

North Chesterfield MMA 2008-2009

WEDNESDAY 8 JULY 2009

How should we use Holy Scripture?

Authority: *Scripture as guide or rulebook? Since we ignore Paul's advice about women in church, why not ignore other rules as well?*

Old Testament

- decalogue, usury, diet, washing up
- polycotton, shaving, cattle grazing, crop mixing (Lev 19)
- plenty instances of incest apparently uncondemned
- lack of hospitality to strangers apparently more serious than gang rape and murder (Genesis 19; Judges 19)
- and many more

New Testament

- Did Jesus condemn anything?
- Jesus' attitude to children, to others
- Jesus and marriage, death
- Jesus, food and wine
- Jesus' attitude to courage, risk taking, fearlessness, entrepreneurial behaviour
- Is there any fundamental difference in emphasis between OT's rules and Jesus' rules?
- What about Paul? Why did he say what he said?

Women in church

Sex and lust

- God looked at all he had made, and it was good. Natural desires must be good.
- Is anything not natural?
- Genesis: man and woman in the image of God. Is this the only model for Christian life?
- Reproduction only? Prayer book marriage service. Testosterone. Oestrogens.
Is the RC policy on natural contraception coherent?
Is every sperm sacred? Is every ovum sacred? Potential for life begins when?
- Urges, tendencies, addictions. Can one be said to have a tendency if one doesn't express it?
- What is lust? Can it lead to love? Idolatry: not necessarily of objects.
- Pleasure: Intellectual, sexual, genital. 'Without delight we are in hell.' Masochism.
- Homosexuality. Nothing *definite* in NT. Genetic sex, psychological sex. Intersex states. Compassion?

War and cruelty?

- Shalom, salvation, salaam, security. Niceness? Passivity? Ned Flanders? Doormat? Sabaath.
- Just war. Augustine (254-430). Aquinas (1225-1274);
- Ahimsa. Sanskrit - avoidance of *himsa*, violence. Gandhi. Jains. Antibiotics? Eating honey.
- Nonviolence: Matthew 5:38-48. Overturning tables? Resistance
- Thou shalt not kill – murder or manslaughter?
- What is cruelty? Is it biological?
- Abuse? Taking something away from someone else? What if with permission?

Why has Christianity lasted as long as it has?

Is Christendom Christian?

Why has Hinduism lasted approximately twice as long?