**Looking For Loopholes (Oak Ridge, April 15, 2018)**

WC Fields, a famous comedian of the 1930s and 1940s was found on his death bed reading a Bible. His friend asked him why he was doing that since he had never read a Bible before. WC replied that "he was looking for loopholes".

One of Merriam-Webster’s Definitions of ***loophole***

**(2) A means of escape; especially: an ambiguity or omission in the text through which the intent of a statute, contract, or obligation may be evaded**

**\*Tax season** – **This year our Tax Day is this coming Tuesday, April 17!** Some folks look for an escape from the tax codes – “What can I get away with rather than what do I really owe.” In a spiritual sense we might put it another way: “How close can I get to sin without actually sinning?”

\*We have examples of people in the Bible who were looking for loopholes

***Adam and Eve (Genesis 3); Saul and Samuel (1 Samuel 15); Rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-31)***

**(1) Loophole around Salvation:** We know many folks who look for loopholes when it comes to how one is saved from their sins. The 3,000 on the day of Pentecost isn’t enough to convince them. The Ethiopian Eunuch, Saul, Cornelius, Lydia and the Philippian Jailer don’t seem to be enough either. We all need to understand that from Pentecost to today, we are simply to obey the gospel of Christ to be saved (**Acts 2:38-41, 1 Timothy 6:12**).

**(2) Loophole around our own behavior:** I did this to so and so because they did this to me: Samantha & Daniel (**Romans 12:17**). Or we are reluctant to forgive. We can forgive most things, but certain things we are not going to completely forgive. Is that what Jesus said (**Matthew 18:21-22**)? There are no loopholes for our sinful behavior (**Matthew 7:12**).

**(3) Loophole around Faithfulness:** After one is baptized into Christ, some have the attitude that their salvation is complete. However, God demands our diligence and faithfulness (**1 Corinthians 15:58, Hebrews 10:23-25, 2 Peter 3:14**). Faithfulness to God is not a one-time experience, but a lifetime commitment (**Matthew 24:13**).

**Conclusion:** Those who seek for a loophole in God’s law forget that God is not a respecter of person (**Acts 10:34-35; Romans 2:11; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Colossians 3:25, 1 Peter 1:17**). What God requires for one he requires for all. There are no loopholes in God’s Word. We are all saved alike and we all must remain faithful till death (**Matthew 28:19-20; Rev 2:10**).

**What about you? Have you been looking for loopholes?** If you are not a Christian we encourage you to submit completely to the Lord in baptism, washing all your sins away. Then embrace all of God’s Word in your life and He will lift you up and exalt you (**James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:5-7**).

If you are a Christian and you realize you have been looking for loopholes and skirting what the Lord wants you to do or towing the line by flirting with sin, we encourage you to repent of that right now and be determined to be completely faithful to God.