

REMINDER

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The Late
Dr. Ron Dunn

How To Interpret The Bible, Part 3

by the late Evangelist Ron Dunn

*T*here are six rules of Bible interpretation:

RULE #1 - The Bible as the Word of God is our sole guide and authority for faith and practice.

Now - we do not get our doctrine by the apostles' experience. We get our doctrine from the apostles *taught*. Now, of course, the ultimate peril of exalting experience above Scripture is that we tend to turn experience into doctrine. But, there's also a more subtle danger that I want to talk to you for just a moment. I'll call it deductive doctrines. Now what in the world do I mean by that?

Making a logical deduction from a Biblical truth and treating the deduction as Biblical truth. Now, let me go through that again. Here is a Biblical truth. You and I come along and we look at that Biblical truth and we make certain logical deductions from that and then we turn around and we treat our deductions as though they were Biblical truth itself.

One example of this is the abortion issue. There are some who have been teaching that the abortion that is going on right now is a sign that the Lord is coming back again soon. And they point to the fact that when Moses, the deliverer, was born that Pharaoh slew all those male children. When Jesus was born Herod had all the male children below a certain age slaughtered...and so they take this Biblical truth and they make a logical deduction from it. Since when the deliverer, Moses, came there was a slaughter of the innocent children and when Jesus was born there was a slaughter of the innocent children that nowadays because there is a slaughter of these unborn children that means the Lord is coming back real soon.

Now, the fact is the Lord may be coming back real soon...sooner than we think...but you can't prove that by that statement. That is an occasion of taking a Biblical truth and making a logical deduction from it and treating the deduction as truth itself.

Another, and this will be the last example of deductive doctrines is when you come to the "better covenant" of Hebrews. It is said in Hebrews that in Christ we have a "better covenant." So, the reasoning is this...if God healed people in the Old Testament days under the old covenant, it only makes sense that God will do no less under the new and better covenant since our covenant is better and we have everything they had under the old covenant plus more. And again, this is reasoning from Biblical truth and treating our conclusion as divine revelation, which is in fact nothing more than human assumption. The fact is that in his treatment of the better covenant the author of Hebrews never mentions healing, nor does Jeremiah in his great passage on the new covenant in Jeremiah 31.

To make such deductions forces our concept of "better" on God. And folks, it's always a mistake to assume that God thinks as we do. His value system is vastly different than ours. With God, spiritual is better than physical, forgiveness better than healing, assurance better than wealth, persecution better than prosperity.

So, to the point...at the last. The Holy Spirit has confined inspired and infallible revelation to the canons of the Old and the New Testament. The work of the Holy Spirit today is not to communicate new truth or to instruct in matters unrevealed and unknown. His function is to illuminate what is revealed in Scripture. The Holy Spirit illumines that which is already written in Scripture. He gives us the wisdom to know what lies within the Scriptures, not beyond them. It is through His illumination that we know not only what is written there but how to apply it in our daily lives.

And here's something you need to know - illumination is never infallible. Only *inspiration* can lay claim to that. Illumination is *never* infallible. In the Middle Ages, there was a cleric named Hugo of St. Victor and he made a famous statement... He said, "Learn first what you should believe and then go to the Bible and find it there." Unfortunately, Hugo is still very much with us. I find a good

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rule to follow is “Say no more than the Bible says.” Everything beyond that is human speculation. Where the Bible is silent, we ought to be silent also. I think it was John Trapp, a Puritan, who said “Where the Scripture has no tongue, we must have no ears.” If we go further than the Bible goes, that’s going too far. “Say no more than the Bible says...where the Bible is silent, let us also be silent.” Well, that’s rule number one.

RULE #2 - The Primary Theme of Revelation Is Redemption.

In other words, the Bible deals with ultimate truth. When Paul wrote to Timothy, he said that the purpose of Scripture is to make us wise unto salvation...and he goes on to say in *II Timothy 3:16-17*: “*All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*”

Now, when Paul writes these words, he is giving to us the purpose of Scripture. And he’s saying the purpose of Scripture is two-fold...to evangelize and to edify. Let me read verse 15 again... “*the holy scriptures*” he says first of all, “*...are able to make thee wise unto salvation*”, and then in the next two verses, “All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” The purpose of Scripture is to evangelize and to edify. The primary theme of the Bible...the primary theme of revelation is redemption.

When we preach messages like “Jesus wants you well,” and “God is committed to your happiness”...., what we’re saying today is in some circles these themes are superseding the Biblical call to repentance towards faith towards God.

I just lately have been watching some of the programs on television and it’s remarkable how that on some of those programs all they ever talk about is health and wealth. There is no preaching of self-denial. I’ve not seen any one of them preach self-denial. The cross is not preached. Winning the lost is barely referred to. There is no call to person holiness and submission and kindness to others and getting right with others. The entire theme is “God wants you healthy and God wants you wealthy” which is, I think, a supreme violation of the Scriptures. The primary theme of revelation is redemption

When I was a boy I remember a preacher came to our church. His specialty was prophecy. I’ll never forget that he had found in some obscure passage in the Old Testament predictions of the tire shortage in World War II. He found where God predicted the invention of tanks and submarines and flamethrowers. I remember hearing someone say that he was a “deep” preacher. But the fact is he wasn’t deep...he was muddy. I have to believe that God has more important things to talk about in the Bible than submarines and flamethrowers and the tire shortage during World War II. You don’t manipulate the Word of God like that. That is finding in the Bible things that God never intended to be there. The Bible

is not a handbook on economics, nutrition or politics. The Bible never professes to contain all the truth about all things. And the interesting thing is that much of that stirs our imagination and excites our curiosity is untouched by the Scriptures. That to me is further evidence of its Divine authorship.

I believe the inspiration of the Scriptures is attended to not only by what it says but by what it does not say...how many things it does not touch upon. Why? It limits itself to redemption. The primary theme of the Bible is redemption.

Next week, we’ll look at Rule #3.

(continued next week)

SURVEY OF CHRISTIAN MEN ON THE SUBJECT OF WOMEN'S CLOTHING

by Evangelist David W. Cloud

I sent out a notice to my e-mail list and asked the following question of the men on the list who are members of bible-believing, conservative Baptist churches:

“In your opinion, which of the following items of female dress cause a real potential for lust?”

- * short skirts * tight skirts * slit skirts * T-shirts
- * long skirts with slits to the knees * sleeveless blouses
- * low cut blouses and dresses * tight blouses * sheer blouses
- * V-neck dresses * form-fitting jeans * looser-fitting pants
- * shorts * one piece bathing suits

[We included peddle pushers and capris in the original survey but most of the men did not know what they are, so it turned out that the comments on those items were too irrelevant to include in this article.]

My objective in this is to help girls and women in strong Bible-believing churches to understand how men think, not only men in the world or men in churches in general but men in the very churches that they attend.

I received a flood of response to this survey. In just one day I received well over 100 responses from men ages 24 to 74 and from many parts of the world, and that was on a weekend, and they are still coming in a week and a half later. This tells me that there is a readiness on the part of men to let women understand how they see this issue.

As you will see, the responses were very earnest. The men are discouraged that lust is such a powerful temptation in their lives, and they admitted that it is so. Some of the men literally begged me to tell the women that their manner of dress is important and that they need to understand how men look at things.

One man wrote: “Thank you for this request. This area is the greatest challenge in my life -- in all honesty to a brother-in-the-Blood.”

The following was also typical: “I have been saved for about eight years and the lust issue is huge for me and for all men. ... I need God every day to help me stay away from lust. Short Skirts, tight blouses, slit dresses are all over. You can't look at billboards, grocery store waiting line magazine racks, Internet advertisements, walking in the park, or any store. You get my

point; it's everywhere. ... I have to pray everyday for God to keep lust out of my way. I wish I was born into a good Bible believing church and was brought up to stay away from lustful sin. To answer your question it would have to be anything short or tight on a woman. I look forward to the cold winters up north when women cover everything up."

Another man said: "That our society drenches every inch of media in sexually explicit advertising is a source of much temptation, sadness and concern for this man. Facing that sort of issue with Christian sisters in a church setting is most grievous."

Most of the men observed that their response to a woman's immodest dress depends on their spiritual condition and acknowledged that they have a responsibility before God not to lust after women regardless of how they are dressed.

For example, one man said: "Men are sight oriented creatures. The Lord has so equipped men to be sexually stimulated visually.... Men must govern their own hearts."

Another man said: "My response to immodesty is often dependent on the environment, situation and my spiritual defense mechanism at a particular moment. If I have had a wonderful prayer time and clothed myself with all the spiritual armor, I am usually just about OK for anything. But more often then I would like it, I am not prepared or I am in a vulnerable situation; then I better run for my dear life (Gen. 39:12)."

Another man said: "*While I feel that the Lord has helped me overcome in this area [of not lusting after women], the enemy knows my weakness and still attacks me. In my opinion, the key to overcoming lust are: 1) Obey God's Word, especially the command to abstain from the very appearance of evil; and 2) don't put yourself in situations where you will encounter women scantily dressed (i.e. the beach, certain television programs, etc.). Since we are in the world, I know that there is no way to completely avoid the things that tempt us, but if we will stay true to the Word of God and allow Him to help us, we can be 'more than conquerors through Him who loved us' (Romans 8:37).*"

Many of the men also observed that this is a heart issue. The following statement by a pastor is typical of those made by many others: "I believe the most important issue in female modesty is the issue of a chaste heart. If the woman desires to please her Saviour and honor her brother in Christ, there is seldom an issue with the clothing she wears. Mandating modest clothing without focusing on creating a chaste heart does little good. If the woman wears 'modest' clothing but is sensual in the way she walks or conducts herself, it will invariably cause a man to lust. I don't need to see skin to cause me to lust. We men have pretty good imaginations."

As to the individual items of dress, the men made the following points:

First of all, many of the men replied that all of the aforementioned female dress styles hold a real potential for lust. The following two statements were typical:

"I believe that ALL you had listed cause a 'potential' for lust."

"I think that ALL of the listed items can cause lust. The bottom

line for me is that anything that is form fitting, exposing, sheer, or clinging to a woman is immodest and can cause men to lust."

Comments on the specific items of apparel fell along the following lines:

SHORT SKIRTS AND SHORT DRESSES AND SHORTS hold a very serious potential for lust for men. One man said, "*The higher up on a woman's leg, the more lustful/tempting it becomes.*"

TIGHT CLOTHING is at least as much of a potential problem for men as skimpy clothing. Most of the men indicated that **TIGHT SKIRTS AND TIGHT BLOUSES AND FORM-FITTING JEANS AND ONE-PIECE BATHING SUITS** hold a "*VERY great potential*" for lust. One man said tight skirts are "very inviting and a potential for lust." Another said of tight clothing, "*You don't even need to see skin; they provide all the curves.*" Another said: "*I would say the number one problem is any garment that is form fitting, be it jeans, pants, skirt, dress, shirt, whatever. Anything that is tight, no matter how long it is, leaves nothing to the imagination, and that defeats the whole purpose of covering the skin in the first place!*"

SLIT SKIRTS AND SLIT DRESSES are a problem for many men. One man answered the question of whether slit skirts are a real potential for lust with the reply, "Oh! Yes." One man said that slit skirts "tempt your imagination." Another called the slit skirt the "*peek-a-boo*" skirt, while another said the slit is "designed to catch the eye."

SHEER BLOUSES OR DRESSES are a problem for the vast majority of men.

Even **LOOSER-FITTING FEMALE PANTS**, while not as much of a problem as form-fitting jeans, hold a potential problem for many men. One man said, "*While it is true that some things on your list will draw your attention quicker and cause you to look longer, even 'looser-fitting pants' direct a man's gaze to the area of the hips.*"

As for **V-NECK DRESSES**, most men said they are not a problem as long as the V is shallow. A few said the V-neck itself, even if not too low, can be a problem because it acts like an arrow pointing to a place where their eyes should not roam.

As for **SLEEVELESS BLOUSES**, many of the men mentioned that they can be a problem because they can allow a man to see something he should not see and "the potential for peeking is there."

When it comes to **T-SHIRTS** on females, the men said they are not a problem unless they are tight or expose the midriff or you can see through them or they have writings/logos/pictures at the chest level.

CONSIDER SOME EXCERPTS FROM THE COMMENTS MADE BY THE MEN:

"I do believe most women just do not know how men think. Period. I believe that there is a whole segment, group, class of women, who, if they really understood men, would change their dress code, because they do want to please God. Not all women, by far, but some would. They just need to understand it's not just

a list of do's and don'ts set forth to force them in to 'frumpiness,' but a desire of godly men to gain their cooperation in helping them NOT lust, and to not be stumbling blocks, because they just want to please God."

"As Christians, it is not our place to say, 'well, I just don't understand why men can't look at me dressed like this and not battle with lusting thoughts.' instead, we need to take it for truth when a person of the opposite sex informs us that our dress is causing problems for them, and do what we need to do to protect our brothers and sisters from stumbling."

"One of the saddest things and hardest to fight against has been the fact that the 'street' and the church now seem to be equal in their approach to female sexuality and its expression. There seems to be no bottom to the level that members of the church are willing to allow in the way of what can be worn to church and church functions."

"It is amazing to me that husbands, fathers, etc., would allow their women out in public Wearing some of the things women wear. Have they no idea the thoughts of other men? Shame on them."

"When my wife and I were first married, she wore pants. I didn't tell her to stop, although she would have if I told her to. She would have quit wearing pants but she would have resented me for telling her to do so. She had to quit wearing them because she was convicted by the Holy Spirit and God's Word. She was convicted and she quit wearing pants. In fact, she dresses so modestly that people stare at her because she dresses differently and not because she's showing something off. I am proud of her stance as a Christian because she dresses this way in obedience to the Word of God and not only in obedience to me." - copied

AND THE PEOPLE GAVE...

Week of March 7, 2009

<u>Undesignated</u> Tithes & Offerings -----	\$	710.00
Insurance Fund -----	\$	8200
Total Received for Week of 03/07/10:		\$ 792.00

Average amount of Undesignated Offerings needed to operate the church EACH WEEK, as a minimum = \$ 1,400.00

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SAVED

1. Admit that you are a sinner.
2. Admit that God says all sins must be paid for.
3. Accept the fact that Christ took upon Himself the suffering necessary to pay for all your sins.
4. You must change your mind about sin and sinning (God calls this repentance).
5. By an act of your will, accept by faith the Lord Jesus Christ, who can save you from the penalty of sin. Then, tell God about this in a simple prayer. Believe that God keeps His promise to save you, and thank Him for His salvation.

NURSERY MINISTRY WORKERS FOR THIS WEEK

10:50 a.m. Service -----	Cradle Roll 1: Rebekah White Cradle Roll 2: Nathaniel White
6:30 p.m. Service -----	Cradle Roll 1: Janet Bridges Cradle Roll 2: Bertha Segebarrt
Wed. Eve. Service -----	Cradle Roll 1: LeAnna White Cradle Roll 2: Seth White

AND THE PEOPLE CAME...

Week of March 7, 2010

Sunday School -----	28
Sunday Morning Service -----	38
Evening Service -----	31
Wed. Eve. Service, 03/10/10 -----	26

Please Remember To Be Faithful to Give!



As with everything else, the costs of keeping a church going never go down - they always go **up**. Bills wait for no one, and churches are no exception to this. An extra, sacrificial gift today by everyone present would go a long way...

We encourage all of our membership to practice obedience to God by being faithful every payday to give back to Him His tithe (10%). *If every family in our church would practice this one simple discipline, we would never have weeks where we have to put off paying some bills until the following week!*

Everything is expensive, especially for a small church like ours, but ours is a BIG God, and He LOVES to bless His children when they are obedient to Him!

If you are already a tither, we thank you, and encourage you to also give offerings as well. If you're currently not tithing, won't you please start **today** - **OK?** Thank you.

