

What In a Passage Is Binding?

Introduction:

- A. Most brethren that the New Testament is a binding pattern. - 2 Timothy 1:13
- B. And yet we also agree that not every precept or example in the New Testament is binding on us today.
 - 1. Must we partake of the Lord's Supper in an upper room? - Acts 20:7 (example)
 - 2. Must we bring a cloak, books, and parchments to the apostle Paul? - 2 Timothy 4:13 (declaration)
 - 3. Must preachers be married? - Matthew 8:14 (necessary implication)
- C. How do we tell what in a passage is authoritatively binding and what is not?
- I. All New Testament precepts, examples, and necessary implications are authoritative and binding unless we can prove otherwise. - Philippians 4:9
- II. We must use the same rules of Bible study in determining what in a passage is authoritative and binding as we do in determining the meaning of a passage.
 - A. Who is the speaker? - e.g., Acts 26:28
 - B. To whom is he speaking? - e.g., 1 Corinthians 14:31
 - C. What is the subject? - e.g., 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; cf. vv. 9-15
 - D. Is the language literal or figurative? - e.g., 1 Corinthians 11:24-25
 - E. Why is this recorded? - e.g., John 13:1-15
- III. Three Kinds of Biblical Information
 - A. that which we MUST NOT follow (negative)
 - 1. declarations - 1 John 4:1,3; e.g., Acts 4:18-20; 5:27-32,40-42
 - 2. examples - 3 John 11; Matthew 26:69-75
 - 3. necessary implications - 1 Corinthians 2:1,5; 2 Corinthians 10:10
 - B. that which we MAY follow (approved, permissive) - 1 Corinthians 7:6-7,25-28,38-40
 - 1. declarations - 1 Corinthians 7:20,26
 - 2. examples - Matthew 3:5-6; Acts 8:36-38 (baptism in outdoor body of water)
 - 3. necessary implication - 1 Corinthians 9:1-6 (preacher refraining from secular labor)
 - C. that which we MUST follow (approved, binding)
 - 1. declaration - 1 Corinthians 11:23-25 (necessary to eat the Lord's Supper)
 - 2. example - Acts 20:7 (first day of week observance of Lord's Supper)
 - 3. necessary implication - Acts 20:7; cf. Exodus 20:8 (frequency of observance)
- III. There are principles taught by the Scriptures to help us determine what in a passage is binding.
 - A. Principle of Unity (Truth always agrees with truth.) - John 17:17; e.g., upper room observance of the Lord's Supper; John 4:19-24
 - B. Principle of Uniformity (For a binding pattern to exist, there must not be variation.) - John 17:17; e.g., one undivided assembly; Acts 20:17; Galatians 2:2
 - B. Principle of Universal Application (Unless information is universally applicable, it cannot be binding.) - Mark 16:15; e.g., washing feet; also 1 Timothy 5:9-10

C. Principle of Legitimate Extension (The passage must only be applied to situations parallel to its context.) - 2 John 9; e.g., sell all we have to give to the poor; Acts 4:32,34-35; 5:1-4

D. Principle of Spiritual Significance (The spiritual significance of a passage is binding; thus, if the outward act is only a cultural or incidental expression of that principle, the act is a liberty). - John 18:36; Romans 14:17; Ephesians 1:3

Conclusion:

A. In order to be mature in Christ, we need to be able to apply these principles. - Hebrews 5:14

B. We should study for knowledge and pray for wisdom to be able to do this. - 2 Timothy 2:15; James 1:5