

F. Y. C.

For Your Consideration

❖ AUGUST 2016 ❖

‘Put it Back Where You Found It!’

Our Bibles have chapter numbers and verse numbers that have been around since the 16th Century. They are like an index that makes it easy to find certain passages. But does it also encourage us to “proof-text”—that is, to quote select phrases from Scripture out of context? Such quoting has become the basis for teachings “found” in an isolated place.

It would do us well to put the verse back in context and make sure that the “found” teaching is consistent with the context. Such context may include, not just the verses before and after, but the context may include a whole chapter or more.

The books of the New Testament are not reference material! They are gospels, letters, and epistles to be read and understood in their entirety. (e.g., *I adjure you by the Lord to have this letter read to all the brethren.* (1 Thessalonians 5:27).

EXAMPLES

SAVED BY FAITH ONLY

One of the most quoted verses in the New Testament is John 3:16 – “*For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*” Some “find” in this verse that one only needs to “believe” to be saved. But few know the context. The verse begins with a preposition indicating it is part of a previous thought. And the following verses shed more light on what “**believe in**” actually means. The context negates the “found” teaching.

SAVED BY GRACE, NOT WORKS

That works have no part in salvation is a “found” teaching in Ephesians 2:8-9 – *For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.* These verses must be “put back in the context.” Not just chapter 2, but chapter 1 and 3-6 also. Especially chapters 4 through 6 that mention many “works” required of Jesus’ disciples.

A word of caution. Not only should we be aware of others’ “findings” – but to be sure that verses we quote to support a command or precept are consistent with the context.

Yes, “**Put it back where you found it!**”

Adversity Is Never Pleasant

Yet it can provide lessons not available elsewhere.

I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

Philippians 4:12

TRADITIONS

Definition: (Greek) paradosis: a handing down, or handing over.

Dictionary: The passing down of elements of a culture from generation to generation, especially by oral communication.

TRADITIONS AMONG THE JEWS OF JESUS' DAY

Traditions were established for the noble purpose of keeping the Law.

The sect of the Pharisees was formed to maintain orthodoxy.

The Pharisees were zealous of their ancestral traditions. Mar.7:3-4, Gal.1:14

Gamaliel was a Pharisee. Act.5:34

Paul the Apostle (Saul of Tarsus) was a zealous Pharisee. Act.23:6, 26:5; Phi.3:5

The rabbis interpretations of the Law had taken on the force of law.

Some traditions purposely violated Scripture. Mar.7:1-13, Mat.15:1-6

The "keepers of tradition" had become overbearing and self-serving. Mat.23:1-7

What the Pharisees considered as important traditions Jesus condemned.

TRADITIONS AMONG THE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST

The source of traditions is all important.

Traditions (doctrine) from God.

Traditions of Apostles came from God through inspiration.

Mat.16:19; 1Co.2:12-13

Apostles handed down the teachings of Christ. (Called "traditions." 2Th.3:6; 2:14-15)

Paul taught "traditions." 1Co.11:2. Cf. 1Co.14:37

Traditions of men.

Traditions that originate in the mind of mankind; sometimes with good intentions.

They cannot be cited as authority. Col.2:8

TRADITIONS IN THE CHURCH TODAY

Traditions that have no Bible basis—are unscriptural.

Traditions that conflict with Scripture—are bad (anti-Scriptural).

Traditions that gain the force of rule—are harmful.

Traditions that bind where the gospel doesn't bind—are needless burdens.

Traditions that become sacrosanct (inviolable)—become divisive.

Traditions that are kept after becoming counter-productive—are a hindrance.

Traditions that are in keeping with the Word and serve the purpose and needs of the congregation—are good and profitable.

ONE MUST DIFFERENTIATE

Traditions (teachings) found in the New Testament are doctrine.

They are approved of God.

Traditions of men cannot be used as doctrine.

They must never be given equal weight to Bible authority.

Traditions devised to carry out the keeping of the Lord's commands cannot be bound.

They can and do serve a useful purpose, but must never be bound.

TRADITIONS (HANDED DOWN) CAN BE GOOD, BAD, OR HARMLESS—IT ALL DEPENDS

Observe all the traditions of Apostles.

Observe none of those which are a substitute for doctrine.

Observe as many as are beneficial

'One-Another' Verses

What Not to Do!

A number of references in the New Testament tell us how we are to love and care for one another. **Here are some that tell us what NOT to do.**

*Therefore let us **not** judge one another anymore, but rather determine this—**not** to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way.*
Romans 14:13

*For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do **not** turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.*
Galatians 5:13

*Let us **not** become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.*
Galatians 5:26

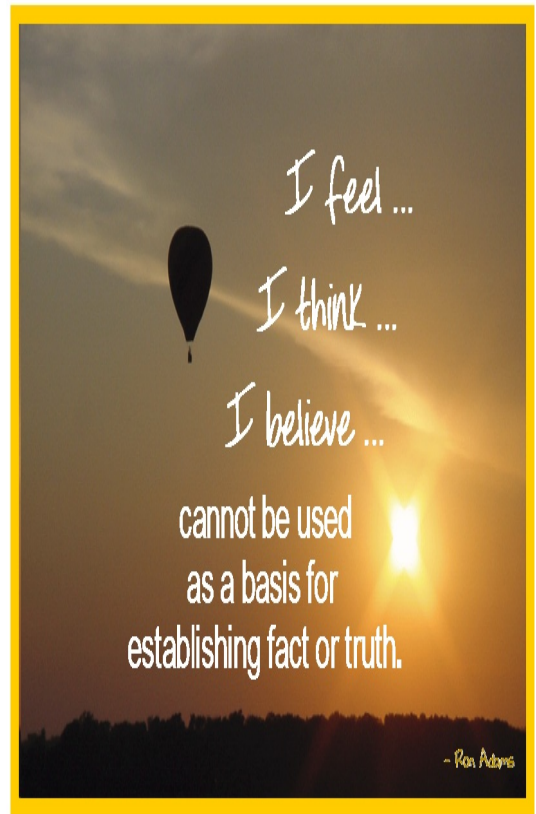
*But if you bite and devour one another, take care that you are **not** consumed by one another.*
Galatians 5:15

*Do **not** lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices.*
Colossians 3:9

*Do **not** speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it.*
James 4:11

*Do **not** complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.*
James 5:9

*Be of the same mind toward one another; **do not** be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. **Do not** be wise in your own estimation.*
Romans 12:16



WISDOM

Words of wisdom are like the stick a farmer uses to make animals move. These sayings come from God, our only shepherd, and they are like nails that fasten things together. My child, I warn you to stay away from any teachings except these. There is no end to books, and too much study will wear you out. Everything you were taught can be put into a few words: Respect and obey God! This is what life is all about.

Ecclesiastes 12:11-13 ESV



Ponder This

Compassion

Defined: sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it.

In the well-known parable commonly called "The Good Samaritan," Jesus answers the lawyer's question, "And who is my neighbor?" A priest, Levite, and a Samaritan all found a man, beaten and robbed, lying wounded beside the road. The priest and the Levite both had strong religious convictions, but showed no compassion. The Samaritan, whose religious convictions are not mentioned, had compassion and helped the man. Jesus' concluding words to the lawyer were, "Go and do the same."

This parable illustrates the message of the judgment scene in Matthew 25:34-40:

"Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink? And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You? When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'"

Both are necessary: religious convictions **and** compassion. **Be compassionate! "Go and do the same."**

Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.

Philippians 2:1-2

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## Keeping a Trust

All relationships, and especially close ones, benefit when the "need to know basis" is observed. Not just families, but among friends, neighbors, and especially church members. While there may be a tendency to want to share "juicy" tidbits, keeping a trust is far more important. The amount of grief, hurt feelings, and damaged reputations that can be avoided is enormous by following this simple rule.

*He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy conceals a matter.*

SProverbs 1:13

F.Y.C. is a monthly publication by Ron Adams.

Bible references are from the NASB except where another translation is referenced.

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