

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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HOW DOES LOVE FIT WITH HERMENEUTICS

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The word “Hermeneutics” means the science and methodology of interpretation (Webster’s Dictionary). In other words, hermeneutics is the art of interpreting the Scriptures. Today, preachers have taken liberties to apply broad principles such as love to change the application of definite commands. One preacher, Mr. Holt says, “*I believe the broad principle of love is sufficient authority and that it should inform us in addition to the kinds of specific authority we are used to leaning on*” (Jack Holt *Hermeneutics* p.2). The fallacy of this concept is, even though a direct command is given, the broad principle of love will allow us to lay aside the command in certain circumstances. However, in Ezra 9-10 the Israelites married pagan wives which was unlawful. Did Ezra because of “the principle of love” allow the Israelites to continue in these marriages because breaking up families would have been awful? No!! Ezra commanded them to put away their pagan wives. Applying love means I will keep God’s law even when difficult circumstances arise.

Ladies and gentlemen let’s

examine some of these concepts Mr. Holt is trying to establish on the principle of love and answer them.

Referring to Luke 6:1-2 Mr. Holt says, “*Jesus uses a broad, general principle to provide authority for His disciples’ conduct. This was authorized by the principle of love.*” (Jack Holt *Hermeneutics* p.1-2). Jesus and His disciples were traveling on a Sabbath through some grainfields and the disciples were plucking the heads of the grain and eating them. The Pharisees said they were violating the Sabbath. When was it ever unlawful to eat on the Sabbath? Never!! The disciples were plucking and eating the grain not threshing grain in the field. The Pharisees were replying that plucking the grain was a violation. Deut. 23:25 confirms that plucking grain and threshing grain are two different actions. Love, the seeking of one’s physical well being is contained in the law, allowing the legitimate satisfaction of hunger.

Referring to John 8:3-11 Mr. Holt says, “*The law clearly states that those who commit adultery should be stoned, but Jesus did not command that in this case. Instead, He replied*

upon the principle of love to extend mercy and forgiveness to this woman” (Jack Holt *Hermeneutics* p.2). The scribes and Pharisees brought to Jesus a woman caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses said a woman who committed such act was to be stoned.. Jesus replied, you without sin cast the first stone. The Pharisees being convicted in their hearts left one by one. Then Jesus said, did no one condemn you? Neither do I. Jesus applied the law. In the law of Moses a person could not be put to death on the testimony of less than two witnesses. (Deut. 17:6). Jesus asked, where are those who accuse you? She replied, there were none. Jesus said, neither do I condemn you. Jesus did not condemn her because of “the principle of love.” The law was not going to unjustly accuse someone without two witnesses. Jesus referred to the law which contained loving justice.

As you have seen both love and law work together in God’s word. One does not override the other as Mr. Holt’s concept has led him to believe. When we keep God’s law we are abiding in love.