

Details Count!

Musical instruments ... communion elements ... Harry Potter ... holidays ... Bible versions ... statues ... marriage in the Lord ... hair length ... attendance ... modest clothing ... divorce ... Bible doctrine ... paying taxes ... pilfering employers ... regeneration before conversion ... etc.

We are frequently criticized for being too picky about religious details. Our adversaries say that God does not care about details. We are accused of straining at gnats, when God is totally pleased by a happy and sincere heart. As long as a person loves Jesus, his doctrine or practice does not matter, according to these people. But what does the Bible say about such an attitude?

Jesus said, “Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 5:19). Jesus said details are important! If you want to be great in His sight, you will care about the least commandment. You will not only obey the least commandment; you will also teach the least commandment.

Consider Cain. He was a farmer. When it was time to worship God, He brought a beautiful arrangement of the finest produce. It was clean, organic, and the very best of his profession. He watched while Abel slashed a lamb’s throat and burned its tender body on an altar. Cain was sure he had improved on Abel’s cruel, dirty, and smelly worship. But God thought differently! He rejected Cain’s offering, and He rejected Cain (Gen 4:1-5; Heb 11:4)! **Details count!**

Consider Moses. He was one of God’s greatest men of all time. But when God told him to speak to a rock to get water for Israel, he hit the rock instead. Though he got results, God was angry with him and would not let him enter Canaan for that single minor offence. His 40 years of faithful service as the leader of a difficult nation were ignored. He used the right rod on the right rock and got results, but God rejected his modification (Num 20:7-12). **Details count!**

Consider Nadab and Abihu. They were two of Aaron’s sons. They loved the LORD and wanted to worship Him at the tabernacle with new contemporary incense. But the LORD burned them up on the spot! Though they were God’s appointed priests, worshipping the right God, at the right place, their innovation was unacceptable, regardless of their sincerity. God consumed them with fire, and He would not let Aaron or their brothers grieve for them (Lev 10:1-7). **Details count!**

Consider King Saul. He did not want to be king in the first place, and he only made two little mistakes. First, he did not wait for Samuel to arrive on a battlefield, so he went ahead and worshipped God without the prophet (I Sam 13:8-14). Second, he let the people spare Agag and the best of the spoil to offer to God in sacrifice (I Sam 15:1-35). God took the kingdom away from Saul, gave it to David, and charged Saul with witchcraft and idolatry! **Details count!**

Consider David. He was the man after God’s own heart, the sweet psalmist of Israel, and the beloved king of God’s nation. He loved God and worshipped Him more than any man. But when he moved the Ark of the Covenant, he moved it the wrong way, and God killed a man during his joyful parade. David had used a new ox cart with great celebration, and the man only touched it to keep it from falling (II Sam 6:1-11; I Chron 15:13; Ex 25:10-15)! **Details count!**

Consider King Uzziah. He was a good king that God blessed abundantly. He prospered marvelously with God's help and became a great king, known far and wide. But he misread God's blessings to think he could take a small liberty and modify the worship of God. When he took it upon himself to offer incense to God in the temple, which only the priests were authorized to do, God gave him leprosy in his face for the rest of his life (II Chr 26:16-23). **Details count!**

Consider Ananias and Sapphira. They were thankful to be part of the Jerusalem Church; the giving by others provoked them to give; so they sold some real estate and brought a large sum to the apostles (Acts 4:32-37). They gave a large offering to the Lord, and they laid it at the apostles' feet. But they kept back part of the price. What did the youth group get to do in that church? Carry their dead bodies out one at a time and bury them (Acts 5:1-11)! **Details count!**

Do not say God is different in the New Testament. Is that how we should interpret, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever" (Heb 13:8)? Did you read the opening words of Jesus that the least commandment is important to Him? Paul also said this: "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire" (Heb 12:28-29).

We sweat the small stuff for good reason, and you should be sweating it with us. We would love to introduce you to New Testament worship in apostolic simplicity and accuracy. Wherever you worship, make sure you prove all things by the word of God and reject any modifications, because details count (Deut 5:32; 12:32; Acts 17:11; Rom 16:17-18; Gal 1:6-9; I Thess 5:21; II Thess 2:15; I Tim 6:3-5; II Tim 3:1-5; Titus 3:10-11).

Take a short quiz:

1. *What did Israel wear to remind them that details count?* A blue fringe (Num 15:37-41)!
2. *Who said Israel could not serve the Lord, because He was jealous?* Joshua (Josh 24:16-20).
3. *What contact is not allowed with unclean things to get God's best?* Touching (II Cor 6:17).
4. *What does God call friendship with the world?* Adultery (James 4:4).
5. *What is worse than being hot or cold for God?* Lukewarm (Rev 3:15-16).
6. *What does God call offenders against sound doctrine?* Belly worshippers (Rom 16:17-18).
7. *For what sin did Jesus threaten to take a church's candlestick?* Loss of first love (Rev 2:5).
8. *What sin led Paul to write about exclusion to Thessalonica?* Laziness (II Thess 3:6-14).
9. *Who was allowed to bow in a pagan temple due to job duties?* Naaman (II Kgs 5:18-19).
10. *Who had a perfect heart with God, though overlooking the high places?* Asa (I Kgs 15:14).

For further study:

The sermon outline, "[God Hates Compromise](#)," which details God's fury against compromisers.

The sermon outline, "[Biblical Separation](#)," which details how God expects separation from compromisers.

The sermon outline, "[Truth, Lies, and Compromise](#)," which details Jehoshaphat's compromise with Ahab of Israel.

The sermon outline, "[Perilous Times](#)," which details the rise of today's compromising contemporary Christianity.

The sermon outline, "[What Is Truth?](#)" which exalts truth in worshipping God in spite of today's compromise.

The sermon outline, "[Truth Is Fallen in the Streets](#)," which reminds and exhorts regarding the importance of truth.