

# ETHICS

The term ethics derives from the Ancient Greek word ἠθικός **ethikos**, which is derived from the word ἦθος **ethos** (habit, "custom").

**1 Corinthians 15:33** Do not be deceived: “Evil company corrupts good **habits**.”

# ETHICS

the study of morality

**WHAT** IS MORAL  
(descriptive ethics)

**HOW** TO MAKE MORAL DECISIONS  
(normative/prescriptive ethics)

**WHY** WE MAKE MORAL DECISIONS  
(meta-ethics)

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**WHAT** IS MORAL  
(descriptive ethics)

“It is written” (Matt 4:4)

“It is written again” (Matt 4:7)

“For it is written” (Matt 4:10)

“depart from Me, you who practice  
**lawlessness!**” (Matt 7:23)

“Therefore, whoever hears **these sayings of Mine**, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock.” (Matt 7:24)

“Why do you transgress the **commandment** of God because of your tradition?” (Matt 15:3)

“In vain they worship Me, teaching as **doctrines** the commandments of men.” (Matt 15:9)

“Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the **doctrine** of the Pharisees and Sadducees.” (Matt 16:11)

“Have you not read that...” (Matt 19:4)

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## HOW TO MAKE MORAL DECISIONS

(normative/prescriptive ethics)

JESUS gave roughly **50**  
commandments in the Gospels

THIS IS THE REAL DISCUSSION OF BIBLE  
AUTHORITY:

**How** and **when** do we apply Bible teachings?  
What do we do when the commandment is a general  
principle? (e.g. teaching of the Good Samaritan)  
How do we **study** and **apply** what God has said?  
What do I do about what the Bible says?

Luke 24:49 “Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

John 13:27 Then Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.”

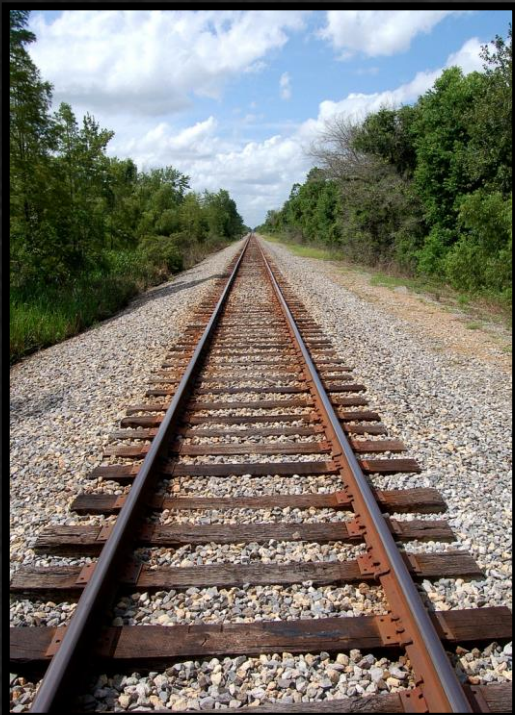
## A COMMAND HAS TO BE UNDERSTOOD IN ITS CONTEXT

- Old Testament vs. New Testament (see Rom 3:19, 1 Cor 10:10, Gal 3:24)
- Who is being commanded (husbands, wives, apostles, elders, etc.)
- Does it apply to us? (“bring my cloak” in 2 Tim 4:13)
- Is it an individual command or a congregational one? (e.g. 1 Timothy 5)

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**WHY** WE MAKE  
MORAL DECISIONS  
(meta-ethics)



WHICH IS  
IMPORTANT?

**ACTION**

or

**MOTIVE**

JESUS says **BOTH**  
Matt 5:21-28 Matt 16:23

## Matthew 22:37-40

Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the **first** and great commandment.

And the **second** is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'

On these two commandments **hang all** the Law and the Prophets."

THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF CHRISTIAN ETHICS:

**Submission and service to God first**

**Submission and service to others next**

1 Corinthians 13:11

When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.