

## Necessary Inference

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When the man of God, Elisha had fallen sick unto death, he demonstrated one last lesson for the king of Israel. 2 Kn. 13: 18-19 records “And he said, Take the arrows. And he took *them*. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed. And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed *it*: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria *but* thrice.” Elisha did not believe in pulling any punches. He believed that in order to accomplish a goal, one must not suffer any mercy towards unrighteousness, but instead to strike until it is consumed. The nature of the following dissertation doesn’t originate from a place of malice, but of zeal. The Church of Christ has always championed Jude 1:3 wherein it reads “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort *you* that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.” That is the sole intention of this composition. The Church of Christ as it is universally known, has abandoned the conservative way and is no longer worthy to bear the name of our Lord. They no longer form the house of God, but have rebelled against the Lord. It has allowed an idol to infiltrate the sacred assembly and they have used it to enact law, or to establish law within the church. It has been a long held position of the conservative Church of Christ that law is established by a direct commandment, and an approved example. Preachers of what can only be referred to as the former Church of Christ, have placed a teraphim in the midst of the assembly and have used it to pass human opinion as though it were the oracle. This, of course, is the use of “necessary inference” in the assembly to introduce practices and beliefs that are contrary to what the law teaches, or speak where God has not spoken. The following excerpt is from Wayne Partain’s article over the use of musical instruments in the assembly. It demonstrates the power the Church of Christ (now apostate) has given necessary inference “Christ reveals himself in four ways: 1. By means of a clear declaration or affirmation. 2. By means of a commandment. 3. By means of the examples left by the apostles. 4. By means of necessary inference. A clear declaration or affirmation is an explicit teaching, something said in so many words. But what the Bible implicitly states is of equal importance, it is the Word of God. His will is revealed both by implicit and explicit teaching. Everyone can understand the implicit teaching, but more study is required.” It is clear that the former house (apostate Church of Christ) leans heavily upon this doctrine as a rod of authority, and since we are attempting to determine the legitimacy of this method of interpretation not found in the scriptures, we must examine writings from the so-called Church of Christ and either prove their legitimacy or rebut their statements using scripture.

We will be referring to Wayne Partain’s study booklet “Estudiar y usar bien la Palabra” quite frequently in this writing. In his study guide, Mr. Partain alludes to the frequent use of spiritual language throughout the scriptures. He argues that because the spiritual language is not straight forward, or in his words, “not explicitly said in so many words,” this means that the scriptures teach through implication, and where there is implication, there is inference. There is no arguing that the discernment of the spiritual language is not inherent in the literal language. The question is, does the Bible use spiritual language to establish articles of faith, or does the

Bible, through implication allow introduction of practices into the assembly? When Jesus puts forth the parables, one cannot take them literally to understand what the Master is teaching us. This is evident when Christ himself explains the meanings. Mr. Partain cites many examples of Christ teaching using parables or spiritual language (pages 14-15), and even answering questions, with another question, but none of the citations in the study guide deal with articles of faith, nor the worship service. They deal with Christ using signs to confirm his divine nature, or disputing with the Jewish leaders, asking questions about the Mosaic Law to have them answer in their hypocrisy. But does because Jesus uses spiritual language to teach us about his Second Coming, or that his esoteric language is understood by a select few mean that God has hidden his requirements of the worship service in mystical language that requires assumption, inference and interpretation of man in order to offer a perfect sacrifice? Of course not! This is contrary to what God has demonstrated in the Old Testament. In other words, just because the Bible uses spiritual language dealing with the eschaton, doesn't mean that this is how God reveals articles of faith for the worship service. God has always been very specific and direct about what he wants in his worship service. For example, in Leviticus chapters 1-9, God directs Moses on the law for the burnt offering, grain offering, peace offering, sin offering, and the consecration of Aaron and his sons, the priests of Israel. Each ritual was very specific, with instructions on what animal was to be used, what part was to be burnt and what part was to be eaten. The meat offering was to be made without leaven, with fine flour, and frankincense. There was nothing left to inference or interpretation when it came to the worship service and sacrifices commanded by God. This is evident in the following chapter. Lev. 10: 1-2 records "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the LORD, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD." After God specifically detailed the requirements for the sacrifices, Nadab and Abihu found it within themselves to infer that God wanted something not mentioned. The phrase "a fire which he commanded them not" indicates that God was silent in respect to the sacrifice they performed. Because God did not condemn it in "so many words," that doesn't mean that it was approved. What was approved by God was exactly what he mentioned in the previous chapters. The point of all this is to demonstrate that when it comes to the sacrifice, our sacrifice, the worship service to God, what is written, is all that is approved, and God's silence doesn't approve, but condemns. The audacity to believe that God wants us to depend on our own discernment and intelligence to determine articles of faith in the worship service is the same attitude demonstrated by Aaron's sons, and will only result in the fiery condemnation of the Lord.

Mr. Partain's notion that man's intelligence is necessary in understanding the scripture and its necessity to introduce practices into the assembly is refutable. On page 16 of "Estudiar y usar bien la Palabra," He notes the example in Acts chapter 15 concerning the literal act of circumcision and whether or not the converted gentiles should adhere to that commandment given to the Jews. He mentions that in verse, 6, the apostles and elders came together to consider the matter, Peter speaking on what transpired for their conversion (verses 7-11), verse 12, Paul and Barnabas citing the miracles wrought among the Gentiles by them, and finally he mentions James coming to a conclusion to not trouble the Gentiles with this commandment. He

calls this a “necessary inference.” What is not mentioned at all is verse 28 of this same chapter wherein it reads “For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things.” The Apostles had the Holy Spirit to guide them and reveal to them the will of God. Of course they were going to come to the correct decision! Can anyone here go to Urim and Thummim and speak directly to God on articles of faith? Of course not! The reasoning of the Apostles and elders were aided by the revelation of the Holy Spirit. They also had power to bind on earth and in heaven. Does any man in the assembly have that power today? No! For this reason, we do not take it upon ourselves to speak where God has not spoken. Another example he cites on page 17 is Acts 16:6-10. Verse 10 records “And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.” The hispanoamerican version renders the word “inferred” in place of gathering. Because of this, he believes that inference is required to understand the commandments and calls the inference necessary because they couldn’t infer anything else. But what does this have to do with anything? We all make inferences in our daily lives, this has nothing to do with establishing law, or practices in the assembly, or even understanding the will of God. When God gives us a commandment, whether we infer something has happened or not, we do it. That is all the apostles did. They were commanded to go to Macedonia, and they went. Our inferences, whether one deems them necessary or not, are not welcome by God when establishing law. The apostles already established all that we need to follow. On page 19 of the aforementioned study guide, he says “The apostles and other brethren – in the same manner of Jesus – discussed, reasoned, explained asked, etc., hoping that man would use his intelligence to understand the truth. Remember that man was created in the image of God, that is to say, God gave us intelligence.” He quotes Acts 17:2, 17; 18:4, 19, 28; 19:8-9. He relies heavily on the fact that man can use his own reasoning to understand the Word of God. But what Mr. Partain fails to realize, in all of these examples, that Paul is not reasoning with members of the church to determine articles of faith in the worship service. He is debating with the Jews! That is the nature of the debate, to take two separate thoughts and provide evidence to determine that which is correct and superior. Many times the word “dialegomai,” which is the word used for reason in these verses is also interpreted as disputing (Acts 17:17; 19:8), that is to say, debating. The exegetical examination of the Greek word isn’t even necessary as we noted, all of the reasoning Paul did was with the Jews in their synagogue to convince them that Jesus is the Christ (Acts 18:28). We, as well as all those who claim to be members of the Church of Christ believe firmly that if anyone wishes to “reason” with us over the scriptures, that we will gladly accept, earnestly contending for the faith! Paul wasn’t using his own reasoning to convince the Jews of Christ, but the words of the Spirit and the scriptures. This type of reasoning with one another isn’t the same as coming together to determine articles of faith in the worship service. That is clearly outlined by God and the apostles. It appears Mr. Partain believes that there is in mortal man, enough to understand the mind of God through his own reasoning. This is contrary to what Jesus said in Luke 8: 10. “And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.” And Also Matt. 16: 17 Jesus attributes Peter’s confession as being revealed to him by the Father. Why was it necessary for something that appeared so obvious to be revealed by the Father? “And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh

and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.” The understanding of the mysteries of God are given only through the revelation of the Spirit. Matt. 11: 25 “At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.” We can use all the human intelligence we have, but it is up to God to whom he reveals this understanding and his will. But this is applicable to understanding eschatological language. This article is aimed at what method is approved in order to introduce practices in the assembly. Is it right to use man’s reasoning to infer from the scriptures, practices that are lawful and unlawful? Ecc 7:29 “Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.” Gen 6:5 “And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.” Ps. 94:11 “The LORD knoweth the thoughts of man, that they *are* vanity.” Isa 55:8 “For my thoughts *are* not your thoughts, neither *are* your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” It would appear that the reasoning of man has no place in determining lawful practices in the assembly. The reasoning of man is a pathway to usurping the authority of Christ in the assembly, as Paul describes the Son of Perdition. 2 Thess. 2: 4-5 demonstrates this fact “Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.” This is the nature of man!

The very nature of necessary inference is suspicious, at best, due to the fact that the preachers of the former house use it solely to fill God’s silence. On pages 19-20 of his afore mentioned booklet, or study guide “Estudiar y usar bien la Palabra” Wayne Partain quotes 1 PT. 4:11 and subsequently advises the reader “It is agreed that everyone speak where the Bible speaks and keep silence where it is silent. It is not convenient to go beyond that which is written.” He then cites 1 Cor. 4:6. Does necessary inference go beyond that which is written? As Mr. Partain esteems to reiterate in his booklet, “It doesn’t say it in so many words,” it would appear that the purpose of necessary inference is to fill that silence with those unspoken words. On page 18 he says “even the commandments and examples require human reasoning.” This is a danger that the former house has adopted. They give their own reasoning too much esteem. As we mentioned before, human reasoning is below God’s reasoning. In order to understand the spiritual language, one must use the Bible in its entirety to interpret it. We do not use our own reasoning, but use God’s word, his own reasoning to understand and depend on his revelation. Prov. 9: 10 “The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy *is* understanding.” Ps. 111:10 “The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do *his commandments*: his praise endureth for ever.” The fear of the Lord will result in knowledge and wisdom. What is the fear of the Lord? Prov. 3: 7 equates the fear of the Lord with departing from evil, and as Paul puts it, “all appearance of evil.” (1 Thess. 5: 22). To depart from evil is to remove ourselves from every human inference and heresy, because all they serve to do is attempt to pervert the way of judgment. Prov. 8:13 records “The fear of the LORD *is* to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.” When it comes to discerning the scriptures, we use the

scriptures, precedence; God's own word to lead us to understanding. That is all that is needed. Ps. 12: 6. Can man's inferences lead to understanding of the gospel? Of course not! Only the scriptures can do that. Man's arrogancy and opinion is nothing more than the evil way.

Our understanding and reasoning is not needed to gain wisdom, which means it's not needed to understand the commandments. His commandments are clear, all we need to do is walk in them and he will give the revelation of the Spirit to his faithful. On page 18 of his handbook, Mr. Partain claims that from Genesis to Revelations, there are hundreds of commandments given by God. He claims that there is no text that divides the patriarchal, mosaic and Christian dispensations. Because of this, he claims, there are some that believe one only need to abide by the Ten Commandments given on Sinai. He claims they don't study the Bible carefully, because it's not hard to *deduce* that we are no longer under the Mosaic Law and even easier to *infer* the commandments given to the patriarchs are not for us. He carefully uses the italicized words to convince the reader that these are in fact assumptions and inferences. This is not the case. Heb. 9: 15, Matt. 5: 17. The author of the Hebrews and Jesus himself plainly stated that the old law was fulfilled by him, thus it ran its course. This New Testament, as Hebrews puts it, was put into force with the blood of Christ and this is the testament of our salvation. There is no need for inference in this case, but Mr. Partain would have you believe so! Another argument used by Mr. Partain on this same page, is that his name is not in the Bible, so he must read the texts, meditate on them and decide if they are for him. He cites two unreasonable examples to justify that his reasoning is required to determine whether or not the commandment was meant for him. The two are God's command to Noah to "Make thee an ark" and to Abraham to "Sacrifice thy son" found in Genesis 6:14; 22: 2 respectively. This is how absurd the argumentation for necessary inference has become. The former house attempts to reach as far as it can to justify this man-made method of interpretation. We know these examples don't literally apply to us directly, for one, the Bible records God speaking directly to these individuals in the aforementioned chapters cited above. (Gen. 6: 13; 22:1). He never commanded anyone after these faithful men to complete these acts. These were one time commandments to this individual only and we don't need to infer this, we can see that no other faithful man after these two were commanded to complete these commandments, nor did they of their own volition. Besides this, Hebrews chapter 11 (verses 7, 17) records great acts of faith performed by many of our predecessors. These listed in this chapter are great examples of faith. They performed things that were not ever duplicated. To cite great examples of faith as a way of demonstrating inferring to whom a commandment is given, is an example of man's "intelligence" trying to warp the Word of God to fit a mold it simply will not! But in a spiritual sense, we can look at these two acts and the rest of Hebrews 11, and consider, "Who is the individual that meets these measures?" Who is it that offers a more excellent sacrifice (Abel) and who is it that walked with God (Enoch), or who built an ark in preparation for the deluge of judgment (Noah)? In a spiritual sense, the individual that endures to the end and overcomes, (Matt. 24:14, Rev. 2: 17, 26-28; 3:21; 21:7) completes these commandments and fills up the measure of the faithful in God, but that is a conversation for another time. Mr. Partain also claims that inference helps him understand that sacrificing animals aren't a commandment for this dispensation. Concerning this and the two previous examples, he writes "How do we know (these commandments aren't for us)? By using our own reasoning." But as we read earlier, Heb. 9:13-15 and Matt. 5:17 clear this up with no need for inferences. This is beside the fact that

there is no example of the apostles sacrificing animals anymore. The silence of the apostles, just as God, condemns action, it does not approve it.

Mr. Partain's notion that God's silence condemns action through necessary inference is ill founded. On page 20 of his study guide, he uses two examples to show that God's silence condemned action, not approved it. This is the Levitical priesthood and the use of musical instruments. While he is correct in his conclusion that God's silence condemns action, he goes a step further by saying it is "a conclusion that is clear and unavoidable." But as we established by God's punishment of Nadab and Abihu, we don't need to assume or infer that God's silence condemns action. We see it first hand by the phrase "which he commanded them not." This statement here proves that God's silence condemns action. We don't need necessary inference to tell us that. Besides all this, we have the example of Jeroboam in 1 Kings 12: 25- 13:3, all the abominable acts that Jeroboam committed, and included in this is the designation of priests from men from a tribe other than Levi. In this context, a man of God condemns him for all his abominations, including the non-Levite priests. A simple example that needs no inference to prove that God's silence condemns action.

On page 20-21, Mr. Partain leans heavily on the belief of the generic commandment to give place for necessary inference to infiltrate into the church as a pillar of authority. He claims that Christ commanded to go and preach, and because he didn't specify exactly how to go or how to preach, the church has authorization or leeway to do so as it chooses. Let's get one thing clear; there is no such thing as the "generic commandment" - the church does not have generic authority, it is subject to Christ and the apostolic examples and teachings. If the context does not supply the how of a commandment, we look at the examples of the apostles, and in some instances, of God's people throughout the Bible to understand the methods that God has approved of in the past. The only manner in which authority is extended to the church is by the apostolic example or directive. But Mr. Partain would have you believe otherwise. He uses 1 Tim. 3: 15 to say the church can approve, disapprove and introduce articles of faith because it is the pillar and ground of truth. Mr. Partain takes too much from this passage. It is a licentious interpretation teaching things that the passage is not teaching. It can only be described as what Paul calls a "dumb idol." We know that the Word of God is living, but how can one accuse the living word of missing something that needs to be filled with man's opinion. Jesus describes the Word of God as having all things ready. Matt. 22: 1-8. The Bible has provided us with all the answers to any question about all things, including the articles of faith in the worship service. How shall one make light of it and attempt to pervert the holy word by adding heresy and human opinion to the already perfect and ready word! The living word is not a dumb idol, but a living word that breaks the dumb idol into pieces. (Heb. 4:12, Jer 23:29). The church cannot go beyond the authority given to us by Christ or the apostles! Jn. 20: 23. In what way is this authority extended to the church? In judgment and excommunication. If the church comes together and delivers one unto Satan, then his sins are retained in heaven. But is an action such as this done by the Church's authority only? 1 Cor. 5: 3-5. Paul commands that this be done in the name of Jesus Christ, and when gathered together with his spirit. In other words, if it is not authorized by Christ, or by the apostles, it is not legitimate. If we are given what the church calls a "generic" commandment, one can follow the example or directive of the apostles to

understand the approved and disapproved actions regard this “generic” commandment. Mr. Partain mentions this to use necessary inference to justify the division of the church for edification. The author of the Hebrews (Heb. 10:25) does not condone this action and Paul demonstrates how the church is to be ordered when the church does come together. 1 Cor. 14:23-35, 40. Paul says “if therefore the whole church come together in one place and all speak in tongues...” It is important to note that the “If” in the beginning of the verse isn’t Paul saying that the church may or may not come together, it is Paul saying that when the church gathers together, if all speak in tongues. We know this because Paul mentions the gathering of the church together many other times. (1 Cor. 14:20; 11:18, 20). So we know that even the church at Corinth, in particular did gather together and this was approved by Paul. There is no example of division of the general assembly to edify. We know this because Paul in 1 Cor. 14: 23 declares that unbelievers and unlearned are among them in the assembly. The entire chapter outlines how to teach those with questions in the general assembly. Paul does not direct us to bring the unlearned into one class and the unbelievers in another. They all assemble together and if a woman has a question, she asks her husband at home. She is not directed to a divided class! Because the apostle Paul outlines the order and decency in which the assembly should be conducted, we cannot go beyond the apostolic authority and do more than what is commanded. On page 21 of his handbook, in the same paragraph, (point 5) Mr. Partain contradicts his own beliefs with the following statements. “On the one hand, there are some extremists that do not believe that such a thing exists (the generic commandment). Because of this these individuals reject Bible classes organized by the church for children and young people.” He goes on to say that “However, the church is the ‘pillar and ground of truth’ (1 Tim. 3:15) and has the generic authority to employ those methods.” In the same breath Mr. Partain then condemns the liberal churches that employ schools and other organizations because “the truth is these are substitutes for the church itself.” So what are divided classes for youth, women and children? Do they not take the place of the church or the general assembly? What is the difference between liberals attempting to replace the church with secular institutions while the so-called conservative Churches of Christ substitute Sunday school, (youth classes), and divisions of the church to edify, thus substituting the assembling of ourselves together to edify? While Mr. Partain condemns them, he condemns himself for doing the same thing. The liberal churches are basing their generic authority on the “generic” commandment, just as the so-called conservative church is. If one is not a partaker in the general assembly, which Paul says is for edification, but partakes in one of these classes, that individual is not fulfilling the responsibility put forth by God and the apostles. This is the apostate brethren using the gospel to justify their own human opinion, their human inferences. Hab. 2: 18-20.

The rest of Mr. Partain’s arguments can be refuted by examining the Bible and determining what it is that can establish and article of faith in the worship service. For example, on page 22 section H, he asks “Where does the Bible explicitly say that we should not follow biblical examples or necessary inference?” In other words, he is stating that commandments aren’t the only means for establishing law, examples and necessary inference are as well. This is false and in the following paragraphs we will see why necessary inference should not be lumped in with an approved example or a direct commandment.

What are the only factors that support the practices and worship in the assembly? What is the foundation that others have based their beliefs on? What holds it up? Our worship service, our lifestyle is based upon the only two aspects approved by God and the scriptures, and those are a direct commandment and an approved example. There is no other form of approval from God that supports the introduction any practice in his church. These are the only pillars that can hold the weight of God's judgement. In the Temple in Jerusalem, on the porch were two pillars that supported the temple. 1 Kings 7:21. These two pillars serve as an example of how the church is spiritually constructed. In modern day construction, pillars go through several tests to indicate whether they are able to hold the weight of the building being constructed. Smaller scale sized pillars are created and a compression test is used to determine if the material can hold the weight. This is done before the final phase of construction to prevent the building from collapsing. Every manner of Biblical interpretation that makes it way to the church is put under the same rigorous testing and they all fail. The only two manners that one can institute, or reinstitute a practice is by a direct commandment or an approved example.

A direct commandment is something that is proclaimed by God, Christ, or his apostles that we are to obey. This is the easiest factor to understand. There is nothing debatable or questionable about a direct commandment. The commandments are not suggestions; they are something that is to be observed. Matt. 5: 19; 19:17, Jn. 14: 15, 21; 15:10. Many denominations will have you believe that certain New Testament commandments are no longer for this dispensation for one reason or another, but we know that a commandment given by the Apostles holds the same weight as a commandment given to us directly by the Master. Matt. 18: 18-20; 10:40. Paul says give money, lift holy hands with strong doctrinal significance. A commandment before crucifixion without apostolic backing is not viable such as washing of feet. It was not commanded to the church to be practiced. It has a great spiritual significance but no practical significance.

Not everything that we do, or that should be done is directly commanded to us by God. For example, we assemble on the first day of the week, Sunday, which Christ, nor the apostles makes no mention of. So why do we do this? We follow the example set for by the Apostles found in Acts 20:7. When we have a practice that is not directly commanded by God, then it must be taken from an example of the apostles after Christ's death and resurrection (Heb. 9: 17). Paul commanded us in 1 Cor. 11: 1 "Be ye followers of me, even as I also *am* of Christ." The Spanish version renders "Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ." The same can be found in Eph. 5:1 and Phil. 3: 17. Simply put, the apostle Paul commands us to do as he does. This means that the example of the apostles should be followed by the believer. We know that the Master gave authority to the apostles to bind law here on earth. Mt 16:19. "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Thus, the apostle's examples are approved by God to bind law in the church. This authority isn't given to every believer. Though we are given the commandment to follow after their examples, we cannot bind in heaven and earth, as only the apostles were given this authority by God.



Col. 2:8 records “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” Necessary inference is a vain philosophy rooted in the tradition of man and not of God. Matt 15: 8 has this same sentiment as the Lord answers the hypocrisy of the scribes and Pharisees, saying “This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.” It is time to cast this idol from within the assembly and embrace the true doctrine of God.