What Were You Taught?

In Finland, the public schools teach logic before they teach factual classes. When I read that recently it reminded me of something I read many years ago about American public schools, "Today in American schools, children are told *what* think rather than being taught *how* to think. Sadly, I've seen a lot of evidence that confirms that assessment.

This American approach to education is precisely the opposite of what true education should be, but more importantly, it is the opposite of what God calls us to do. In Isaiah 1:18 we see God's call to mankind:

> "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the Lord, "Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool," (NASB).

Did you catch it? God, Himself, is calling us to *"reason"* - the very act of using our logic to understand something (rather than merely being told what to think). The specific subject in this passage is understanding the forgiveness of our own sins, but the call to use our reason (logic) is clear.

Some of the brightest men in history have, indeed, used their reason and logic to recognize God's word as truth (as Jesus said in John 17:17). Even Anthony Flew, (1923 - 2010) once known as the world's foremost debating atheist, changed his mind about the existence of God, the one who built the universe and created man. His last book was entitled: *There is a God: How the World's Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind.*

From creation in Genesis chapters one and two to the details about the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus, we must use our logic. From the birth of the church in Acts 2 to details about Paul's church plantings, we must use our reason to understand what God wants us to know. *We, as His people, must read and understand God's word, and never, **ever**, apply our human interpretation.*

> But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is *a* matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God. (2 Peter 2:20, 21, NASB).

So we must not apply our human ideas to scripture, but let scripture guide our understanding of scripture. It comes from God and is not to be spun by man. Yes, God gave us a book we can, indeed, understand. But we have to *read it!* As Paul wrote in Ephesians 3:4, 5 (NASB):

> By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit.

God gave us a book we can understand. He calls us to read it and *not* to make up human interpretations, but rather to take Him at his word…. again, John 17:17 says, “Sanctify them in truth, Thy word is truth.

Then and only then can we ever hope to “not go beyond what is written,” God’s command through Paul’s pen in 1 Corinthians 4:6. Let us take God at His word, not go beyond His written word, and continue to read and understand as we let His word guide and hearts and our minds into obedience to Him.

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