

The Regulative Principle of Worship.

- I. The Regulative Principle Enforced: Exodus 20:6.
 - A. God's Covenant Prerogative: Jealousy.
 1. It is spiritual adultery to worship God wrongly.
 2. Thus, the curse appended to the 2nd Commandment.
 - B. Reinforcement by Threat and Promise.
 1. Threat.
 - a. God does not always make an example of people (re. Nadab and Abihu) due to His mercy and forbearance.
 - b. The threat is that our wrongful worship will have consequences for future generations.
 2. Promise: be zealous for the purity of worship; a covenant seed will be raised up.
- II. Objections Answered.
 - A. Objection: The source of our pattern of worship is the synagogue, not the temple; the synagogue was not divinely regulated since it did not exist until after the Exile.
 1. Synagogues were in existence before the Exile; in fact, they were in existence by God's command from the beginning of Israel's national occupation of the promised land. Lev. 23:3; Ps. 74:8.
 2. The ceremonial elements of worship were limited to the tabernacle/ temple, but the non-ceremonial elements of worship which God commanded were, by inference, to be carried out in the synagogue, since they were required in any corporate worship and not by command limited to the temple.
 3. These non-ceremonial elements were the reading and preaching of Scripture, prayer, praise, benediction, the sacrament of circumcision.
 - B. Objection: The Feast of Purim was celebrated as a holy day but was not ordained or

commanded by God.

1. It was not a holy day.
 - a. It was not to be celebrated at the temple or in the synagogues.
 - b. There was no prohibition from work connected to it as there was with all the “holy convocations.”
 2. It was a special occasion of thanksgiving: the church may be called to such by the officers of the church or by the civil magistrate.
 3. Though it was not a holy day, it was still ordained by God. The book of Esther is inspired; therefore, the Word of God had come to Mordecai in order that Purim would be instituted for the OT church.
- C. Objection: Hanukkah could not have been commanded by God since it was a celebration of the deliverance of the temple from the Syrians by the Maccabees in the inter-testamental period. Yet it was a religious festival which Jesus celebrated, as in John 10:22.
1. Jesus was not celebrating the festival. John was giving a historical reference in 10:22 so that the reader would know what time of year those events took place.
 2. Jesus was teaching to a crowd in the temple because during this festival, the crowds were in the temple; why go to teach where there were few or no people. He was under Solomon’s Portico because the festival is in the midst of the rainy season; He knew enough to stay out of the rain!
 3. Jesus was the One who commanded not to worship according to human tradition (Mk. 7:6-13). He is God incarnate and perfect. Why would He contradict His Word with His actions, and why would He do that which was sinful? It is not possible. Therefore, He would neither approve of worship on Hanukkah (a human tradition), nor would He commit sin by attendance of worship at the synagogues, if they were only human tradition.