

Application...working with the Text...

"But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." 2 Tim3:13-17. While in prison and ultimately beheaded, Paul pens his very last Epistle to Timothy to encourage him in his ministry of Ephesus.

If Man, by nature, deceives himself, what methods could we employ to safeguard the appropriate application of God's Word?

1. Rely on the Holy Spirit. Yield your will to the Will of the Holy Spirit; change your thought process and realign your will to God's. In what "heart" do you read the Bible? In what "mind" do you interpret the Bible? In what "spirit" do you apply the Bible?

Deception: You can simply read the Bible and just do it.

2. God pleasing application is built on proper interpretation and accurate observations of the Bible. Application is based on sound and objective reasoning.

Deception: Application is based on how "spiritual" you feel.

3. The Bible has many commands (i.e. "And just as you want people to treat you, treat them in the same way." [Luke 6:31]) and prohibitions (i.e. "You shall not oppress a hired servant *who* is poor and needy" [Deut 24:14]). Appropriate application of biblical commands and prohibitions are based on contextual similarities of the original audience and today. Study the original recipients of the Bible. What was their condition like? What was expected of them? The more similar the conditions, the more valid the application; God's Word to them applies just as much to us **but** limited to God's original intent.

Deception: The Old Testament only applies to the past and is no longer valid for today.

4. Look for the principle **within** the text and **within** the context of the Bible. In many examples, parables, and narratives, God's message is not so obvious leaving one to derive the principle of the passage. Proper application requires the evaluation of the principle in light of the context of the Bible.

Deception: The application of a principle can be extended to apply to other contexts of today.

5. Make it easy to apply the Text. Consider the following questions:

Is there a command to obey?

Is there an error to avoid?

Are there sinful behavior or attitudes that need to be worked on?

Is there an example to follow?

Is there a promise to claim?

TIPS:

1. When in doubt of a particular principle, always double check to see if the principle is repeated somewhere else in the Bible.

2. Get a hermeneutics book! Books are so much better and thorough than these web pages. God used some brilliant minds write these books just to teach us how to read the Bible!

“Scripture leaves many historic events uninterpreted, but of many it renders a judgment: the behavior is either commended or condemned. In some of those instances Scripture goes even further; it gives a reason for the commendation or condemnation. Such interpreted events are the legitimate raw material for refining general principles. For example, if Abraham is held up as an example of faith in the sacrifice of Isaac, then we are safe in considering his act commendatory, although we may not have thought so on our own.” McQuilkin