



did not question the validity of His argument despite pushing the issue just a little further in verse seven.

Is CENI “man-made”? No! It is simply a method of identifying the content of written materi-

al. Beyond that, it is a practice Jesus used in order to determine the authority for an action or attitude. Who are we to say that we could come up with something better? It is arrogance and sinful pride which leads people to denounce CENI and the godly practices which come from appropriately using it. Friends, the appeal to godly authority is of vital importance. Let us all be unified in the method we use in determining godly authority by using the method Jesus used.



Faithful Sayings Issue 12.3 January 17, 2010

Welcome Visitors

We are so glad that you joined us today.
Please come again.

● Let us know if you have any questions.

ISSUE

12.3

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

January 17
2010



Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM
10:20 AM
6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Ken Ford
Charles Kelley
Pat Ledbetter

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Pat Goguen
Neil Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Rusty Scott

Evangelists:

Kyle Pope
Curtis Carwile

Jesus and CENI

by Curtis Carwile

There is a technique that is used to determine what the Church as a whole or on an individual basis has the authority to do and what is outside of that authority. This technique is often shortened to the acronym CENI, which stands for *command, example, and necessary inference*. This is a technique we use a lot. Unfortunately, CENI has come under fire over the last few decades by liberal brethren. Several of the liberal brethren with whom I have spoken hold the position that CENI is man-made and, therefore, flawed. They argue that we should only hold to the things that are expressly written in the Bible, the things that would fall under the *command* section of CENI.



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An example of this would be how we are to partake of the Lord's Supper. In First Corinthians 11:23-34, we find one of the commands given to partake of the Lord's Supper until He returns. That is explicitly commanded and most people do not have a problem with this. The problems begin to arise when we take other passages into account.

In Acts 20:7, Paul waits until the first day of the week to depart from Troas so that he could partake of the Lord's Supper with them. The example we find in the New Testament is that the First Century Christians partook of the Lord's Supper on the first day of every week. Liberal brethren have a problem with this because it is not specifically commanded; rather, it is "just an example." And, as a result of their belief that Acts 20:7 is not binding or authoritative, they believe that the Lord's Supper can be taken however frequently (or, more to the point, infrequently) they like.

Well, as is the case with most questions regarding the Bible, the Bible answers this dispute for us in Matthew 19. In Matthew 19:1-9, Jesus is approached by the Pharisees while He was in the area of Judea beyond the Jordan and it is in the midst of a great multitude that the Pharisees tested Him in order to find some fault with Him. The question

which they asked Him was "Can a man divorce his wife for any reason?" Jesus begins by bringing to their attention the marriage command given by God at the very beginning (Matthew 19:4-6). He says, "**Have you not read that He who made them at the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall become one flesh'? So then, they are no longer two but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let not man separate.**" Here, Jesus makes an appeal to the very highest authority—God, and what He commanded the length and duration of marriage should be. But it is not only commands to which Jesus appeals. In this passage, Jesus uses the very first marriage relationship as an example of what God views as acceptable. Why does He appeal to this example? Because this example is binding. But Jesus goes even further. In verse six Jesus draws an unavoidable conclusion (or



we could say a *necessary inference*) from what was commanded and exemplified. That inference is that man must not separate what God has joined together. Jesus draws the inference that divorce for any reason is completely out of the question. It is easy to see in this passage that Jesus uses CENI to answer their question. It is also clear that they understood Jesus' point and

