechanical instruments in worship and the employment of a missionary society to preach the Gospel justified these innovations by denying the prohibitive force of Scriptural silence concerning them. As previously noted, God clearly specified the music that pleases Him in worship as singing. He also clearly specified the church as the agency of evangelism (Mat. 28:18–19; Mark 16:15–16; Luke 24:46–47). With these additions came the multitude of other departures out of the proverbial " Pandora's Box" the innovators opened. Ignoring and despising the force of Scriptural silence resulted in the heartbreaking division of 1906, with faithful brethren (a mere 15% of the brotherhood at the time) having to make a new beginning. Buildings, property, bank accounts, schools, and in some cases, entire congregations, were ruthlessly stolen from faithful brethren by the innovators.

The repudiation of this principle resulted in the creation of two new sects (as if the world were not already burdened with enough), both calling themselves the "The Christian Church." One of these sects ("The Disciples of Christ") eventually totally abandoned any pretense at restoring New Testament Christianity, reveling in its denominational status and claiming Alexander Campbell as its founder. The other sect (i.e., "The Independent Christian Church"), though not as liberal as the "Disciples," has predictably continued to multiply its innovations through the years. Although the ICC has not followed the rejection of Scriptural authority as consistently (and thus as far) as the Disciples, it is still firmly wedded to its chief idol, the musical instrument, on the excuse that "the Bible doesn't forbid it," and pledging, "We're not about to give up!" Actually, the Bible does forbid it by the *inclusion/exclusion* principle.

Additionally, it is notable that almost every practice of Catholicism and Protestantism that is unauthorized by God's Word has been justified by someone somewhere on grounds that "the Bible does not say not to"! Indeed, Martin Luther, the sixteenth reformer, expressly favored retaining everything in the Roman Catholic Church that was not explicitly forbidden by Scripture. Protestant denominationalism has swallowed this defective principle totally, and the evil results of numberless unscriptural and anti-scriptural practices are universally observable. Mark it well that there is no consistent way to oppose coffee and doughnuts on the Lord's table, infant baptism, counting beads in prayer, and 1,000 other practices, including the use of instrumental music in worship, if the silence of Scripture is not authoritative.

Respecting the Silence of Scripture Produces Only Good Fruit

Noah saved his own family and the entire human race by honoring God's silence. Joshua successfully carried out God's plan for the conquest of Canaan because he respected God's silence as well as His statement. The church of our Lord was restored because some men arose who perceived, observed, preached, and practiced the principle of inclusion and exclusion. Faithful saints have maintained the church since its restoration by adherence to this principle. If every saint now living should totally apostatize and the church were lost from the history books again (perish the thought), others could arise and restore the church by application of this principle. This is a God-ordained and God-pleasing principle, and it can bear only good fruit when faithfully followed.

Inspired Men Respected the Silence of Scripture

Those who repudiate this inspired principle claim that the Scriptures themselves are silent concerning the principle. The following statement of this claim by a disenchanted, disillusioned, disoriented former member of the Lord's church who has now defected to the ICC, is illustrative:

The traditional Church of Christ attack on instruments was based on a concept called the "silence of the scriptures," which claimed that only that which was specifically used in the New Testament is allowed today. Unfortunately, that doctrine eliminates itself. There is no such command spelled out in the New Testament.³

The foregoing assertion represents either gross ignorance of the inspired text or an unwillingness to accept the force of simple words and concepts—or perhaps some of both. For example, Acts 15:23–29 records the earliest inspired epistle. The letter begins with greetings to various recipients, followed by the significant statement: "Forasmuch as we have heard that certain who went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls; to whom we gave no commandment [i.e., regarding circumcision of Gentile Christians]" (v. 24). Notice the argument: (1) Moses had given a commandment concerning circumcision the Law that bears his name (implied), (2) the apostles and elders "gave no commandment" concerning the matter, and (3) therefore, there was no authority for binding circumcision or the Law upon Gentile Christians. Circumcision and the Law of Moses were not bound on the saints because of a direct prohibition from inspired men, but **because those inspired men did not command such—they were silent on the subject.**

Hebrews 1 contains two statements that argue from Scriptural silence. The first one is in verse 5: "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, This day have I begotten thee? and again, I will be to him a Father, And he shall be to me a Son?" The second

states: "But of which of the angels hath he said at any time, Sit thou on my right hand, Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet?" (v. 13). The point of both passages is to demonstrate the superiority of Christ to the angels. God did not name (nor did He need to name) any or every angel and say to each, "You are not my son" to preclude their Sonship. Nor did God need to say to any angel that he was not to be enthroned. Since He was totally silent about the Sonship and enthronement of any angel, every angel was thereby excluded from being God's Son and from occupying a Heavenly throne. The entire argument in these passages establishing the exclusive Sonship and coronation of the Christ is from God's silence.

The seventh and eighth chapters of Hebrews employ the argument from silence in a powerful way. Hebrews 7:14 declares: "For it is evident that our Lord hath sprung out of Judah; as to which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priests." Hebrews 8:4 adds, "Now if he [the Christ] were on earth, he would not be a priest at all." Clearly, Christ was prohibited by the Law of God from being an earthly priest because He was of the tribe of Judah. We are made to ask, "Where did God ever say, 'Thou shalt not take a priest from the tribe of Judah'?" The answer is, "Nowhere." However, He did say that priests must come from the tribe of Levi (Num. 1:47–51). This at once included all whom God desired and excluded all others from the Mosaic priesthood. God did not have to name any/every other tribe of Israel and specifically tell them they were disqualified as priests. No, the fact that "Moses **spake nothing** concerning priests" coming from Judah (or any other tribes besides Levi) had precisely that effect.

If the apostles and other inspired men understood, respected, and employed this principle, then we not only may, we **must** do likewise. If they established **prohibitions** from the **silence of Scripture**, then we are flawed in our hermeneutical principles relating to the Sacred Volume if we fail to do so.

While many problems confront the church of the Lord, in my judgment there is none more serious than the repudiation of respect for the silence of Scripture. I opine that there is no principle of Bible study and interpretation that is more significant than this one. To give it up is to forfeit everything that makes the church of Christ distinctive. We must understand the importance of inquiring more than merely, "Does the Bible forbid it?"; we must also ask, "Does the Bible authorize it?" about everything we preach and practice. If the church remains the church by New Testament definition and identity it will do so because we respect the silence of God's Word as well as its statements. This necessary principle needs to be earnestly, faithfully, and frequently proclaimed to the body of Christ in every generation, otherwise we are doomed to repeat the same sad errors of the past.

Conclusion

We should be thankful to God for the great leadership and example Joshua furnishes for men of all ages. His greatness was not in his wealth, his looks, or his earthly position. He was great because "he did as the Lord bade him," not falling short of the statement of God's directions and not presumptuously running beyond God's silence. No man who fails in this essential trait can be great in the sight of God or of right-thinking men. In the following statement, Roy C. Deaver powerfully described the loyalty to the Word of God which characterized Joshua (and which ought to be true of all men):

Everything the Christian does must be authorized by the New Testament. We must not go beyond its teaching. We must not fall short of it. We must not seek to change it. We must not substitute. We must not allow what God condemns. We must not condemn what God allows. We must not violate the laws which God made. We must not make laws which God has not made.⁴

May the Lord give us more "Joshuas"!

Endnotes

1. All Scripture quotations are from the American Standard Version unless otherwise indicated.
2. C.F. Kiel and F. Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1982 reprint), v. 2, part 1, p. 122.
3. From a personal letter dated February 24, 1986.
4. Roy C. Deaver, *Biblical Notes*, v. 16, 9/82, p. 70.

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