

# CENI

**C:** command

**E:** example

**NI:** necessary inference (implication)

# I. The Position

1: “The problem with those who embrace the *CENI* hermeneutic is they too frequently believe that what some mere man assumes or infers is EQUAL to what God Himself has commanded.”

2: “It matters *not* that God never commanded such a practice; it matters *not* that God never even mentioned such a practice, or spoke either for or against it; if I have assumed or inferred something from my study of the Scripture, then that is now perceived to be universal LAW binding upon all people everywhere, and if any dare to transgress these decrees they will forfeit everlasting life!”

## Aristotle, Locke, and Lawyer

Lawyer: “The *CENI* concept comes in part from the common law of British-American jurisprudence. I was somewhat startled, while reading some old cases in law school nearly 20 years ago, to find an appeal for authority based either on express ‘statute,’ approved ‘precedent,’ or ‘necessary inference’”

I. The Position

II. The Purpose

## Preacher

“1 Co.16, a command to churches of Corinth and Galatia; no evidence that it applies to all churches.”

## Lawyer

“There are today a considerable number of lawyer-preachers among us who detest legalism and proclaim the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- False dichotomy / dilemma
- Do they detest ‘illegalism’?
- Cf. Luther: Paul or James?

I. The Position

II. The Purpose

III. The Problem



## A. Misrepresentation

It's not CENI, but SCENI (“statement”)

Statement or Command  
Approved Example  
Necessary Inference

Mk.16:16

## B. No substitute for SCENI

- “READ” (?) What then? [Lk.10:...37, do]
  - Does the text apply to him?
- Mt.19:4-6 (“read”) –

4

Statement

4

Example

5

Command

6

Conclusion

6

Command

## A note from mom

- *To the manager of the grocery store:  
I have sent my son to purchase your  
smallest box of Tide detergent. Please  
see that he leaves the store with the  
correct change – Mrs. Smith*
  - May manager add cool-aid?
  - Does design on box change it?

Noah's note

## c. SCENI: taught throughout Bible

### ■ Dt.4:2

- Add or subtract is disobedience
- Did this principle affect Jews of Jesus' day? ...disciples of Jesus?

Jews  
Mt.15:3-9

Christians  
Ga.3:15...  
6:2... 1:6-9

## 1 Chr.13, 15

1 Chr.13:14 – David: three months to study; he learned about CENI

Num.4:15

\* *Command / Prohibition*

\* *Example* = entire Pentateuch

\* *Necessary implication* (Num.7:7-9)

Did not mention David's name  
1000+ years before Aristotle

Num.4:15, do not say:

1. “Sons of Kohath only”

\* “*Kohath*” excludes everyone else

2. “Others used carts” (7:1-9) or “shoulder carrying only” . . .

[Each has peculiar instructions]

3. 1 Chr.15:2, David’s conclusion: Levites only [Num.4, 7]

1 Chr.15:5, *sons of Kohath*

## 1 Chr.15:13

- *because you did not do it the first time* (NKJV); *because you did not carry it the first time* (ESV) [Wrong personnel]
- *because we did not consult Him about the proper order* (NKJV); ...*according to the ordinance* (NASB); ...*according to the rule* (ESV) [Wrong procedure]

- Ac.10:19, Peter: “serious *thought about*” the *vision* –
- 28, “*shown me*” . . . make clear by evidence
- 34, “*I perceive*”
- 47-48, Peter already knew about baptism for forgiveness (2:38)
  - Now...baptism for forgiveness of Gentiles (2:39)
  - He correctly inferred what God implied, then bound it on others / commands (48)



## Ac.11:1-18, Peter related events / conclusions

- 1-3: Gentiles and uncircumcised.
- 4-6: example
- 7-10: command / example
- 13-14: example / command
- 15-16: example / nec. infer.
- 15-16: example / necessary inference
- 17: necessary inference (Peter's)
- 18: necessary inference (audience)

Ph.4:9 –  
command to  
follow  
examples:  
“saw in me...  
these do”

I. The Position

II. The Purpose

III. The Problem

IV. The Conclusion

# Those who deny CENI are agenda-driven

## A. *Work of the church*

- Milo Hadwin: examples not binding
- Now, neither are commands

## B. *Worship*

- Ac.5, women leaders
  - \*LS; announcements; preaching; elders
- Ac.20:7, LS
  - \*Sat. nights; annually; common meal

## *C. Plan of salvation*

- Ac.8:26-39, an example
- Remember this . . . ?

“1 Co.16 is a command to churches of Corinth and Galatia; no evidence that it applies to all churches...”

- What about Acts 8 – Philip and eunuch – any evidence it applies to all sinners?

## D. *Morals*

- Social gospel, political causes
- Women elders and preachers
- LS on Saturday night
- Raffles, rent
- Musicals, choruses, plays
- Adulterers / homosexuals

# Conclusion

1. Whatever God implies is *His* implication; it was there all along
2. My reasoning merely discovers it
3. *God's Word* binds us, not my reading

Is it legalistic to believe  
in the law of gravity?