

Bible Authority and Duncan Hines Cakes
6-2-13

One of the most important passages to the idea of understanding the Bible is Ephesians 3:2-6. Here the Apostle Paul makes a rather wonderful proclamation: *“when you read (my letter), you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ”*. According to Paul, you can have complete spiritual understanding by reading the writings of Paul. No special dispensation of the Holy Spirit, or the aid of a clergy is needed. You can read and understand!

Now this begs the question: How do we understand what God wants us to know and do? How we understand the Bible is essentially the same as how we follow direction in everyday life. Let’s use a worldly example to prove just that. Let’s make a cake the Duncan Hines way, and learn about Bible authority



What do you notice on the back of the box? There are a number of commands given to the reader to follow. Words like PREHEAT, SOFTEN, GREASE, BLEND, BEAT, POUR, BAKE CHECK and COOL. These are direct statements, or commands, needed to be followed.

Now lets look at a Bible formula to make disciples:
 Matthew 28:19-20 *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”*

Notice that there are commands here too. GO, MAKE, BAPTIZE, TEACH. Just like the Duncan Hines box. These commands are stated that are necessary to follow.

Now let's go back to the Duncan Hines box. Notice now that there are pictures on the box of a cup of water, of eggs, of butter. Notice the picture of the knob, and the picture of the cake coming out of the oven with mitts on. Duncan Hines did not tell us to put on the mitts, but showed us a picture of it to teach us. Duncan Hines did not tell us how to beat the mixture together, but showed us a picture with a blender. Pictures show us what to look for, and how to accomplish the commands.

The Bible contains illustrations for us to follow as well. We call these examples, and they are as important in some ways as commands. In Acts 8:26-38 we read about the conversion of the Ethiopian Eunuch. There we see the commands of GO and TEACH, MAKING a disciple and BAPTISM all accomplished. But the illustration shows us that we teach from the Scriptures, that Baptism must be done in water, and that one must confess Jesus as Lord before they are baptized. Such illustrations are throughout the Bible, and vital to our understanding.

Once more we go back to the box. Look at the eggs. Did Duncan Hines ever say to break them? Look at the oven; did Duncan Hines ever say to take the cake out of the oven at the right time? Instead, it was inferred by either the statements or the illustrations that this must be done. We use the word "necessary inference" to describe these actions.

The Bible too contains necessary inferences we must observe. For example, we see that the Ethiopian Eunuch went into the water. We conclude that he was immersed in water, not sprinkled. Jesus said that we must teach men to be disciples before baptizing them (we saw that in the example); we can make the necessary inference that infants cannot be baptized since they cannot be taught.

What is important to consider is how the variation of the recipe results in a whole other product. If I did not take the cake out of the oven (a necessary inference), it would be destroyed. If I did not blend it together, the cake would be a mess. What if I change the temperature or the time in the oven? What I would call slight variations result in a failed cake. What if I added something to the mix? What I must finally do is to realize that I am not allowed to add to or take from the recipe if I want a Duncan Hines cake.

Why would the same not be true of Salvation? Revelation 22:18-19 states *"For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."* Seems very much the same, does it not?

Ultimately, how we obey the Bible is very much like how we do many things day to day. Yet for some reason many see God's directions as mere suggestions, to be added to or taken from at whim. If something as simple as a cake would be a disaster to approach in such a way, would not we ought to be much more serious about our salvation?