

A Study Of

Bible Authority

A Study Guide

By David Phillips

Wednesday Evening Bible Study
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Introduction

Bible authority is one of the most important subjects that the Christian can study. We understand this from the very premise upon which Jesus based the Great Commission, “*All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore...*” (Matthew 28:18, 19).

Nevertheless, there is a great push in today’s religious world to cast off the authority of the Bible. This is seen in the cry for a “new hermeneutic.” *Hermeneutic* is the method of interpretation a person uses to understand language and literature. The “old hermeneutic” that many have become dissatisfied with is the use of *commands*, *examples*, and *necessary inferences* to determine God’s will for mankind as it is communicated through the Scriptures. Some people are saying that it is a manmade method of interpretation and should, therefore, not be used. Though the proponents of the “new hermeneutic” are not agreed on which method should be used to interpret the Scriptures, they are agreed on one point—“get rid of the old hermeneutic!”

Various reasons for this have been suggested such as “It is too constraining”; it does not allow men the freedom to do what they want to do in their religious practices. And “Though the old hermeneutic was useful for establishing the pattern for the church in its work, organization, and worship, it is not suited to address the more pressing issues of the day.” Whatever the reason, the overall idea is that the old hermeneutic is inadequate for addressing the issues of modern man.

The purpose of this booklet is to not only guide the Bible student in a study of Biblical principles of authority, but to also emphasize the necessity of the “old hermeneutic.” If this subject is studied carefully and honestly, the student will find that commands, examples, and necessary inferences are not only the most basic and universal principles of human communication, but that they make up a hermeneutic that is both scriptural and perfectly adequate for addressing all of man’s needs in matters of life and godliness. It is the same method Jesus used as well as His apostles (that’s where we got it from!). The only limitation lies, not in the method, but in the individual’s willingness to apply it to every aspect of his/her life.

May God bless you in your studies.

--DP

God's Sovereignty

Memory Work: Hebrews 3:4

"For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God."

Weekly Reading:

DAY 1: God's Authority Is Inherent.

- A. As the Creator, all things inherently belong to God.
 - 1. "Create" means to bring into existence.
 - 2. Gen. 1:1-2; Psalm 148:1-5; Jeremiah 32:17; Hebrews 3:4.
- B. God shows all men His power and deity through His creation.
 - 1. Romans 1:19-20
 - 2. Revelation 14:7

DAY 2: God's Authority Is Manifest In His Power Over Nature:

- A. His creation does His bidding: Nahum 1:3-6
- B. God even has control over the weather.
 - 1. Job 37:6-13
 - 2. Psalm 147:7-8
 - 3. Jeremiah 51:15-16
- C. God now upholds our universe by the power in Jesus' words: Hebrews 1:3

DAY 3: God's Authority Is Evident In His Knowledge.

- A. God knows the past, present, and those things in the future which He will, by His authority, cause to come to pass.
 - 1. Isaiah 46:9-10
 - 2. Ecclesiastes 12:14
 - 3. Job 21:22
 - 4. Hebrews 4:12-13
- B. His knowledge is beyond our comprehension.
 - 1. Psalm 147:4-5
 - 2. Isaiah 55:8-9
 - 3. Romans 11:33-36

DAY 4: God's Authority And Power Are Infinite.

- A. He is called Lord God Almighty in heaven and on earth.
 - 1. Revelation 19:15
 - 2. Genesis 17:1
- B. All things are possible with God.
 - 1. Genesis 18:14
 - 2. Isaiah 26:4
 - 3. Matthew 19:26

DAY 5: God's Authority Extends Everywhere.

- A. We cannot hide from God. His authority is over everyone everywhere.
 - 1. Jeremiah 23:23-24
 - 2. Isaiah 29:15-16

- B. 1 Kings 8:27; Isaiah 66:1-2: He cannot be contained, for He rules heaven and earth.
- C. Where there is authority, there are those that are subject to that authority.
- D. Colossians 3:5-6; Rom. 1:18: Where there is authority, there are consequences for rebellion and disobedience.

Study Notes and Questions

Man's Need For Authority

Memory Work: Colossians 3:17

“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

Weekly Reading:

DAY 1: Man's Need For Authority Stated.

- A. Acts 17:26-30: As the offspring of God we will be judged for how we respond to His authority.
- B. Ecclesiastes 12:13: It is the whole duty of man to fear God (respect His authority and power) and to obey Him.
- C. Colossians 3:17: “In His name” means “by His authority.”

DAY 2: Consequences Of Not Seeking God's Authority.

- A. Matthew 7:21-23: Refused entrance into the kingdom.
- B. 2 John 9-11: Do not have God.
- C. Galatians 1:8-9: Will be accursed.

DAY 3: The Need For Authority As Seen In The Old Testament.

- A. Cain and Abel: Genesis 4:1-7; Hebrews 11:4; Romans 10:17.
- B. Nadab and Abihu: Leviticus 10:1-3.
- C. Uzziah: 2 Chronicles 26:16-20; Exodus 30:7-8; Numbers 16:40.

DAY 4: The Need For Authority As Seen In The New Testament.

- A. In the teachings of Jesus:
 - 1. Matthew 7:21-23: Great works are no substitute for simple obedience.
 - 2. Matthew 7:24-27: Wise men do the will of the Father.
 - 3. Matthew 21:23-27: Jesus' question emphasizes man's need to act by the proper authority.
- B. The teachings of the apostles:
 - 1. Philippians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 1:10: Unity requires one absolute standard.
 - 2. 2 John 9-11: To transgress (go beyond) is to be without God.
 - 3. Revelation 22:18-19: Curse upon those who add to or take away from God's word.

DAY 5: The Need For Authority In Every Realm Of Human Life.

- A. “Authority in religion”—though absolutely necessary, is not the full extent of man's needed application of Bible authority.
- B. Colossians 3:17: “Word” and “deed” applies to every part of man's life (read Colossians 3:1-16).

Study Notes and Questions

Lesson Three

The Source Of Authority

Memory Work: Matthew 21:23

“Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, ‘By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?’”

Weekly Reading:

DAY 1: The Source Of Authority: What It Is.

- A. Hebrews 1:3; Matthew 17:5: Jesus is God’s appointed spokesman today.
- B. Deuteronomy 18:18-19; Luke 9:28-36 (esp. 35); Acts 3:22, 23: God requires that we hear Jesus.
- C. Matthew 28:18: Jesus has been given all authority by the Father.
- D. Colossians 1:16-18: Jesus is to have the preeminence.
- E. John 16:12-15: Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would reveal all truth to the apostles.
- F. 1 Corinthians 2:9-10, 16; 14:37: That revelation is recorded in the New Testament Scriptures—God’s authority for man today.

DAY 2: Mistaken Sources Of Authority In Religion.

- A. Colossians 2:14-17; Galatians 5:4: Old Testament practices.
- B. Matthew 15:9; 2 Corinthians 10:4-6: The creeds of men.
- C. Matthew 7:13-14: Majority rule.
- D. Matthew 22:29; 1 Corinthians 1:21: Educated religious leaders.

DAY 3: Mistaken Sources Of Authority In Personal Life.

- A. Romans 12:2; 1 John 2:15-17: Present values of society.
- B. Proverbs 16:25; 1 Corinthians 2:11: Feelings, intuition, conscience.
- C. Romans 3:23; Matthew 10:37-39: Common sense.
- D. Matthew 10:37: Parents.

- E. “What would Jesus do?”: This is a *subjective* question. More appropriate would be “What *did* Jesus do and say?” (1 John 2:6).

DAY 4: The Consequences of Mistaken Sources Of Authority.

- A. 1 Samuel 15:3, 9, 15, 22-23: The ends never justify the means.
- B. 2 Samuel 6:1-11: Good intentions and desirable outcomes are never good substitutes for obedience to God’s commands.

DAY 5: The Old And New Testaments:

- A. Romans 7:7, 12; Gal. 3:24: The law of Moses was good, it was the law of God, and it fulfilled God’s purpose.
- B. Hebrews 8:6; 7:12: But Jesus brought better promises, better covenant, and new law.
- C. Colossians 2:14-17: The old law is no longer God’s standard for men.
- D. Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11; 2 Timothy 3:15: The New Testament is our law; the old testament is profitable for teaching and wisdom.

Study Notes and Questions

Lesson Four

Truth

Memory Work: John 17:17

“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”

Weekly Reading:

DAY 1: God’s Word Is Truth.

- A. John 17:17
- B. John 14:6
- C. John 16:13

DAY 2: There Is Such A Thing As Absolute Truth.

- A. 2 Timothy 4:3-4: Since there is such a thing as *error*, it necessarily follows that there is such a thing as *truth*.
- B. Colossians 1:16: God created all things; therefore He is the ultimate standard of truth for all things.
- C. Ephesians 4:6: Since there is one God who is above all, there can only be one standard of truth.
- D. 1 Corinthians 2:6-13: That standard of truth is revealed from the mind of God to men through the Scriptures.

DAY 3: Seeking God’s Authority Requires A Love For The Truth.

- A. Prov. 23:23: We love the truth by seeking it at all costs.
- B. Ephesians 4:14-15: We love the truth by speaking the truth.
- C. Galatians 3:1; 1 Peter 1:22: We love the truth by obeying the truth.
- D. 2 Thessalonians 2:10: Those who do not love the truth will be deceived.

DAY 4: Bible Synonyms For Truth:

- A. Ephesians 1:13; Colossians 1:5: *Gospel*.
- B. Ephesians 1:13: *The word of truth*.
- C. 1 Thessalonians 2:13: *The word of God*.
- D. Titus 2:1: *Sound doctrine*.
- E. Romans 6:17; 2 Peter 3:15-17: *The doctrine*.
- F. Romans 16:26; Jude 3: *The faith*.

DAY 5: Implications Of Absolute Truth

- A. 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3:
 - 1. There is no need to go beyond the truth.
 - 2. Anything beyond or contrary to the truth is a lie.
- B. 1 Timothy 2:4, 14; Ephesians 4:17-18
 - 1. Men need the truth for salvation.
 - 2. If we choose to believe something other than the truth our understanding is darkened and we fall into sin.
- C. Because there is absolute truth, departure from that is error and will receive its consequences.
 - 1. Revelation 22:18-19

2. Galatians 1:9
3. 2 Corinthians 10:4-6

Study Notes and Questions

Lesson Five

How God Instructs Men

Memory Work: John 6:45

"It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me."

Weekly Reading:

DAY 1: God Communicates With Man On Man's Level.

- A. Isaiah 1:18: Men are able to reason with God and vice versa.
- B. Ephesians 5:17: Men are able and expected to understand His will.
- C. Ephesians 3:4-5; 2 Timothy 2:15: That understanding comes from reading and diligently studying the Scriptures.

DAY 2: The Bible Narrative.

- A. The Bible is laid out like an historical narrative.
 1. It is the history of how God has fulfilled His plan for man's salvation.
 2. The historical accounts are real and factual.
- B. Through that record *God instructs man* by revealing His will as well as important spiritual truths.
- C. Summarize the stories and list the truths that are revealed in the passages below.
 1. John 4:23-24:
 2. Acts 15:1-16:
 3. 2 Timothy 3:10-17:
 4. Matthew 22:31-32 (Ex. 3:6):

DAY 3: God Instructs Man Through Direct Statements.

- A. Just as men communicate with one another through direct statements of fact or direct commands, God communicates with us the same way.
- B. Note the specific instructions and the choices allowed in the following commands.
 1. The Lord's Supper: Matthew 26:26-30; 1 Corinthians 11:23-34
 2. Baptism: Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38; 10:48

DAY 4: God Instructs Man Through Approved Examples.

- A. Older men often train younger men by *showing* them how to do a job.
- B. 3 John 11: Likewise, the Bible records the conduct of men which provide examples for what we should either imitate or avoid.
- C. The Bible contains three kinds of examples:
 1. Good examples: Acts 20:35; 1 Corinthians 11:1; 4:16-17.
 2. Evil examples: 1 Corinthians 10:6, 11; Jude 7, 11.
 3. Examples that were approved, but are not for men to imitate today: Acts 19:11-12.

DAY 5: God Instructs Man Through Necessary Inferences.

- A. Necessary conclusions are an integral part of human communication.
- B. Similarly, God expects men to make necessary conclusions from His communication with us.
- C. We do so by putting statements or passages together to form a conclusion: Acts 2:25-31 with 2 Samuel 7:12 and Psalm 132:11.
- D. Jesus made a necessary inference in His discussion with the Sadducees: Matthew 22:23-33.

Study Notes and Questions

Lesson Six

Fenced In By God's Word

Memory Word: 2 John 9

"Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son."

Weekly Reading:

DAY 1: "Inclusion" Or "Exclusion"?

- A. Does God allow men to *include* in their works anything that He does not specifically condemn? Or when He is specific on a matter, does His silence *exclude* everything else?
- B. Leviticus 10:1; 16:12: Did God's law on the burning of incense *include* or *exclude* fire which was not specified by Him?
- C. Hebrews 7:14: Did God's commands in the law of Moses concerning the Levitical priests *include* or *exclude* the tribe of Judah?
- D. Gal. 6:1-9: Once the gospel was revealed, did that *include* or *exclude* other gospels as means for salvation?
- E. 1 Corinthians 11:17-34: Does the pattern for the Lord's Supper *include* or *exclude* the eating of a common meal?

DAY 2: God Tells Us In Several Places And In Several Ways That We Cannot Add To His Word.

- A. Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 5:32
- B. Proverbs 4:26-27
- C. Revelation 22:18-19
- D. In effect, we are fenced in by God's word and as long as we remain within that fence, we are doing His will.

DAY 3: Everything God Wants His People To Do Is Provided In His Word.

- A. 2 Peter 1:3: He provides all things for life and godliness.
- B. 2 Timothy 3:16-17: What has been revealed is able to make the man of God *perfectly* equipped for *every* good work.

DAY 4: The Character Of Men Who God Outside The "Fence?"

- A. Proverbs 3:5: They do not fully trust the Lord.
- B. 2 Timothy 4:3: They seek their own will and not God's.
- C. 1 John 3:4: They transgress God's law—that's sin!
- D. Colossians 2:23: Their religion is self-imposed (literally "will-worship" or worship that one prescribes for himself).

DAY 5: Going Beyond God's Word Separates Men From God.

- A. 2 John 9: Those who transgress (go beyond) do not have God.
- B. 1 John 3:4, 6, 8: Because sin is the transgression of the law, those who continue in it cannot be children of God.
- C. Isa. 59:2: In that condition, our iniquities separate us from God.

Study Notes and Questions

Specifics And Generics

Memory Work: 1 Corinthians 14:37

"If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord."

Weekly Reading:

DAY 1: God Instructs Man Through Specific Commands And Statements.

- A. Direct commands or statements are clear declarations of God's will—what He wants men to do, not to do, or truths that must be believed.
- B. Direct commands concerning the Lord's Supper: Matthew 26:26-30; 1 Corinthians 11:23-34.
- C. Direct commands concerning man's love for God: Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37.
- D. Direct statements concerning the nature of God: 1 John 4:8; Isaiah 40:28.
- E. Direct statements concerning the nature of man: Psa. 39:5; Eccl. 12:7; Matt. 10:28.
- F. Direct commands or statements are fixed; there are no variations or options to choose from.

DAY 2: Specific Commands Are Imperative, Generic Commands Are Optional.

- A. Genesis 6: Noah was told specifically to build an ark out of gopher wood, but he had the option (generic authority) to choose which tools to use.
- B. Matthew 28:19:
 1. Jesus commanded His disciples specifically to *go* make disciples (teach), baptizing them.
 2. In fulfilling the command to "Go," their charge was specific, but their mode of transportation was optional.
 3. Acts 20:20: They also had generic authority to choose the most suitable teaching environment (i.e. public speaking, private study, etc.).
- C. Every command of God has both specific and generic elements.

DAY 3: Generic Options Do Not Exceed Specific Commands.

- A. Specific commands establish parameters, while generic authority allows men to use whatever options are allowed within those parameters.
- B. Generic authority does *not* permit men to do things that are in conflict with God's specific commands.
- C. Luke 22:17: "Divide the cup."
 1. Specifically the apostles were commanded to *divide* the *cup* (or drink).
 2. They had generic authority to choose the most suitable method of dividing the cup, without exceeding Jesus' command (i.e. without using a different drink, etc.).
- D. Matthew 26:26-28: Jesus established the pattern for observing the Lord's Supper.
 1. 1 Corinthians 11:17-22: The Corinthians were not following the pattern set by Jesus.
 2. Because they were changing the manner and conduct of the meal, it was no longer the *Lord's* Supper that they were keeping (vs. 20).

DAY 4: Misapplying Generic Authority.

- A. We misapply generic authority when we choose options that are in conflict with God's specific commands.
- B. Ephesians 5:19:
 - 1. We are told to *sing*, which *kinds* of songs to sing, and to make melody in our *hearts*.
 - 2. We have generic authority to use song books and to choose the specific songs to sing.
 - 3. But if we use mechanical instruments, we are doing something *other* than singing; therefore, generic authority does not apply to instrumental music.
- C. Matthew 28:19:
 - 1. God gives authority for Christians and congregations to preach or fund the preaching of the gospel.
 - 2. But when Christians establish organizations in addition to the church to fund gospel preaching, they exceed God's pattern; they have no generic authority.

DAY 5: Generic Authority And Silence.

- A. Generic authority does not violate God's silence, but rather functions within the parameters of what God has revealed.
- B. Deuteronomy 29:29: When God had *not* spoken on a matter that was His way of saying, "Don't go there."
- C. Leviticus 10:1-2: When God specified the source of the fire, Nadab and Abihu did not have generic authority to get their fire from a different source.
- D. We must respect the silence of the Scriptures and not venture into realms where the Lord has not spoken.

Study Notes and Questions

Approved Examples

Memory Work: 3 John 11

“Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.”

Weekly Reading:

DAY 1: What Is An Example?

- A. 1 Corinthians 11:1; Hebrews 6:12: Character or practice to be imitated.
- B. 1 Corinthians 10:6, 11: Character or practice to be avoided.
- C. Acts 19:11-12: Character or practice that *was* approved, but is not for us to imitate today.

DAY 2: Classes Of Examples.

- A. Acts 8:14-15; 1 Cor. 13:8-13; Examples limited to the first century (e.g. use and conduct for miracles).
- B. Acts 21:18-26; 1 Cor. 7:18-20: Social, civil, and religious laws and customs peculiar to the cultures of the day.
- C. 1 Peter 2:21; John 13:15; Luke 10:29-37: Example of character or attitude, but not specific works.
- D. 1 Corinthians 16:1; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15; ch. 9: The carrying out of specific instructions from God.
- E. Acts 20:7-8; Heb. 10:25: Examples of generic options being used in carrying out specific instructions.

DAY 3: Look For The Commands Behind The Examples.

- A. Most approved examples reflect a direct statement given elsewhere in the Scriptures.
- B. In the book of Acts there are many examples of people responding to the gospel. Yet there are also direct statements showing that their responses were correct:
 - 1. Believe: Acts 8:12 & Mark 16:16
 - 2. Repentance and fruits of repentance: Acts 26:20 & Acts 19:18-19
 - 3. Confess Jesus as Lord: Acts 8:37 & Rom. 10:10
 - 4. Baptism: Acts 2:41 & Acts 2:38
- 5. Though not every requirement is mentioned in every conversion, we know they are required because of the commands given elsewhere.
- 6. Looking for the command behind the example enables us to know whether an example is binding or simply exercising generic authority.

DAY 4: Examples And Generic Authority.

- A. Descriptions of disciples carrying out specific instructions, but using their own judgment to choose from available options in doing so. Their choices do not limit Christians today.
- B. Acts 20:7: Several things they did were options of generic authority (i.e. upper room, one assembly, time of day).
- C. 2 Corinthians 8:1-8: The example of the Macedonian Christians was a good one to follow, but it was not a command.
- D. We must always find the specific instructions first, determine the list of options, and then fit the examples into the picture.

DAY 5: Acquire All The Information To Properly Understand An Example.

- A. John 13:7, 12:
 - 1. The context.
 - 2. Does Jesus' example teach us to wash each other's feet, or is He teaching something else?
- B. 1 Corinthians 11:13, 16:
 - 1. The historical background.
 - 2. Were the Corinthians concerned about women covering their head because the apostles had commanded it?
- C. Matt. 26:27; Luke 22:17-22:
 - 1. Consider other passages.
 - 2. Both passages tell the same story, but one adds a little more information to draw from.
- D. Acts 1:8; 1:21-26; 1 Cor. 15:8:
 - 1. Has an example been "fenced off" by other passages?
 - 2. Are we meant to select apostles today as was done in Acts chapter 1?
- E. Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-37; 6:1-3; 11:27-30:
 - 1. What is the consistent pattern?
 - 2. To whom was benevolence given out of church funds?

Study Notes and Questions

Necessary Inferences

Memory Work: Mark 12:26-27

“But concerning the dead, that they rise, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the burning bush passage, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living. You are therefore greatly mistaken.”

Weekly Reading:
DAY 1: What Are Necessary Inferences?

- A. Putting passages or statements together to form a conclusion.
- B. Without necessary inferences, the Bible has no meaning for men today.
 1. The letters of the New Testament were written to individuals and groups of Christians that lived in the first century.
 2. How do we know that those letters are for our learning today? NECESSARY INFERENCE.
 3. Matthew 28:19: Who must preach to all nations?
 4. 1 Corinthians 6:9; Galatians 5:21: Was God’s moral standard only for first-century Christians, or was it meant for all time?
 5. Jude 3: To whom was the faith delivered? First-century saints only or succeeding generations also?

DAY 2: Not All Conclusions Are Necessary.

- A. By necessary inference or conclusion, we are talking about conclusions that God expects us to make and conclusions that are unavoidable—they are *necessary*.
- B. Matthew 4:5-6: Both Jesus and Satan drew conclusions from the Scriptures, but only Jesus’ conclusion was necessary.
- C. Matthew 12:22-24; 31-32: The Pharisees *falsely* concluded that Jesus worked by the authority of Satan, but Jesus *necessarily* concluded that by saying such a thing they were blaspheming the Holy Spirit.
- D. 2 Peter 3:16: Making wrong conclusions and believing and teaching them as necessary conclusions are detrimental.

DAY 3: The Method That Jesus Used.

- A. Matthew 22:23-33: How did Jesus use necessary inference to refute the Sadducees?
- B. Matthew 22:41-45: What necessary inference was Jesus pointing to concerning the relationship between King David and the Christ?
- C. Matthew 16:5-12: Jesus expects His disciples to make necessary inferences.

DAY 4: The Method That The Apostles Used.

- A. Acts 2:25-32: Peter used a necessary inference concerning the resurrection of the Christ.
- B. Acts 10:10-15, 28: Peter made a necessary conclusion concerning the salvation of the Gentiles.
- C. Galatians 3:16: Paul made a necessary conclusion concerning Abraham’s “Seed.”

DAY 5: Applications Of Necessary Inferences.

- A. Acts 20:7: How often are Christians to eat the Lord’s Supper?

Necessary Inferences

- B. Hebrews 10:25; Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2: When are Christians to assemble?
- C. Galatians 5:21: “And things like these” requires Christians to make necessary conclusions on moral issues.
- D. Acts 8:5-19: When would the ability to do miracles cease?

Study Notes and Questions

Expedients

Memory Work: 1 Corinthians 10:23

“All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify.”

Weekly Reading:
DAY 1: Definition of Expediency.

- A. Something that is advantageous, useful, good, or worthwhile.
- B. Vine says, “lit., to bring together, to be an advantage, profitable, expedient (not merely ‘convenient’)” (p. 62).
 - 1. An expedient is a tool or option at one’s disposal that is profitable for accomplishing the commands of God.
 - 2. It is a thing that is used to achieve the desired outcome (see rules and exceptions to this point in the following sections).
- C. In the Scriptures:
 - 1. 1 Corinthians 6:12; 10:23: The word *expedient* used by Paul.
 - 2. John 11:50; 18:14: *Expedient* used by Caiaphas in a prophecy concerning the death of Jesus.
- D. Examples:
 - 1. Acts 16:8-11: After receiving instructions to preach in Macedonia, Paul used a ship as an expedient to travel there.
 - 2. Acts 20:7: The *place* (an upper room, vs. 9) where the disciples came together was an expedient that enabled them to fulfill the command to assemble.

DAY 2: An Expedient Must Be Lawful And Profitable.

- A. 1 Corinthians 6:12: “Expediency must come within the realm of that which is lawful.”¹
 - 1. 1 Samuel 15:15, 22: Even though something seems good, it is not expedient if it causes one to disobey the commands of God.
 - 2. Ephesians 4:28:
 - a. Christians are commanded to share with others, but to steal from someone in order to have something to share is not lawful; therefore it is not expedient.
 - b. However, a person may choose from any number of *lawful* occupations in order to acquire something to share.
- B. 1 Corinthians 10:23: Expediency must be profitable.
 - 1. An expedient is more than an option; it must also be advantageous or helpful.
 - 2. If an option is not helpful, then it should not be used.

DAY 3: An Expedient Is Not Specified; It is Simply An Option.

- A. Anything that God specifies is *not* an expedient.
 - 1. Romans 6:4; 1 Peter 3:20-21: Water is used in baptism, but since God specified that baptism be done in water, it is not an expedient (It is not optional).
 - 2. Matthew 26:27-29: The fruit of the vine is specified; therefore it is not an expedient in the Lord’s Supper.

¹ Roy E. Cogdill: *Walking By Faith*, pg. 18.

3. Expedient can only something which God has *not* specified.
- B. What is specified and what are possible expedients in the following commands?
 1. Ephesians 5:19:
 2. Acts 2:38; Mark 1:5; 8:36-39:

DAY 4: An Expedient Must Edify; It Must Not Offend.

- A. 1 Corinthians 14:26: Let all things be done for edification.
 1. If a thing is a matter of choice or human wisdom and it tears down what God would have built up, it is wrong.
 2. If it is non-essential, and is enforced in spite of its harm, we sin.
- B. 1 Corinthians 10:32: It must give no offense.
 1. “Offense”: To cause another to stumble or violate their conscience.
 2. 1 Corinthians 8:9; Romans 15:1-3: One person’s freedoms must not be pursued at the expense of another personal’s soul.
- C. 1 Corinthians 6:12:
 1. Paul would not be mastered by anything that was optional.
 2. Something that is optional cannot be forced upon others as commands or to the offense of a person’s conscience.
 3. NOTE: Specific commands must be fulfilled, regardless of an individual’s conscience.

DAY 5: Expedients vs. Additions.

- A. Where EXPEDIENTS are helpful and profitable for fulfilling the commands of God, ADDITIONS go beyond God’s commands by ignoring the principles listed above.
- B. Circle the additions in the examples below:
 1. *Baptism* (Acts 8:36-39; Rom. 6:4): Water, Sprinkling, Baptistery.
 2. *Evangelism* (Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16): Bible, Tract, Missionary Society.
 3. *Sing* (Eph. 5:19): Song Books, Song Leader, Piano.
 4. *Preach* (2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Tim. 2:11-12): Female Preacher, Pulpit, Sermon Outline.

Study Notes and Questions

More Than “Book, Chapter & Verse”

Memory Work: 2 Peter 3:16

“as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.”

Weekly Reading:

DAY 1: “Book, Chapter, And Verse” Preaching: A Scriptural Approach.

- A. 1 Peter 4:11
- B. 1 Corinthians 4:6
- C. Acts 17:11

DAY 2: Is “Book, Chapter, & Verse” Enough?

- A. Both Jesus and Satan used book, chapter and verse to make their points.
 - 1. Matthew 4:6: Satan used Scripture to tempt Jesus.
 - 2. Matthew 4:7: Jesus used Scripture to resist Satan.
 - 3. How was “book, chapter, and verse” used differently by each?
- B. Satan’s tactics today:
 - 1. Matthew 16:1: Used to justify authority of the Pope.
 - 2. Ezekiel 37:15-27: Supposed prophecy of Book of Mormon and the Bible.
 - 3. Romans 3:28, 4:3: Used to teach salvation by faith only.
- C. 2 Timothy 2:15: Christian responsibility to avoid Satan’s tactic above (i.e. there is a right way and a wrong way to “divide” or “handle” the word of truth.)

DAY 3: More Than “Book, Chapter, And Verse”.

- A. Book, chapter and verse preaching is essential.
 - 1. Isaiah 44:2: It shows us what God says on any given subject.
 - 2. 1 Peter 4:11: It enables men to speak as oracles of God.
- B. CONTEXT is important.
 - 1. Read Matthew 27:5; Luke 10:37; John 13:27.
 - 2. Taken out of context, what would one conclude from these passages?
 - 3. Arbitrarily quoting Scripture does not provide authority.
 - 4. This kind of preaching must be combined with a thorough study of the words and context of the Scriptures that they may be used the way God intended.

DAY 4: Exercising Our Senses.

- A. Hebrews 5:12-6:2:
 - 1. All Christians begin as babes, with a limited understanding of the Scriptures and how to apply them.
 - 2. We can only learn how to properly apply the Scriptures by having the elementary principles firmly fixed in our minds, and exercising our senses by applying to principles in every area of our lives.
- B. 1 Peter 2:2; Psalm 119:9-16: We exercise our senses by constantly feeding on God’s word with a desire to know and to do His will.

- C. Proverbs 23:23; 2 Thessalonians 2:10: Along the way we must constantly remind ourselves of our commitment to the truth.
- D. 2 Peter 3:16-18:
 - 1. We must be careful to avoid twisting the Scriptures: i.e. misapplying them and forcing them to say things that they were not meant to say.
 - 2. How do we avoid that?

DAY 5: Where to Apply “Book, Chapter, And Verse” Teaching.

- A. John 4:23, 24: *Worship.*
- B. 1 Corinthians 4:6, 7: *Allegiances with other men.*
- C. 1 Timothy 1:8-11: *Morality.*
- D. Galatians 5:22-23; 2 Peter 1:5-7: *Character and attitude.*
- E. James 3:17; 2 Timothy 3:15: *Wisdom.*
- F. Acts 17:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:21-22: *Standard for examining all things.*
- G. John 15:12; 1 John 3:18: *Love.*

Study Notes and Questions

Applying Bible Authority

Memory Work: Romans 12:2

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

Weekly Reading:

DAY 1: Bible Authority Must Be Applied To “All Things”.

- A. 2 Peter 1:3:
 - 1. Since God has provided for “*all things* that pertain to live and godliness,” we must apply Bible authority to *all things*.
 - 2. This means that look to the Bible as more than a list of do’s and don’ts.
- B. James 1:22-24: We must let it define the kind of people we are or should become.
- C. Romans 12:2:
 - 1. Applying Bible authority means understanding God’s word with the intent toward using it as the mold for transforming our minds.
 - 2. The ultimate goal is that in all things we may prove (show approval through our actions) the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

DAY 2: Applying Bible Authority To Our Attitude.

- A. God uses commands, examples, and necessary inferences to teach us about the kind of attitude we should seek.
- B. Philippians 2:5-8:
 - 1. The Christians attitude (mind) needs to be patterned after that of Jesus Christ.
 - 2. Philippians 2:3; Matthew 11:29: Lowly of heart.
- C. James 3:14; 4:6: Avoid bitterness, envy, self-seeking, and pride.
- D. James 3:17: Pursue purity, peace, gentleness, wisdom.
- E. Matthew 5:3-10: The beatitudes have a great deal to do with one’s heart or mind.

DAY 3: Applying Bible Authority To Our Individual Lives.

- A. God uses commands, examples, and necessary inferences to show us the kind of character we should have.
- B. Business and work ethics:
 - 1. Ephesians 4:28: Work to have something to share.
 - 2. Colossians 3:23: Do everything with all our might, as to the Lord.
 - 3. 1 Corinthians 6:8: Do not cheat, but deal honestly.
 - 4. Luke 16:11-12: Be wise and faithful in money matters.
- C. Ephesians 5:22-6:4: Our role in the family.
- D. Luke 11:34; 1 Peter 4:3-4: Our choice of entertainment.
- E. John 15:12; Mark 12:31; Romans 12:9-12: Relationships.

DAY 4: Applying Bible Authority To The Worship Of The Church.

- A. God uses commands, examples, and necessary inferences to show His people how to worship Him.
- B. John 4:23-24: God expects His people to worship Him according to the right pattern (truth), and with the right attitude (spirit).

- C. 1 Corinthians 11:17-34: *The Lord's Supper.*
- D. Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16: *Singing.*
- E. Matthew 6:5-13; 1 Corinthians 14:15: *Praying.*
- F. 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8; 9:6-9: *Giving.*
- G. 2 Timothy 4:2; Acts 20:7: *Preaching.*
- H. 1 Corinthians 14:26, 40: *Conduct during worship.*

DAY 5: Applying Bible Authority To The Work Of The Church.

- A. God uses commands, examples, and necessary inferences to show the kind of work the church is to do on the earth.
- B. Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Thessalonians 1:8: *Evangelism.*
- C. 1 Corinthians 14:26; Ephesians 4:11-12, 16: *Edification.*
- D. Acts 11:27-29; 2 Corinthians 8:1-7: *Benevolence.*

Study Notes and Questions