

Introduction: We live in a time where all standards are being rejected for the subjective.

A. There is nothing new seeing men throw away God's foundation to serve themselves.

(Ps 11:3; Jer 2:11-13)

Psalm 11:3 - If the foundations are destroyed, What can the righteous do?

Jeremiah 2:11-13 - Has a nation changed *its* gods, Which *are* not gods? But My people have changed their Glory For what does not profit. ¹² Be astonished, O heavens, at this, And be horribly afraid; Be very desolate," says the LORD. ¹³ "For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, *And* hewn themselves cisterns -- broken cisterns that can hold no water.

1. Some quickly cast aside "traditional" teachings without serious examination.

Others react emotionally to bad experiences with a few brethren. (Rom 3:4)

Romans 3:4 - Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged."

2. We must take the question of how we read and view the Bible very seriously.

3. God has shown us plainly how to find and know His will for us. (Rom 12:2)

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.

B. There are a large number of brethren questioning things that once were universally accepted.

1. Seeking to test all things is good as long as there is a sincere desire to find God's truth. (1 Thess 5:21; Acts 17:11)

1 Thessalonians 5:21 - Test all things; hold fast what is good.

Acts 17:11 - These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

2. There are some who raise questions with no desire to find answers. Their goal is to create doubt so they can seek worldly goals. (Mt 11:18-19)

Matthew 11:18-19 ¹⁸ "For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, 'He has a demon.' ¹⁹ "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' But wisdom is justified by her children."

3. Everyone who has doubts should ask questions so that God's will can be known!

I. God has chosen to communicate His will by delivering words

A. God delivered words at different times in the Old Testament that men were expected to understand and obey.

1. The Ten Commandments were words written on stone.

2. God delivered words to the prophets that were to be handled very differently than the words of men. **(Deut 4:4-5, 10; Jer 1:9-10)**

Deuteronomy 4:4-5 - "But you who held fast to the LORD your God are alive today, every one of you. ⁵ "Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the LORD my God commanded me, that you should act according to *them* in the land which you go to possess.

Deuteronomy 4:10 - "*especially concerning* the day you stood before the LORD your God in Horeb, when the LORD said to me, 'Gather the people to Me, and I will let them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days they live on the earth, and *that they may teach their children.*'

3. There were things that were inherently true about these words *because they came from God.* **(2 Sam 22:31)**

2 Samuel 22:31 - *As for* God, His way is perfect; The word of the LORD is proven; He is a shield to all who trust in Him.

B. God chose to deliver words through Jesus who, in turn, would deliver them to us through the apostles and prophets. Jesus showed us how to handle these words!

1. Jesus would only do those things that He saw the Father do. Without instruction He would do nothing! **(Jn 5:19-20, 30)**

John 5:19-20 - Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. ²⁰ "For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.

John 5:30 - "I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

2. Jesus wanted His followers to understand authority and to follow the Father just like He did. He wanted others to test doctrine! **(Jn 7:16-17)**

John 7:16-17 - Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me. ¹⁷ "If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or *whether I speak on My own authority.*

3. The respect for the words of God would lead Jesus only to act when the Father gives Him instruction. This stand would lead Jesus to the cross and us to be free from sin! **(Jn 8:28-32; 12:32-33)**

John 8:28-32 - Then Jesus said to them, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He*, and *that I do nothing of Myself*; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things. ²⁹ "And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him." ³⁰ As He spoke these words, many believed in Him. ³¹ Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

John 12:32-33 - "And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *peoples* to Myself." ³³ This He said, signifying by what death He would die.

4. Jesus showed how we must empty ourselves and follow Him. When we do as Jesus did then we will honor the Father. (**Jn 12:25-28**)

John 12:25-28 - "He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him *My Father* will honor. ²⁷ " Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour. ²⁸ "Father, glorify Your name." Then a voice came from heaven, *saying*, "I have both glorified *it* and will glorify *it* again."

5. This same attitude was to be expected of all us whom this precious word would be delivered! (**Jn 12:48-50**)

John 12:48-50 - "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him -- the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. ⁴⁹ "For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. ⁵⁰ "And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."

6. This carefully delivered message would not be added to by Jesus, the Holy Spirit or the Apostles as it was delivered! (**Jn 16:12-13; 17:6-8; Eph 3:3-5**)

John 16:12-13 - "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear *them* now. ¹³ "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

John 17:6-8 - " I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word. ⁷ "Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You. ⁸ "For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.

Ephesians 3:3-5 - how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, ⁴ by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), ⁵ which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:

7. The words delivered from God are together perfect. We glorify God by simply allowing all that we teach and practice be authorized by these words. **(1 Pt 4:11)**
1 Peter 4:11 - If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

II. We must use reason to apply these words to our lives

A. Without reason we would be unable to draw any conclusions to the identity of Christ, our need of salvation and what I needed to do to be saved. **(Acts 26:25)**
Acts 26:25 - But he said, "I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and reason.

1. Jesus expected others to draw necessary conclusions from His miracles.
(Jn 10:24-25; 37-38; 9:32-33)

John 10:24-25 - Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, "How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly." ²⁵ Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me.

John 10:37-38 - "If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; ³⁸ "but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him."

John 9:32-33 - "Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. ³³ "If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing."

2. The New Testament is not given in the form of a law but law is found within it. It is impossible to apply the Bible as binding anything to all men without applying reason.
 3. Because God used words to reveal His will then we must understand that these words will: 1. **Tell us something** (direct statement or command)
2. **Show us something** (example) 3. **Imply something** (we draw conclusions).
 4. When you reject any of these principles you have rejected the use of words. The Bible cannot be your source of teaching and practice.
 5. Many who reject "CENI" have turned to a direct operation of the Holy Spirit as a guide. The writings of Francis Chan and others are used to influence others.
- B. How should we react to those who bind human laws and employ false reasoning?
1. Some have reacted to abusive teachers and bad experiences from those who claim to reason but in fact use raw force to enslave others to their self-made rules! **(1 Tim 6:3-4; 3 Jn 9-11)**

1 Timothy 6:3-4 - If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, ⁴ he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions,

3 John 9-11 - I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to have the preeminence among them, does not receive us. ¹⁰ Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to, putting *them* out of the church. 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.

2. Some become like the very teachers that hurt them! Watch out when you begin to make sweeping conclusions about brethren and being to spread a spirit of bitterness and pride. **(James 3:13-18)**

James 3:13-18 -Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. ¹⁵ This wisdom does not descend from above, but *is* earthly, sensual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where envy and self-seeking *exist,* confusion and every evil thing are there. ¹⁷ But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. ¹⁸ Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

3. We respond to false reasoning by correct reasoning. We must never abandon reason!
4. One crucial element of Christian growth is the ability to develop reason to apply God's word to our lives. **(Heb 5:12-14)**

Hebrews 5:12-14 - For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need *someone* to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. ¹³ For everyone who partakes *only* of milk *is unskilled in the word of righteousness,* for he is a babe. ¹⁴ But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is,* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

5. Satan has always sought the same false teaching in each generation. He has been successful when he changes the name of that which is false. **(Isa 5:20-21)**

Isaiah 5:20-21 - Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! ²¹ Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight!

6. Often a new generation has no understanding of basic principles and how to apply them and are easy prey to abandon the apostle's doctrine.

Questions

1. What should we do when we have doubts as to what has been the common practices of churches? What happens when we run from our doubts and bury them?
2. What are the benefits of having a confirmed message from God that is written?
3. Can we conclude that the full written revelation from God is complete?
4. How did Jesus handle the words given Him from the Father?
5. Did Jesus or the Holy Spirit teach any doctrine of themselves? What conclusion should we draw from these examples concerning these same words delivered to us?
6. What three ways does all language teach us?
7. Is it possible to apply God's word to our lives without reason?
8. How should we react to teachers who use false reason to bind human rules?