

Don't Argue With Me; Just Do as You're Told

by Bryan Gibson

Parents have used this line for years. They don't like it when their children question their authority. Well, neither does the Lord. He doesn't like it when we've got a better idea (Galatians 1:6-9; Revelation 22:18-19), or when we just refuse to do what he says. "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). "Blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" (Luke 11:28). It's really very simple; those who respect the Lord's authority will do exactly what He says—without changing it, adding to it, or taking from it.

In a previous article we looked at the proper attitude toward sin. The last point made was that if we really want to be forgiven of sin, then we should be willing to do whatever we're told to do—by the Lord, that is. What we're looking for in this article is what the Lord tells us to do to be forgiven. We'll break it down into two parts: what non-Christians are told to do and what Christians are told to do. To do this, we'll look at two examples.

Peter's sermon to non-Christians in Acts 2.

The design of Peter's lesson was to lead these people to belief—you can see that in the conclusion he draws in v. 36: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." Many of them were convinced by Peter's sermon that Jesus was both Lord and Christ, that He was the Son of God. They were so convinced that they said to Peter and the other apostles, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" (v. 37). Don't miss what's being said here. They had already come to believe in Jesus, but they wanted to know what else they needed to do. And here is Peter's inspired answer: "Repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins (Acts 2:38). Thankfully, many who heard this didn't argue; they just did as they were told. "Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them" (Acts 2:41).

Peter's words to a Christian in Acts 8.

Let's focus our attention on a man named Simon, one who had practiced sorcery, but who had now become a Christian (v. 13). Shortly after he became a Christian, he committed a sin—he tried to buy the power to lay hands on people and impart to them the Holy Spirit (vv. 18-19). After he issued this man a strong rebuke (vv. 20-21), Peter told him what he needed to do to be forgiven: "Repent therefore of this your wickedness and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you" (v. 22). Simon didn't argue; he knew how much trouble his soul was in. In fact, he was so eager to be forgiven that he said to Peter: "Pray to the Lord for me, that none of the things you have spoken may come upon me" (v. 24).

Please don't argue with Lord; just do as you're told.