

solving, and character development. This property includes a ropes course, softball fields, and initiative game trails. In addition to serving WOC youth ministries, Leadership Park is also utilized by area community organizations”. Where do these religious mega structures come from, and how do they get started? One thing we can know for certain, any church that you do not read about in the Bible in both name and practice started with at least one innovation! Any change in God’s laws will be a disaster for those involved, just as it was for Nadab and Abihu. *“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”* (Revelation 22:18–20)

I pray that you will study and ponder these great Bible lessons from the Old Testament, learn from them, and start applying the lessons†
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June 18, 2021

RED OAK CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE GUIDELINE

Psalms 31:3

HAVE IT YOUR WAY WORSHIP?

Leviticus 10:1-2 reads: *“And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.”* There are several things we can learn from a study of these two Bible characters that will be beneficial. The Bible tells us to look to the Old Testament to learn from both the mistakes and those things done right by the people of God in that particular period (Rom 15:4, 1 Cor 10:1-12).

Nadab and Abihu were the sons of Aaron selected by God to serve in the tabernacle. *“And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron’s sons”* (Exod. 28:1). What a glorious honor for these men to have been selected by God for this great service! After these men were selected by God, he immediately gave instructions about what the priests were to wear, (it would do some of our brethren good to study this more often concerning God’s law on modest dress) and how the sacrifice and worship were to be carried out. When we begin reading Leviticus, it is clear that God left no stone unturned concerning His law for His people. God has never left man without a law to follow, even though man is often disobedient. One can look at the very beginning as it is revealed to us in the scripture and learn this, *“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”* There are countless other examples in the word of God concerning apostasy. Let us look at another.

Nadab and Abihu knew the law but chose not to follow the divine pattern set forth by the Lord. Instead, they chose to ignore what God had said. In the first seven verses of Leviticus 10 we learn that Nadab and

may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and

clean;"(emp. jc) (Leviticus 10:8-10) I do not believe the placement of this command is an accident! We can learn from this that the use of alcoholic beverages was profane and unholy in the sight of God. The prophet Ezekiel was shown through a vision the new temple and along with it a reminder that "Neither shall any priest drink wine, when they enter into the inner court." Why this decree? So that they would be able to "teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean."(Ezekiel 44:23) How can anyone expect to teach a person right from wrong or clean from unclean when said person is "on the spirits?" Obviously, the answer is one cannot. However, we have many (in the Lord's church) who believe that it is all right to partake in social functions and have what is called a "social drink." Studies have been made showing that if a person imbibes one drink of an alcoholic beverage he is one drink drunk; "Blood alcohol of 1/10 of one percent can be accepted as prima facia evidence of alcohol intoxication recognizing that many individuals are under the influence in the 5/100 of one percent range... There is no minimum (blood-alcohol concentration) which can be set at which there will be absolutely no effect." (Minutes of the 1960 annual meeting of the American Medical Association) and (Journal of the American Medical Association). So much for the "I can have one drink with my friends" crowd.

Although we are under the authority of the New Testament today (Colossians 3:17), we can learn a valuable lesson about how we are to approach God from the Old Testament. Nadab and Abihu took one small liberty (in man's way of thinking) with God's law and perished. If we can learn anything from this incident, we can learn that God is serious about worship and will not accept man's innovations.

Let us all learn that we cannot take liberties with the worship of God and expect to enter into the "streets of gold" when this life is over. It is a sad commentary when one begins to look at the religious community around us where they call for "hub-bub" rather than order in worship, leading to a chaotic carnival-type atmosphere. I recently discussed with a young lady who was asking me about the "World Outreach Church". She said she liked it but thought it strange that they worshiped on Saturday. She also noticed their big emphasis on entertainment. Here is one ad from their web page, "In 2000, 155 acres of land were purchased to build Leadership Park, a youth initiative emphasizing leadership, teamwork, problem

Abihu were authorized to do this part of the worship. So the question is raised, "Why then did God take their lives?" We can know that it was not the censurers they used, nor the incense they used (Exod. 25:38; 27:3,23). The problem was in the fire they used, which was unauthorized by Jehovah God. The Bible calls this fire "strange," which simply means God did not authorize it. This is nothing more than will worship, and we can see God's attitude toward it. Will worship is wrong and condemns one's soul. Later in the New Testament, Paul would condemn this practice; "Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honor to the satisfying of the flesh." The brethren at Colosse were falling back into the "rudiments of the world" by following the "commandments and doctrines of men." They were "having their way" instead of worshipping God's way. The word "will" is from the Greek word ἐθελόγησεν which means - self-made religion, do-it-yourself religion, idiosyncratic religion, voluntary (arbitrary and unwanted) piety, i.e. sanctimony:—will worship. Notice the idea of arbitrary, "existing or coming about seemingly at random or by chance or as a capricious and unreasonable act of will, based on or determined by individual preference or convenience rather than by necessity or the intrinsic nature of something." (Webster) God has never nor will he ever accept some capricious act as a lawful means of worship to him. We have an even older example of this in Genesis, "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell."(Genesis 4:3-5) Here we have another prime example of man offering a random act of his own devices for worship to God and we see God's answer to that offering, "no respect". God had instructed man how to worship (Roman 10:17), but evidently that did not suit Cain.

We learn from this calamitous account that not only did Nadab and Abihu practice that which was unauthorized in worship, they also partook (by implication) of that which altered their minds to the point of not following God's word (which might help explain in part why they made such a bad decision). Immediately following the faulty worship of Nadab and Abihu the Bible has this to say, "And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying, Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die (emp. jc): it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations. **And that ye**