

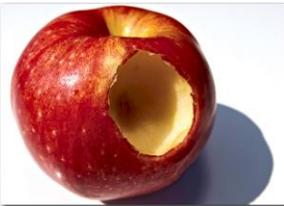
# SO? JUST WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

—LET US CULTIVATE THE FIELD WE’VE PLOWED THIS WEEK—



When you clear a field to plant a crop, rocks will inevitably dull the plow. Weeds will assuredly grow from previous seeds, usually not compatible with the crop you’re trying to raise. And, even with great growth, some of that growth will be inedible. It needs not only to be cleaned of its inedible shell, it often needs to be cooked, sometimes with preservative salt, and sometimes not. Regardless, harvest must occur, otherwise a plowed field has been cultivated and weeded for nothing. Nothing is more tragic than an unharvested life. Let us harvest this week.

1. Our culture can be a great asset to understanding the Lord God, or it can be a pavement filled with potholes. Consider these potholes:
  - ✓ How we’ve been taught it was “the woman’s fault” in the Garden of Eden?
  - ✓ How God never changes how He is going to fulfill His purpose (aka, His will)?
  - ✓ David’s motives were purely spiritually focused for eliminating Goliath?
  - ✓ It’s not good to be a “doubting” Thomas?
2. Denying the reality of the Christ or Holy Spirit or Father God is unforgivable?  
Read the Scripture first, completely; make it part of who you are—*before* you even glance at that “commentary” or “footnote” or “clarification.”
  - ✓ Be wary when you hear: “What this Scripture really means is...” Unless it’s Dr. Tom.
  - ✓ Use Scripture to interpret Scripture.
  - ✓ Be wary of “According to the Greek (Hebrew, Aramaic)...” Too often, it’s a sign that the writer/speaker wants to make the Scripture more useful, rather than more true. Unless Dr. Tom is speaking.
  - ✓ Be wary of commentaries—too often the writer has a theological/cultural agenda that may or may not correspond with the Scriptures. For example,
    - The legend which says Peter died on a cross in Rome upside down even though Jesus described his last days quite differently—a hospice or assisted living environment?
    - NIV’s comment as if Philistines practiced circumcision though Scripture says the opposite.
    - Our culture which wants to blame the woman for the fall; i.e., the man was not even there when she grabbed the fruit to eat; i.e., he was seduced by her cunning.



3. Use the words of Scripture in their original meaning, not the street meanings—for example, “faith” as unsupported or even unsupportable hope. It’s trust, period. “Grace” as some theological morass of confusion; it’s gift, period. “Sin” as some difficult construct to apprehend; it’s distance from the Lord God, period. God is glorified when we are closer to Him, and our disobedience (i.e., our ungodliness) distances our self from Him).
4. Know your teacher’s cultural, academic, epistemological and/or theological bias. Use that knowledge to assess the extent to which Truth or truth is being promulgated.