

About *ADDING TO and SUBTRACTING FROM* God's Word

About *TURNING RIGHT or LEFT* From Obedience to God's Commands

Look Up the Verses That Illustrate these Principles:

Deuteronomy 4:2	Deuteronomy 17:20	2 Kings 22:2	Revelation 22:18
Deuteronomy 5:32	Deuteronomy 28:14	2 Chronicles 34:2	Revelation 22:19
Deuteronomy 12:32	Joshua 1:7	Proverbs 4:27	
Deuteronomy 17:11	Joshua 23:6	Proverbs 30:6	

SUMMARY:

The references to adding and subtracting seem to focus on the way we respond to God's Word, the Bible.

The references to turning to the left or to the right seem to focus on the way we respond to God's "straight and narrow way." This "straight and narrow way" refers to a lifestyle that is pleasing to God and that glorifies him most. It is a reflection of his very own character. [There are some verses which uses the words "left" and "right" in a different manner - see the note below (following the questions).]

God *always* forbids any *addition to or subtraction from* the message of his Word. He always forbids any *turning to the right or left* from his "straight and narrow way." From the beginning to the end of the Bible, the message is consistent: We never find verses which permit either of these.

Furthermore, there are *blessings* associated with the *refusal* to add/subtract or to turn right/left. And there are *curses* associated with the *willingness* to do those forbidden things.

QUESTIONS:

- Study the verses. Do these commands and warnings have any meaning today? What application do they have to the way we think and live? How all-encompassing are they to all the decisions of life? Under what circumstances (if any) can these commands and warnings be disregarded?
- Is there any place in the Bible where authority is given to *not* follow these commands? If so, where? If no such passage exists, then why do so many people, who claim to follow the Bible, take the liberty to ignore these commands? What are the consequences of doing so?
- Read Mark 7:6-8; Galatians 2:2-5; Colossians 2:16+; 2 Peter 2:1-3; 3:16; 2 John 1:9; Jude 1:4; and other similar verses that you might be able to find. These are some - but not all - of the possible ways that someone might add/subtract or turn right/left. What might you be able to learn from these verses? How might these verses affect your perspective and actions (either to reinforce godly behavior or to change sinful behavior)?
- If some "human authority" (example: church leadership) tries to persuade you to add/subtract or turn right/left, how must you respond? Why?

Note: People who try to get you to do these things will never admit that they are adding and subtracting, etc. They will always use "positive-sounding" words to describe what they are doing. But in each case, the ultimate result will be something different than what we get when we accept the Bible as it was written, and on its own authority.

- How do your own thoughts and actions compare to this "standard of faith and practice" (that is, to the Bible's requirements for "unconditional surrender" to its authority)? If they do not completely match this standard, what can/will you do, to begin moving toward compliance to it?
 - Read and contemplate the significance of the statement Jesus made in Matthew 7:13-14.
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NOTE: Another way the Bible occasionally uses the concepts of "right" and "left."

There is a verse in the Old Testament that uses the words "right" and "left" in a way that is different from the others:

Ecclesiastes 10:2 - A wise man's heart directs him toward the right, but the foolish man's heart directs him toward the left.

This verse does *not* emphasize deviation from God's "standard" (which we could describe as "center" or "straight ahead" in a direction that does *not* turn to either "side"). Rather, it stems from various concepts related to the idea of being "right-handed" - which most people are.

Since a right-handed person tends to be stronger and more skilled with his right hand, the right hand came to be associated (symbolically) with strength, skill, good, etc. To the average person (being right-handed), the left hand came to be associated (symbolically) with weakness, clumsiness, bad, etc.

It is important to realize that this *symbolic* use of right and left hands does not reflect good or bad upon the nature of *people* who are right or left handed. (A concordance could be used to provide various verses that mention the symbolic use of right-handedness... as well as, if desired, verses mentioning left-handed people.)

A New Testament passage which uses the words "right" and "left" in a similar way is the parable of the sheep and the goats - Matthew 25:31-46.