

Chapter Thirteen:

Rules Of Interpretation

(Part Two)

John 12:48

48 "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.

Scripture Review:

Revelation 22:18 & 19

II Timothy 3:16

II Peter 1:21

Deuteronomy 29:29

Isaiah 55: 8 & 9

Hebrews 4:12

I Thessalonians 4:2

Psalm 19: 7 & 8

Hebrews 9:15

Luke 1:1 – 4

Deuteronomy 29:29

Matthew 13:10 & 11

II Peter 1:20

I Corinthians 4:6

Genesis 1:3 & facts

Chapter 13

The Rule of Subjugation

Rules of Interpretation (Part Two)

All aspects of life and ministry are subject to scripture and no scripture is subject to any aspect of life or ministry.

“Question Authority” – Common bumper sticker

“I will not have you disciplining my child for questioning authority. I teach him to question all authority!” – Parent of sixth grade student who was sent to office for talking back to his teacher (my wife).

“It can be safely said, that one of the primary reasons for the holocaust, was that Germans were taught at an early age to respect, rather than to question authority.” – Historian on N.P.R.

“You’ve got to get your mind out of the way!” T.D. Jakes, minister to celebrities and athletes during radio broadcast – 7/30/01

One of the key problems with the use of the Word of God by the modern western evangelical church is not a rebellious shift to the left by the rejection of the authority of the Word of God, but rather simply an imposing of a rebellious cultural world view in the use of the Word of God. The same questioning approach of all authority, the same self reliance, the same desire to advance, evolve and improve, is taken to the Word of God.

This falls under the heading of presumptuous sins. Sins so engrained in us that we do not even consider them, that we do not even think to evaluate them. David recognized this tendency where he prays in Psalm 19:13 ***“Also keep back Thy servant from presumptuous sins; Let them not rule over me; Then I shall be blameless, And I shall be acquitted of great transgression.”***

Modern psychologists stumbled upon this truth which was clearly presented in the Word of God thousands of years before. The “Joe / Harry Window” seeks to address this issue of presumptuous sins, though they did not know it, they were simply recognizing this spiritual truth. These psychologist grouped issues of life into four “windows” of awareness. Picture if you would a large picture window with four panes. Each one presenting a differing view. The first pane is what you know about yourself and what others know about your, the second, what you know about yourself and what others do not know, the third what others know about you but you do not know and the last, what neither you nor others know. These last two panes represent our presumptuous sins. Sins so ingrained into our lives and culture that we would not even consider questioning them, taking a second look at them, they are OK because we feel good about them. This questioning of authority as to the Word of God, this belief that we are to take the Word of God and adapt it to our culture, rather than subjecting our culture to the Word of God, this view that we use the Word of God as our tool for success rather than submitting ourselves to the Word of God irrespective of the consequences, this falls under the heading of presumptuous sins.

Modern man thinks that if the Word of God does not make sense to him, to his world view, to his value system, to his understanding of science, technology, genetics, right, wrong, yes, to his world view, then it must not mean what it says, it must mean something else. Since the modern evangelical holds the Word of God as true and inerrant, and since it does not make sense to him, then it must mean something else. It never even occurs to him that it means just what it says, that his world view, his value system his understanding of science, technology, genetics, right and wrong, yes his world view is flawed, more than flawed, is sinful, having its roots in a depraved culture.

The modern evangelical may be an Evangelical Pragmatist, and out of his presumptuous pride, he may feel that since the Word of God will not “work” as laid down, then he is free to make it work. He may be an Evangelical Mystic, that his personal spiritual experience frees him from the encumbrances of strict obedience to the Word of God. He may be a liberal who feels, that although at one time the Word of God was pure, time and culture has so incrustated it with change and distortion, that he is not longer held strictly accountable to it. Whatever the case, he is not free to subject the Word of God to his world view, to his values, to fix it so it works for him.

The call has gone out for men and women to return to the authority of the Word of God irrespective of the shattering impact this has upon their world view. This brings us to the fourth, and in our age the most important rule we will discuss, the rule of subjection.

IV. Rule of Subjugation - All experiences, events and authorities are subject to the authority of the scripture.

In the project below: First read the Biblical principle given as the heading, next, read the passages writing out in a short sentence for each how the passage serves as a proof text for the principle given. Lastly, at the end, in the space provided, write out a summary statement of the verses as they pertain to the Biblical principle given in the heading.

A. God’s Word judges us, we do not judge the Word of God

1. JOH 12:48 "...the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.

2. ROM 3:19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God;

3. HEB 4:12 For the word of God is ... able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

4. JAM 2:12 So speak and so act, as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty.

5. JAM 4:11 ... but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law, but a judge of it.

6. Summary Statement:

B. God's Word is not judged by our senses

1. 2CO 5:7 for we walk by faith, not by sight—

C. God's Word is true

1. PSA 19:9 ... The judgments of the Lord are true; they are righteous altogether.
2. NEH 9:13 "Then Thou didst come down on Mount Sinai, And didst speak with them from heaven; Thou didst give to them just ordinances and true laws, Good statutes and commandments.
3. Summary Statement:

D. God's Word is unchanging

1. MAL 3:6 "For I, the Lord, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.
2. NUM 23:19 "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent; Has He said, and will He not do it? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"
3. ISA 54:5 "And also the Glory of Israel will not lie or change His mind; for He is not a man that He should change His mind."
4. PSA 89:34 "My covenant I will not violate, Nor will I alter the utterance of My lips.
5. PSA 110:4 ¶ The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, "Thou art a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."
6. HEB 6:17 In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath,
7. Summary Statement:

E. The problem is man and not God

1. Man has consistently chosen sin and not righteousness, as a result, he has no standing upon which to judge God. This includes culture. Culture is not neutral. Culture does not exist except in the context of the actions and views of man. As a result culture by nature is fallen and must be redeemed by the redemption of man. Culture does not judge the Word of God, God's Word judges culture.
 - a. DAN 9:14 "Therefore, the Lord has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the Lord our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice.
 - b. ROM 3:11 There is none who understands, There is none who seeks for God;
 - c. Summary Statement:
2. God's Words and ways are unfathomable to man
 - a. ECC 11:5 Just as you do not know the path of the wind and how bones are formed in the womb of the pregnant woman, so you do not know the activity of God who makes all things.
 - b. ISA 55:8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Neither are your ways My ways," declares the Lord.
 - c. ISA 55:9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.
 - d. Summary Statement:

3. Man as spiritually blind cannot know God's Word and Ways
 - a. EPH 4:18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;
 - b. Summary Statement:

4. Even as a regenerated child of God, His Word and ways still allude us due to the fallen nature within which we live.
 - a. ROM 11:33 Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!
 - b. 1CO 2:11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.
 - c. 1CO 13:12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known.
 - d. Summary Statement:

5. God's Word and ways seem reasonable and just to those who are walking with Him.
 - a. PRO 8:9 "They are all straightforward to him who understands, And right to those who find knowledge.
 - b. Summary Statement:

Application

A. That if we experience it as being true, but the Word of God says it is false, then we deem it to be false.

1. In modern culture, “love” is something that happens to man, it is not something he does. Thus you here the statement, “I did not want it to happen, I did not want to fall in love, it just happened, now I love this woman, I don’t love my wife, I guess it was just meant to be.” Here a man experiences adultery as being true, as being his life’s experience. He cannot help what he feels, he cannot help what he is. The Bible may say one thing, but his life experience is just the opposite.
2. Yet even in the face of life’s experience we hold this to be false. The Bible says clearly...
 - a. EXO 20:14 You shall not commit adultery. – The Word of God, not our feelings, not our experience, determines God’s will, our actions and what is “meant to be”.
 - b. EPH 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; - The Bible says clearly that we are to love our wives
 - c. This man should stop doing those love actions and end his adulterous relationship with this woman
 - d. Then he should begin doing these same love actions to his wife.
 - e. If we experience adultery as being true and yet God says it is false, then we deem it to be false and act accordingly.
3. In the space below give a second example of how modern man tends to subjugate the Word of God to his experience, when he experiences “true” but God’s Word say’s “false”.

B. That if we experience it as being false, but the Word of God says it is true, then we deem it to be true.

1. With the turn of the millennium, great emphasis was placed upon the possibility of cataclysmic events, both in the material and spiritual world. Computers were to fail, messiahs appear, chaos reign, even among Christians there was much talk about the return of Christ. Yet Christ did not return. It has now been over 2000 years since His birth. Many have begun to question the fact of His literal return. It seems to them like a long, long time.
2. Yet even in the face of life’s experience we hold this to be true. The Bible says clearly...
 - a. PHI 4:5 Let your forbearing spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. – Christ’s return is near. That whatever time framework we use to gauge our perspective of near and long, it is wrong, it causes us to question the nearness of Christ’s return.
 - b. 2PE 3:3 & 4 Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all continues just as it was from the beginning of creation." – it is in fact mockers, those who follow after their own lusts, who question the imminent return of Christ.
 - c. We therefore reject as fallen and sinful our own perspective of time and accept without question that 2,000 years falls within the valid framework of “near” and

irrespective of our own views of prophetic fulfillment, hold the nearness of Christ return as true and our own experience as false.

3. In the space below give a second example of how modern man tends to subjugate the Word of God to his experience, when he experiences “false” but God’s Word say’s “true”.

C. If God’s Word says “Just” and we experience “Unjust”, then we hold God’s Word to be true.

1. God’ hardening of Pharoahs heart.

EXO 4:21 And the Lord said to Moses, "When you go back to Egypt see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in your power; but I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go.

EXO 7:3 "But I will harden Pharaoh's heart that I may multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt.

EXO 10:20 But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go.

EXO 10:27 But the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he was not willing to let them go.

EXO 14:4 "Thus I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will chase after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord." And they did so.

EXO 14:8 And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he chased after the sons of Israel as the sons of Israel were going out boldly.

2. Genocide

DEU 20:16 "Only in the cities of these peoples that the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, you shall not leave alive anything that breathes.

JOS 8:22 And the others came out from the city to encounter them, so that they were trapped in the midst of Israel, some on this side and some on that side; and they slew them until no one was left of those who survived or escaped.

JOS 8:25 And all who fell that day, both men and women, were 12,000-- all the people of Ai.

JOS 8:26 For Joshua did not withdraw his hand with which he stretched out the javelin until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai.

JOS 11:11 And they struck every person who was in it with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them; there was no one left who breathed. And he burned Hazor with fire.

JOS 11:14 And all the spoil of these cities and the cattle, the sons of Israel took as their plunder; but they struck every man with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them. They left no one who breathed.

3. Ethnic Cleansing

EXO 6:1 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for under compulsion he shall let them go, and under compulsion he shall drive them out of his land."

EXO 23:31 "And I will fix your boundary from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the River Euphrates; for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you will drive them out before you.

NUM 22:6 "Now, therefore, please come, curse this people for me since they are too mighty for me; perhaps I may be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land. For I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed."

JOS 13:6 "All the inhabitants of the hill country from Lebanon as far as Misrephoth-maim, all the Sidonians, I will drive them out from before the sons of Israel; only allot it to Israel for an inheritance as I have commanded you.

4. In the space below give an example of how modern man tends to subjugate the Word of God to his experience, when he experiences God's actions as "unjust" yet God by His nature is "Just" in all His deeds. DAN 4:37 "Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise, exalt, and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride."

D. If God's Word varies from reason, from the scientific method or from rational science, then we hold science to be in error and God's Word of be true.

1. Jacob, Laban and the goats
2. Numbers five and the adulterous woman
3. Creation
4. In the space below give an example of how modern man tends to subjugate the Word of God to the scientific method and the laws of science.

E. If God defines a word differently from our definition of the term, then we hold God to be correct and our definition to be false.

1. Example: Saint
 - a. Bible – all Christians
EPH 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus, and who are faithful in Christ Jesus:
 - b. Popular – miraculous, godly, person
Catholic "saints"
He is a real "saint"
I ain't no "saint"
2. In the space below give another example of how the world tends to define a term differently than God does.

F. That our decisions in life are not based on majority rule or personal experience but rather on the authority of God's Word which is subject to no other authority.

1. Much has been made of councils and assemblies and that consensus within such bodies adds validity to the Word of God. Yet nothing could be further from the truth. God's Word needs no support of councils. The designs of councils is proved as valid by the Word of God and not vice versa.
2. The Word of God is in fact replete with councils and majority assents which went contrary to the Word of God.
 - a. Israel, in the wilderness, more than once voted against Moses, to their destruction.
 - b. The Pharisees, more than once stood as a unified body against Christ and the Apostles.
 - c. The early church, more than once questioned the work of God in the life and ministry of Paul.
 - d. Movements within the church, be they liberal, mystical or pragmatists, have more than once, by the force of their prominence and numbers, sought to legitimize

their decisions to sidestep, reinterpret or reinvent principles from the Word of God.

- e. Gamaliel's council to the Pharisees stands today as a warning to all such councils who find the Word of God cumbersome in its literal form. ACT 5:39 but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God. "
3. Give another example where the majority has felt that they could override the Word of God in an area where the bible is clear.

G. Neither experiences, ministry success, miracles, praise or gifts substantiates the Word of God, only the Word of God substantiates itself.

1. As a university student, I can remember witnessing in my campus and having students argue with me about "white magic" and "good witches" and "friendly spirits". Their main argument was that in the light of the good which was accomplished by these spiritual entities and phenomena's, I could not speak against them. It was only the dark side of the spiritual world which was evil. Their validity was clearly seen in the good results they brought about.
2. Today I shudder, as evangelical Christians argue with me about the validity of spiritual events, based not upon the Word of God, but rather upon the good results these spiritual events bring about. Not only are these events seen as good or bad based upon the relative framework and evaluation of the individual Christian, but the understanding of the Word of God is brought into question. "Since it is obvious from the good results that God is at work, then the Word of God is not as clear on these subjects as one might suppose. These verses obviously do not mean what they seem to mean, based upon what is clearly seen in this movement"
3. In other words what is clearly seen in the Word of God is brought into questions by what is clearly seen in the movements of these groups. Nothing could be further from the truth. What is clearly seen in the Word of God brings into question the results of these movements, not vice versa.
4. The Word of God has ample examples of demons who seem to do good in order to deceive the world and derail the ministry of Christians...
 - a. Good Miracles - MAT 7:22 & 23 "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'
 - b. Praise to God - MAR 1:24 saying, "What do we have to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Have You come to destroy us? I know who You are-- the Holy One of God!"
 - c. Confession of Faith - MAR 3:11 And whenever the unclean spirits beheld Him, they would fall down before Him and cry out, saying, "You are the Son of God!"
 - d. Affirmation of ministry - ACT 16:16 & 17 And it happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a certain slave-girl having a spirit of divination met us, who was bringing her masters much profit by fortunetelling. Following after Paul and us, she kept crying out, saying, "These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation."

5. Spiritual events and phenomenon are evaluated by the Word of God, not by results. The affirmation of doctrine from the Word of God always holds precedence over our fleshly and finite evaluations of relative values of good, bad, successful, unsuccessful, right and wrong.

Jonathan Edwards – Religious Affections; Chapter IV – The Object of Gracious Affections; The false Christian delight in his own experiences

“When false believers congratulate only themselves, they keep their eyes only upon themselves. Having received what they call spiritual discoveries or experiences, their minds are taken up with self and the admiration of their experiences. What they are chiefly excited about is not the glory of God or the beauty of Christ but the thrill of their own experiences. They keep thinking, ‘What a wonderful experience this is!’ What a great discovery that is! What wonderful things I have encountered!’ And so they put their experience in the place of Christ and His beauty and all-sufficiency. Instead of rejoicing in Christ Jesus, they indulge in their own wonderful experiences. They are so caught up in their own imagination about these great and wonderful experiences, that all their notion of God relates merely to them. As their emotions intensify, these hypocrites will sometime be completely swallowed up in narcissism, self-conceit, and a fierce zeal with what is happening. But it is all built like a castle in the air that has no foundation other than imagination, self-love, and pride.”

6. Give an example where the Word of God is interpreted by spiritual experience rather than spiritual experience by the Word of God.

H. Culture is not neutral. Culture is fallen and sinful. When there is conflict, culture is seen to be wrong, scripture is seen to be right. Culture bows to scripture as its authority and is redeemed by scripture.

1. The Word of God transcends culture. Thought written over thousands of years and within the context of many differing cultures, it never-the-less was written in one sitting, by one person of one culture. By the timeless God, by the person of the Holy Spirit, revealing the will of God for all men, in all times, in all places.
2. The Word of God does not need to be adapted to culture, rather, culture needs to be adapted to the Word of God.
3. All men, all cultures, are fallen and wrong - ROM 3:10 - 12 as it is written, "There is none righteous, not even one; There is none who understands, There is none who seeks for God; All have turned aside, together they have become useless; There is none who does good, There is not even one. "
4. Contrastingly, God is all knowing, sovereign, righteous and right - REV 22:13 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."
5. Can you think of an area of morality, conscience or church rule, where the Bible flies in the face of prevailing culture in such a way that many churches would just as soon pretend it does not say what it clearly says?

- I. Our feelings are subject to the Word of God, when they are in conflict with the Word of God, then they are seen to be wrong and the Word of God is judged to be right.**
1. If what we feel contradicts the Word of God, then what we feel is wrong and God is right.
 2. If you feel uncomfortable with God's commands to slaughter entire cities, men , women, children, animals, then the problem is with your feelings, not the Word of God.
 3. If you feel uncomfortable with God commands concerning the husband as head of the home, the spanking of children, the role of slaves to their masters, the problem is with your feelings, not with the Word of God.
 4. God is right, we are wrong, and we judge our feelings on the basis of this truth – DAN 9:7 "Righteousness belongs to Thee, O Lord, but to us open shame, as it is this day-- to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which Thou hast driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against Thee. DAN 9:14 "Therefore, the Lord has kept the calamity in store and brought it on us; for the Lord our God is righteous with respect to all His deeds which He has done, but we have not obeyed His voice.
 5. Can you think of a personal experience where you read something in the Word of God and your first reaction was, "This is not right" or "This does not seem fair"? Write it in the space below.

- J. As a result, all aspects of life and ministry are subject to scripture and no scripture is subject to life or ministry. In the space below, write out in your own words a thesis statement on the authority of the Word of God.**

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: Experience Is Subject To The Word Of God

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Hebrews 4:12

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?

Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: James 2:12; 4:11

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?

Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Psalm 19:9; Nehemiah 9:13

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?

Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: Experience Is Subject To The Word Of God

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Psalm 89:34; 110:4

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?

Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Romans 11:33; I Corinthians 2:11; 13:12

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?

Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Proverbs 8:9

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?

Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?