

God's Tool Box

Mike Root



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It is very difficult, if not impossible, for most of us to read and interpret the Bible objectively. I have espoused the belief for years that "The first casualty of biblical interpretation is objectivity." We enter our study of the Bible with all the things others have taught us. We carry all our religious baggage with us as we study and learn, and are thus reinforcing our predetermined beliefs rather than discovering the spirit of the message in scripture, for instance, when you have been taught that Christians go to church on Sunday and worship God, and there are specific requirements that God wants to see happen during these "formal worship" times, you tend to use scripture to prove and support that premise rather than honestly seek to understand what was written. After all, those practices, rituals, ceremonies, or "Acts of Worship" are laws commanded by God and they must be obeyed - or are they? Most Christians are surprised to find out that nowhere in the New Testament does it ever say that the followers of Jesus met together on Sunday to worship. We impose that definition from our own traditions. Worship was never a time and place but a life given as a "living sacrifice" to God. The things that God's people do when they come together are more a product of traditions, preferences, and manmade ceremonies. God's Tool Box is a challenge to rethink how we look at many of the things we do when we are together. If God is simple and clear about what He wants, he is not in the business of creating hoops for His followers to jump through or religious jigsaw puzzles that people need to piece together and "figure out." He wants us to love Him completely and learn to do that by loving one another. Everything He calls on us to do is to support that goal. God's Tool Box is a call to a paradigm shift in how we view God's requirements for helping each other grow in love. Instead of giving us rituals, ceremonies, acts of worship, or any list of "religious requirements," He gave us tools. Tools are used to get a job done. They are not the god to be worshipped or rituals to perform. They are practical tools with practical results. God's tools are anything He gives us that we can use to help others grow closer to Him, and as a result, help us grow also. I have fourteen tools in the box and there may be more. Whatever they are, they are used as a support, not the goal or focus.



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