

The Bulletin

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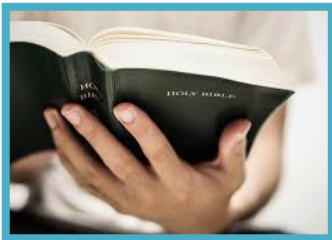
December 1, 2019

“Reasoning From Scripture”

By Doy Moyer

No reasoning takes place without drawing conclusions from implications. Just try it. Statements and examples often come with the expectation that we draw further conclusions. The point of reasoning and discerning is that we are capable of taking what is explicitly given, then reasoning to conclusions that are, in fact, necessary.

For example:



1. The list of sins given in Galatians 5:19-21 concludes with “things like these.” What things? How do we know what is “like these”? How can God expect us to figure that out without explicitly stating it?

2. The Hebrew writer speaks of the mature, who “*because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil*” (Hebrews 5:12-14). If something is explicitly stated, then what discerning is needed? We just take it at face value and do it or not. To discern, however, is to apply reason, to think it out and through, to draw conclusions based upon principle. Discerning “good and

evil” is, of course, vital to one’s spiritual growth and maturity. To do it, however, requires drawing conclusions that are not explicitly stated. Does anyone seriously want to argue that “necessary inferences” are not vital for understanding God’s will? If so, they’ll need a good explanation (based on inference, mind you) for Galatians 5 and Hebrews 5, both of which require drawing conclusions about good and evil beyond what the text explicitly states.

We may debate the particulars of the conclusions, but the principle here is absolute, and it requires reasoning from implications.

1. Jesus expected the people to know and believe certain things based on what the Law said, even though not specifically stated. “*I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*” conveyed more than what the Sadducees were discerning (Matthew 22:32). Jesus expected them to know and believe certain things based on this passage, even though not specifically stated here.

2. Jesus chastised the Pharisees for their failing to properly apply the concept of honoring father and mother, a principle they sacrificed to their view of “Corban” (Mark 7 — “Corban” is a transliteration of a Hebrew term that means a gift or offering dedicated to God; it was considered an irrevocable vow).

But how were they to know that such an application to parents was necessary? Should they have drawn a conclusion about this that was, in the end, binding upon their actions and attitudes?

3. Since there was no specific statement against those from Judah serving as priests (Hebrews 7:14), how were they supposed to know such was forbidden?

Were they expected to reason to the necessary principle, or should they have waited for a specific statement? And was that principle binding or not? Did God’s silence on the issue of other tribes matter at all?

4. How did the people know to keep every Sabbath holy? Where, in the giving of the Law, do we find God specifically stating that “every single Sabbath” is to be kept holy? All God said was to keep the Sabbath holy. But

which one? Every one? Every third one? Once a month? Once a year? “Every one” (every time the Sabbath rolls around) is gathered by inference, and God expected them to get it.

One may find this painfully obvious, but such is the nature of many implications and inferences. Many are so self-evident that they need no further argument and we hardly think about it. Even so, the children of Israel failed to obey this.

The list can go on. The point is that understanding God’s will requires the reasoning process. If this is the case, is it not significant that we develop our reasoning abilities — to love God with all the mind — so that we draw proper conclusions? It is not easy because we all make mistakes in our reasoning.

Yet, this should not stop us from striving to develop our thinking, becoming more mature, training our senses to discern good and evil. God gave us minds to think His thoughts after Him. May God help us do so.

“The Church Must Come To Order”

by Mark White

Paul’s letters in the New Testament are filled with encouragements, thanksgivings, warnings, teachings, corrections, reproofs— and commendations. The Colossian epistle is a case in point. After laying down in chapter one the basic tenets supporting the Christian’s hope, emphasizing the mystery revealed in and through Jesus Christ, Paul asserts the dangers of false doctrines faced by the brethren. Delivering a sharp blow to the Gnostic thinkers of his day, he said “*all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*” are hidden in Christ (Col. 2:3).

There is simply no other source for true wisdom and knowledge apart from Christ. Colossians were told to beware of those who pretended to be wise through manmade worship and mistreatment of their bodies, things which may have appeared wise and spiritual, yet were of no real value against the flesh (Col. 2:23).

Apparently, the Colossians were handling their challenges to true faith and wisdom rather well. Paul commended them for this. In fact, he specifically rejoiced to “*see your good order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ*” (Col. 2:5).

That word, “*order*” (“*discipline*”, NASB) captivates our attention. The Greek term from which it comes into English is used only a few times in the New Testament. Once, it is found concerning Zachariah’s fixed priestly duties (Lk. 1:9). Several times it is used to explain the connection of Christ’s priesthood with that of Melchizedek (Heb. 5:10; 7:11). Two other uses are here in the book of Colossians and once in I Corinthians 14:40.

The word has many derivatives but they all have similar meanings. The root meaning of “*order*” is that of precision of arrangement, marked by discipline somewhat like the military use of “*order*”. Its verb forms demand attention to what is commanded or ordained (to arrange, to appoint, to ordain, to prescribe, to give order; Thayer).

This is exactly Paul’s meaning when he says to the Corinthians, “*And the rest I will set in order when I come*” (I Cor. 11:34, KJV). Or, “*the remaining matters I will arrange when I come*” (NASB).

Doubtless, the order Paul heard about in Colossae was very important, especially since he listed it beside their steadfastness in their faith. It should also be important to churches of the Lord today. Paul does not say exactly what the Colossians were orderly about, but the context is broad enough to include the whole of their service to God. For certain, the Colossians (and the Laodiceans, despite their later reputation) were not exhibiting the same disorder and confusion which could be observed at Corinth, for example.

The Corinthian church blatantly violated the decorum of decency and order (I Cor. 14:40). Paul did not commend them for this but rather corrected them. Despite their possession of an abundance of miraculous gifts, the church was disorderly in the exercise of those otherwise edifying aids.

They used poor judgment and selfishly ate the Lord’s Supper without due consideration of poorer brethren who had nothing to eat, turning the Lord’s Supper into a common meal for those without the wherewithal to provide their own feast. Poorer brethren went hungry, so to speak, as the Lord’s Supper turned into a selfish and carnal display. They lacked order.

Significantly, the church was not being edified and visitors were unimpressed by what they saw and heard (14:23). Thankfully, the disorder at Corinth had not yet affected the Colossian church across the Aegean Sea. In striking contrast, they were orderly and steadfast in their faith (Col. 2:5).

We need to study carefully the lessons of I Corinthians 11-14. “*God is not a God of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.*” (14:33, NASB). The church must always be a place of order, so that edification and worship can occur.

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Chad Harris, Martha Norvell (Mississippi Care), June Lawson (Lisa Busby's Mom), Debbie Keplinger, Janis Johnson, Daniel Holloway, Tammy Kilgore (Jerry's niece), Betty Hurst, Peggy Harville (cancer), Linda Harris, Hazel Corner, Clay Ford, Clois Wright, and Dan & Linda Hunt, Martha Cottrell (Dan's Mom) is still recovering. Brandi Meade will have back surgery December 11th. Kat Pett will have surgery this coming Wednesday.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Tim Harris Jr.
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: *"The Christian & Personal Offenses"*

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service: Paul Johnson
The Book of Romans (Kyle Pope)
Page #32 Question #1

Announcements: Russell Briggs
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Adam Harris
Romans 12:17-19
Song Leader: Paul Busby
Lord's Supper: Doug George
Assisting: Russell Briggs & Nathan Meade
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #2: *"The Christian & Revenge"*
Closing Prayer: Tim Harris Sr.

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

December 4th:

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Busby
The Book of Psalms (Randy Blackaby)
Lesson #2 (page 13) Question #1
Invitation: Doug George
Song Leader: Brian Meade
Closing Prayer: Nathan Meade