

# ***IT IS SETTLED!***

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

---

*By Howell Lasseter*

## Do God's Rules need Interpretation? (Part 2)

After devoting two-thirds of the newspaper space allotted the article to a discussion of human sports, the writer of "You Would Not Believe All the Possibilities" (2/7/2003 Tribune) references the straight gate and the narrow way and the wide gate and broad way (Matthew 7:13,14). He says, "To the mindset of many, being a Christian is very much limited to a rigid interpretation of Biblical rules and principles. 'Thou shalt not' is often viewed as a penalty capable of snuffing the enjoyable essence out of life... Yet, the opposite actually stands as the truth." The writer then extols the vast possibilities life in Jesus provides. No Bible student would argue that the Christian life is the abundant, fulfilling, joyful, and peace-filled life here on earth, with an even better life to come in eternity. But, the reader of the February 7 article may wonder if the writer is implying that God's commands are open to interpretation. The quality of the Christian life is not in question. The question **is**: Is obedience to what God says essential to enter that Christian life, where all spiritual blessings can be accessed? Who taught us about the straight and narrow way? Who pointed out to us the folly of the wide and broad way? Was it not Jesus, the Master Teacher? Using Matthew 7:13,14 as the starting place, read what Jesus says in the verses following: "*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity*" (Matthew 7:21,22). Let's continue to hear Jesus: "*Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:...And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand...*" (Matthew 7:24-27). Could Jesus expect us to obey if His words are unclear, shifting, and open to various interpretations by denominational conferences and conventions? How important are Jesus' words? "*He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day*" (John 12:48). It is clear that Jesus expects us to know, understand, and obey His words. He tells us our judgment will be based on His words. The abundant life of joy, peace, and confidence comes from the security of knowing and obeying God's firm, plain, and unambiguous commands!