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Before You Ask - Chapter 5

Comparisons, Analogies, Allegories

Suppose you paid dearly for a painting represented to be an original by a world famous artist. Unfortunately, you later find out that it had not been painted by that particular artist, after all—that it is a fake by an unknown artist. You have been defrauded. Yes, you still have a painting—but now, you don't know its value. Since there is no doubt that it is not in the class of paintings by well known artists, it is demoted to the class with unknown artists. Since the painting is not a genuine, original by a well known artist, it is not worth what you paid for it. You must now reappraise and re-evaluate the painting, and decide what you are going to do with it. Will you keep it, or let it go?

This is the situation many of the friends find themselves in when they learn that William Irvine started this 2x2 ministry and church about 100 years ago. They feel like the props have been knocked out from under them. The main overriding reason some bought into the 2x2 belief system was because they were told/taught and believed it was the ONLY genuine apostolic New Testament church on earth today. Many have remained in this fellowship primarily because (1) they believe it is of apostolic succession, and (2) they fear a lost eternity if they don't continue in it.

But, like the painting, the 2x2 church turned out to be a fake/fraud. The church and fellowship they bought into is not what it's cracked up to be. It is not of apostolic succession, and did not originate in the New Testament, and it has for a founder, not Jesus or God, but a fallible human man, like other churches do. It's not the bill of goods they were sold at all—not the original, authentic, genuine NT church of Jesus. With the discovery of William Irvine, it no longer merits an elevated status above other churches—it is demoted to the class of churches with founders.

When a person has accepted the fact that Wm Irvine started the 2x2 ministry and church, and that it didn't exist in a continuous line from the New Testament apostles, certain questions naturally come to mind. This additional knowledge calls for a serious reevaluation, and a possible realignment or change in spiritual perspective and beliefs. It is only normal to wonder, to struggle with a number of complex questions. The lives of many friends are significantly altered by the way they answer these questions:

- What is the value of this church?
- Does this knowledge change anything?
- What difference does it make that this fellowship has a founder?
- Does having a founder contradict any of my other spiritual beliefs?
- How can this fellowship be God's only true way, when it has a human founder?
- What reasons do you have for believing it is God's only way?
- Is there a good basis in the Bible for regarding it as God's ONLY way to Heaven?
- Is it the closest way to the New Testament church and ministry?
- How is this church and ministry superior to other churches and ministers?
- How is the 2x2 way unique?
- Where do I go from here?

When someone reaches this point, it's not unusual for them to want to visit with the workers. For what purpose? To see if there is something they are missing--something they don't see. To give the workers a chance to resell them on the 2x2 system. To give the workers their last chance before they cut short their losses and cut loose from the group. To judge for themselves whether or not there is good reason to continue in this group. To learn whether or not there are any good sound reasons and/or documented evidence to shore up claims the workers make about the 2x2 system. Surely, they reason, the workers must have good reason that they've overlooked since they give their very LIVES for this belief system. They want ANSWERS—the Plain Truth! The Hard Truth. “ Many infallible proofs.” They don't want the run-around, or pussy footing—just the facts, please. They want reasons supported and consistent with Scripture and Biblical principles and practices. They don't want to hear for “reasons” the opinions, experiences and analogies of a worker, but that is often what they get—it is all that many workers have to offer.

The following was written to help sincere Questioners evaluate the countless little stories and comparisons you will be subjected to while attempting to get your simple questions answered about this so-called simple way you have been associated with.

Evaluation of Analogies

Often friends ask a question about the 2x2 belief system, and the workers reply with an analogy. A comparison of two items is called an "analogy." The Bible is full of analogies--a parable is an analogy. When people are trying to understand something new, they usually relate the new idea to something known to them. In other words, the new is explained by the old and familiar. New, unknown objects, concepts, information, happenings, events, ideas, beliefs, situations, etc. are far easier to understand when they are compared to something similar that a person has knowledge of, has previously experienced or encountered. Therefore, comparisons are extremely useful tools that help illustrate points about a previously unknown idea or concept. So, the workers take the item being questioned and compare it to something else that the

Questioner is familiar with or accepts as "right," hoping to make them feel comfortable with the familiar and leave off their uncomfortable questions.

ANYONE can come up with a comparison or analogy. The basic format is: "this is like that." "X is like Z." Even a child who reports that his corn cob has a bone in it is comparing a cob of corn to a piece of meat. If you look hard enough and long enough, you can usually find similarities between any two items or situations. Because two things share some similarities, it is sometimes ERRONEOUSLY assumed they ARE the same entity. For instance, humans closely resemble apes in many ways. Does the presence of these similarities prove humans ARE apes? Similarities don't prove evolution. Similarities are NOT conclusive! DON'T ACCEPT A COMPARISON AS PROOF!!

An Analogy is NOT a sufficient reason to take a leap in faith; and is NOT a sound basis for eternal security or for risking one's soul. The BEST a Literal Analogy can do is to point to a high degree of probability--it cannot PROVE anything. A Figurative Analogy adds color to an explanation and aids understanding by illustrating more vividly the point the speaker is trying to get across. There are good, poor, and faulty comparisons or analogies. An analogy cannot stand alone, and is not an end in itself. Analogies that are not reinforced by other evidence are merely illustrations. Comparisons, analogies, similarities are never conclusive.

Basically, there are two kinds of analogies: Literal and Figurative. A Literal Analogy compares two items or cases in the same class that are similar in essential aspects and equal in value. The KEYWORD is "SIMILAR." The term "comparing apples to apples" applies to a comparison (analogy) made between two SIMILAR cases.

A Literal Analogy goes from the known to the unknown; from an actual case to a prediction. From things which resemble each other in some respects, it MAY be inferred or asserted that they will also resemble each other in some other respect(s). In order to make valid Inferences from a comparison or analogy, it is ESSENTIAL that the items being compared are:

1. Similar in vital aspects
2. Of equal value
3. In the same class

INFERENCES: When comparing two SIMILAR items, SOMETIMES--but NOT ALWAYS--it may be assumed that what is true in one case will also be true in another similar case. In other words, a high degree of probability (not proof) MAY be established that what is true in one case MAY also be true in the other similar case. For example, if one member of Class "A" has "X," then there is a high degree of probability that others in Class "A" MAY also have "X." Explaining how one can know that the current 2x2 fellowship is a continuation of the New Testament ministry and church, a Canadian brother worker compared the following two DISSIMILAR items (Grandfathers and cake recipes) to the 2x2 fellowship:

"It's like your great-grandmother's recipe. You are looking through your great grandmother's recipe box and you find a recipe for what you think is a cake that she used to always make that was just wonderful. You wonder if it is THE one? So you make it, and YES! It tastes just exactly the same! It doesn't matter if the recipe has been lost in the box for years and years; you know that it is the recipe for the same cake because it tastes the same." [Eldon Kendrew, Alberta, Canada, 6/4/95 to John & Shawna Mitchell]. "I have no idea who my great-great-grandfather is, but I know that he had to exist, because I am here today. We know how life begets life, and it is the same spiritually." [Eldon Kendrew 6/4/95 to John & Shawna Mitchell]

Needless to say, great grandfathers and grandmother's cake recipes are not in the same class as a religious belief system, or the 2x2 fellowship. These two analogies break down in all three areas. The items being compared in the examples are NOT similar, not equal and not in the same class. Therefore, these analogies are NOT Literal Analogies, and are good only for illustrating the speaker's point or opinion. No conclusive evidence or logical inferences can be drawn from such remarks as these. They are what is known as Figurative Analogies which will be discussed in more detail later. EQUALITY: If one item has an important ability the other does not have, then they are not equal. For example, the items being compared in the following analogy are far from being equal:

"You folks have no problem recognizing the way children are born into the natural world, do you.? You have no problem with that at all. You should have no problem in how God's children are brought into the world . You don't question natural childbirth; God's order for children to be brought into the world. You don't question that at all. So why would you question the order that God has arranged for children to be born into His family—why would you question that? " [Willis Propp, Transcript of Wesenburg visit in Canada 4/92]

This is not a Literal Analogy since the natural process of childbirth has nothing to do with salvation; and the two are not equal and not in the same class. The similarities are extremely superficial; therefore, it cannot be reliably inferred that what applies in one case also applies in the other case. This is also an attempt to divert the conversation with a Red Herring about asking questions. SIMILARITIES: The compared elements must possess an initial likeness that justifies a comparison, such as two persons, two buildings, two wars, two books, two symphonies, two states, two schools, two governments, etc. Just because two things share some superficial, non-critical similarities is no guarantee they will be alike in significant and relevant respects. The essential characteristics of two items being compared cannot be merely related by casual happenstance, surface appearance or mere proximity. Focusing on superficial points of similarity and ignoring significant, vital or fundamental differences between two things commits the Fallacy of Faulty Analogy. **Some examples are:**

Mushrooms and toadstools look alike.

(But it would sure be a mistake to assume that because one is edible, the other is also!)

A water pump and the human heart have some similarities.

(But few would conclude that a mechanic is qualified to repair both of them! Yes, they have some similarities, but they aren't significant, critical similarities. Furthermore, their differences are critical!)

In his historical article "Glimpses in History of Simple Christian Peoples," Dr. Cornelius J. Jaenen limited his discussion to various primitive religious groups who held SOME similarities to the 2x2s, while disregarding significant differences, such as infant baptism, that show the primitive group could not have been a forerunner of the 2X2s. When significant differences are ignored, a comparison is of no value. So you have two groups that are similar in certain non-critical, non-essential areas. What does that prove? Certainly not that one group is the same group as the 2x2 group. It proves nothing. In his book *Reinventing the Truth*, Page 54, Kevin Daniel addresses this point regarding Dr. Jaenen's article:

"Even with regard to the beliefs which the author does seem to wish us to accept as important, the article conveniently fails to mention that none of these groups adopted all, or even most of the practices of which the author approves. And some of the practices condemned in other groups (such as the requirement that all members become homeless celibates) have in the past been adopted by the 'Two by Two' sect which the author espouses."

CLASS: When items being compared are NOT in the same class or category, it cannot be inferred with any degree of certainty from one item that the other item will be similar. Only Literal Analogies can be used as a basis for making inferences. Comparing two items that are not in the same class or are significantly dissimilar is often called "comparing apples to oranges." Comparisons MUST be made of similar items of equal value in the same class, for a Literal Analogy to be valid. In other words, apples must be compared to apples and not to oranges. Items are not in the same class if one case has an important ability that the other does not have. For example: "How can you expect to reform a criminal? A leopard can't change his spots, you know."

"We should not feel bothered if we offend people with the gospel. After all, in order to make an omelet, you have to break a few eggs."

"The scripture* teaches that God's way began in eternity. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way before his works"...One of the simplest answers that I can give is that it began when 2 and 2 became 4. It began with God, and it has always been; 2 and 2 have always been 4. And I could go back in my experience maybe to when I first knew that 2 and 2 was 4, but that's not when 2 and 2 became 4. And I could go back in my mother's experience when it likely first became aware to her that 2 and 2 was 4, but that wasn't when it became 4. So we can go back, and we don't have to trace it generation to generation back to the beginning. The fact that we find 2 and 2 are 4 today helps me to appreciate that it was in the beginning." [Willis Propp, Wesenberg Transcript, Canada, April, 1992]

*Possibly Willis was referring to Prov 8:22-23: "The LORD possessed ME in the beginning of his way, before his works of old....I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." ("ME" and "I" refer to Jesus--not to the 2x2 fellowship!!) The origin of a mathematical truth and the origin of a man-made fellowship are not in the same class! This analogy was concocted to fit the speaker's a pet theory because he has no scriptural basis.

The above examples do not compare items in the same class. Therefore, they do not qualify as Literal Analogies, and fall under the category of Figurative Analogies. A Figurative Analogy

compares items, cases, etc. which are NOT in the same class, are not similar and are not equal in value. Figurative Analogies are very useful in illustrating a point, making a vivid impression, and aid in clarity. As long as you ignore the differences in a Figurative Analogy, everything is the same! If one item has an important ability the other does not have, then they are not equal and are not in the same class; and generalizations about other characteristics they may also share in common are speculation or incidental. Reliable Inferences cannot be made of dissimilar items that are not in the same class and not equal in value, or from comparing "apples to oranges." Figurative Analogies have no value in establishing probability. They ARE wonderful for illustration purposes, however. **Some examples of Figurative Analogies are:**

- "Life is like a River."
- "To thwack a child over the head because he does not get his lesson is about as wise as it would be to rap a watch with a hammer because it does not keep good time."
- "Old Walter Williams would never make a good governor because an old dog cannot learn new tricks."
- "You should not changes horses in the middle of a stream; therefore, you should not change generals in the middle of a battle."
- "Pulling the church bell is like pulling the devil's tail." (Charlie Mitchell)
- "Believing in Jesus is like believing in the tooth fairy."
- "Imagine the Hard Case living out his life on a luxury liner. That ship represents his world view, his philosophy or religion, and he believes it is safe. Now imagine the Bible-believing Christian rowing up to him in a lifeboat. Why should he leave his elegantly crafted ship to get into the lifeboat? He will not, unless he has good reason do to so. In order to get him off the liner, we must take him below decks and show him the holes below the water line. Only when he sees his ship will not save him will he be interested in getting into our simple little boat." [From the book: Hard Case Witnessing by James R. Spencer, Page 59]

WHITE HORSE ANALOGY: Because two things share some similarities, it is sometimes assumed they ARE the same entity. For instance, humans closely resemble apes in many ways. Does the presence of these similarities prove humans ARE apes? Similarities don't prove evolution. Similarities aren't conclusive! Likewise, because of a few similarities found in this fellowship and which we read about in the New Testament concerning the church and ministry, some "leap" to conclude that the 2x2 fellowship IS the continuation of the New Testament church. However, just because two entities have some characteristics in common doesn't make them one and the same entity. Regarding the Underground Church Concept held by the Landmark Baptist faith of the mid 1800's, Charles Spurgeon said:

"If I see a white horse in a pasture, and he disappears for a time in the woods, then I see a white horse coming out from the woods on the other side, I can be fairly sure it is the same white horse, even though I could not see him while he was in the forest."

"Fairly sure" is NOT a positive identification. One would think that any church asserting they are "from the beginning" would be able to produce a documented line of succession and reasoning which would withstand scrutiny. Similar to the above "reasoning," some of the friends and workers cling to the slim hope and possibility that the 2x2 fellowship is of apostolic succession and contend that it went "underground," or "into the woods." However, an analogy conceived by a man cannot disprove history to the contrary. Since white horses and belief systems are not in the same class, are not equal or similar, this analogy offers no basis for probability. It simply illustrates a far fetched possibility. There is no evidence this fellowship existed before 1897-99, and there is much evidence that proves it began about 1897-99. Similarities don't prove identity. At BEST, similarities can only give a degree of probability. Similarities must be taken into consideration with evidence and proof. The most an analogy can do is to establish probability, and probabilities come with no guarantees!

Summary of Analogies

An Analogy is not a valid comparison, if the items compared:

- are not in the same class
- are not alike in essential characteristics/similarities; are different in critical areas
- the differences are greater than the similarities in the items compared.
- have critical* point(s) which have been omitted or ignored. *critical = essential characteristics, pertinent. The critical thing is one that MUST be present; it is inherent, inevitable, controlling, fundamental, basic.

IF the items ARE in the same class, the comparison is a Literal Analogy.

Only Literal Analogies can be used to infer probability. IF the items ARE NOT in same class, the comparison is a Figurative Analogy.

Figurative Analogies cannot be used to determine probability.

ANALOGIES ARE NOT ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

ANALOGIES ARE NOT PROOF.

SOME ANALOGIES POINT TO A DEGREE OF PROBABILITY.

Questions To Ask To Evaluate Analogies

Often when there is no Scriptural text supporting a religious tradition, custom or practice that its followers are required to adhere to, an analogy will be used to defend the position when questioned. However, Analogies CANNOT determine proof. They can only show probability WHEN certain conditions are met. Here are some questions that may be asked to evaluate an analogy:

A. What does the Analogy attempt to prove? Some possibilities are:

That two similar items will be alike in other aspects.

That what is true of one item is true of the other.

The significance of one item OVER another

That X can be inferred because there is a similar person/event in scripture

That the 2x2 method existed before Irvine came on the scene

That results prove the source (effect proves cause)

B. What are the two items being compared? Are there any ambiguous, critical terms? Ask for definitions.

Does the meaning of a main term change/shift in the course of analogy?

Are the asserted facts of the analogy verifiable?

C. If comparison is made to a Biblical situation or person, Does the Bible confirm all the facts given in the analogy?

Are there any assumptions? Unproven assertions?

Does the Bible define the terms used

D. Is the analogy a Literal Analogy? Are two items in the same class?

Are the two items equal?

F. How Similar are the two items being compared? Are the two items alike in ESSENTIAL characteristics/similarities. Consider source, main point, purpose. If two actions are being compared, is the purpose for the actions the same? Do the similarities pertain to critical, main points, which are relevant to the issue?

Or are they superficial, surface similarities only skin deep?

[Critical = ESSENTIAL, pertinent characteristics. A critical point is one that MUST be present; it is inherent, inevitable, controlling, fundamental, basic.]

Could the critical similarities have been produced by chance?

Or produced/caused by any other method or reason?

Do any other cases, people, situations etc. have these same similarities?

Does the converse hold up logically?

G. Are there any striking differences?

H. Do the differences outweigh the similarities?

I. Are any critical fundamental differences disregarded, ignored or omitted?

Any contrary evidence not taken into consideration?

J. When followed on out, does the Analogy:

Hold or break down?

Become ridiculous? Absurd?

Contradict with or disprove other beliefs presently held? When the analogy is followed out fully, is it consistent or contradictory with 2x2 beliefs and practices? For example, if it were true that "when TRUE SEED is planted in hearts, it will produce THE SAME," then it would prove the SAME THING when other groups outside the 2x2 group also produce the SAME fruit; i.e. PROVE they are Children of God . And we know the 2x2s do not believe this. Therefore, the similarities shown are superficial.

Every analogy must break down or stop at some point since the class members are similar, but NOT identical. In other words, the likeness of the two items being compared will not extend indefinitely to all areas. Eventually, the list of similarities will end and the differences will remain. Carrying a comparison out too far or going beyond the point of meaning intended will distort the message, and sometimes becomes ridiculous: "If a corporation has no feelings because it has no heart, then it cannot enter into contracts because it has no hand."

Example: The main point Jesus was making in John 10:11-18 is that a hired shepherd cares more for himself than he cares for the sheep he is charged with taking care of; while on the other hand, a true shepherd does the opposite--cares more for the sheep than himself. The 2x2s carry this parable way on out beyond Jesus' point, and have made a hard fast doctrine out of the point the shepherd was a hired shepherd, which is a distortion of Jesus' message.

About Allegories

What is the difference in an Allegory and an Analogy? An Analogy is a comparison of two items. An allegory is a story where people, things or happenings have a hidden or symbolic meaning. An allegory is not reliable evidence since an allegory can be made out of ANY statement by taking the main characters and events and assigning them with other meanings. Reinterpretation or renaming is no proof that any interpretation other than the literal is correct or valid.

A teacher once took a random newspaper article and read it aloud to his class. Then he assigned new meanings to the various characters and events and read the article aloud again. The result was hilarious. But what did it prove? That you can make anything mean anything you want it to. Altered or reinterpreted meanings prove nothing conclusively. We are no different

when we read into a situation or Scripture our preconceived ideas, instead of reading out of Scripture the authors' original intended meaning. The true meaning is whatever the author or speaker meant at the time he said or wrote it. It's easy to read into, instead of reading out of.

The Bible plainly identifies the meaning of the key items used in some of its allegories. In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus identified the seed, wayside, stony, etc. Paul identified in Gal, 4:24-31, "Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children." Many of the friends' testimonies are allegories they have made up. How often have you heard the terms:

- "Naturally Speaking..." compared with "Spiritually Speaking..."
- "This passage is a 'type and shadow' of..."
- "This natural item X is compared to another item Z spiritually ..."

However, allegories men draw to a Biblical character or precedent are not a reliable basis for belief unless the Bible has plainly identified them. One danger of the allegorical approach is that the Scripture may be dissociated from its simple, literal meaning. Another potential danger is that it opens the way to arbitrarily reinterpreting the Scripture. Thus, in using the allegorical approach, the Bible's literal meaning may be ignored and substituted with alleged "hidden truths" interpreted by men. Some words do have meanings below the surface. For example, Jesus said, "Walk in the Light as I am in the Light." What did He mean by "the Light"? One said it meant "the 2x2 ministry and church in the home." When the context is carefully considered, the main emphasis of the passage is love, as is the rest of 1-2-3 John. Keeping true to the context, it would seem that "Walking in the light" would mean "walking in love." Extreme care must be used in reading INTO Scripture a message that it never intended or meant, instead of reading OUT of Scripture its real meaning. Some interpret "the poor" in the Scripture to be referring to the workers. Can man's "private interpretation" be trusted? If the Bible doesn't mean what it says, any Tom, Dick or Harry can reinterpret it to say whatever they want to. How could we depend on God's Word if we had to depend on men to interpret so-called "hidden" meanings to us? Why were we given the Holy Spirit to guide us in all truth if men may reinterpret at will?

Analogies To Biblical Terms or Events

Some justify their belief in William Irvine as a man used or raised up by God by pointing to a

similar event or person in the Bible. Analogies may suggest similarity, but analogies never prove similarity. Characteristics in common do not prove that two cases are identical, or that what is true in one case can be inferred to the other case. Mushrooms and toadstools look alike. Does that prove anything? It would sure be a mistake to assume that because one is edible, the other is also. So what if "this" is like "that" in one area? If you look hard enough and long enough, you can find similarities between ANYTHING. It is POSSIBLE, but not plausible, probable or conclusive that what is true in one case is also true in another case.

When a common practice/tradition is compared with a similar Biblical event or custom, the practice/tradition instantly may seem to take on a much greater significance or validity--and may be examined far less carefully. Don't be hoodwinked! The Questioner may assume that if he doubts the practice is scriptural, that would be the same as fighting against God, and "Who am I to argue with the BIBLE?" Examining comparisons drawn by men should not be confused with arguing with God! Similarities to Biblical characters or events are NOT justification. The following examples of analogies attempt to justify a person (Wm Irvine) or an action by pointing to similarities in the Bible:

"Wm Irvine was just another 'repairer of the breach and the restorer of paths to dwell in,' mentioned in Is. 58:12. He was a man that God used to restore God's original plan and way."

ROBERT DARLING: In about 1967 or 1968, Robert Darling spoke at the Convention held at Silverdale, British Columbia, Canada.. His text was Daniel 2: 34-35, and 45, particularly about "the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands," which "filled the whole earth." He then announced that the stone was William Irvine's sister who became very ill and died. According to Robert, she supposedly had a dream which she related to William, which deeply stirred him and in some manner supposedly influenced him religiously from that time on. Robert Darling's main point was that we should be crediting Wm's sister who was taken in death by God before William Irvine even began preaching--rather than credit William Irvine with starting this fellowship; and thus, avoid any accusation that this fellowship is man-made. William's sister was, therefore, "the stone made without hands." A few weeks later in a private conversation, Robert Darling affirmed to Paul Abenroth that William Irvine was the first worker, and he did not claim or believe that the friends and workers existed before Wm Irvine, whom he termed "the firstfruits of our faith" in our day.

THAROLD SYLVESTER, referring to the book "The Secret Sect," by Doug & Helen Parker claimed a scriptural precedent for William Irvine as being "the firstfruits of faith" in our day. He cited Abraham and Sarah and Zacharias and Elizabeth, claiming that they were the "the firstfruits of faith" in their day. [Richland WA Spec Mtg, 1985] WILLIAM LEWIS mentioned that a lot of lies were going around, without giving any particular examples. He then discussed Joseph's brothers who sold him into slavery and then lied to Jacob that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal. Wm Lewis pointed out that Jacob didn't question what was told him regarding the fate of Joseph--he didn't go out and dig into things, and have to prove Joseph was dead for himself. Jacob accepted the lie that was told him and grieved for his lost son. Years later, when Jacob finally heard the truth, he was able to accept it. It was all in God's timing. The subtle implication was that the friends should emulate Jacob and not question and probe into things they are told. (Should they happen to find out they were lied to about the history of their church

and become aware of the truth, then they should look to Jacob for their example, and just accept it.) And the friends should keep in mind that the discovery of the real truth is all in God's hands and timing. [William Lewis, Texarkana, TX Conv, 1993]

William Lewis stopped his analogy here. Why? Why didn't he carry it out further? Recall the rest of the story?? Joseph's brothers quaked in their boots when they found out Joseph was still alive, and knew what they had done. Then Joseph's brothers begged his forgiveness for the evil they had done against Joseph, and Joseph forgave them. If Wm Lewis had carried his analogy out further, he would have been required to do as Joseph's brothers did. He would have admitted to his spiritual brothers and sisters the wrong that he and other workers have done to them in perpetuating the historical lies (and omissions), and begged their forgiveness, and urged other workers to do the same. But Wm. Lewis stopped short of this...

Analogies To Biblical Characters

When the subject of William Irvine comes up, he is often compared to a Biblical character, as in the following analogies. Do similarities prove anything? The differences between the two men compared far outweigh and outnumber the similarities. Irvine and the following Biblical characters are not equals and are not in the same class, so a valid conclusion cannot be inferred by comparing the two. There are too many critical differences, and too few significant similarities. Thus, these analogies serve only as illustrations, and are a waste of your time if your goal is to get your Question(s) answered.

Analogy to David: "Irvine's fall was similar to David's, who fell into the temptation of adultery with Bathsheba when he didn't go to battle himself, but instead sent his armies out." (quote of Irvine Weir.) (Note: King David was royalty and Wm Irvine was an evangelist--not in the same class!)

Analogy to Sampson: "Irvine was like Sampson, who was a strong man of war, until Delilah influenced him so that he put her before God." (quote of Ed Cooney.)

Analogy to Saul #1: "Irvine's fall was similar to that of Saul, who lost his anointing." (Ed Cooney and Jack Carroll reportedly used this explanation)

NOTE: What do Irvine and Saul have in common, other than they were both men, both prophesied, and both became separated from their kingdoms or had their kingdoms removed, after a (seemingly) good start. They were definitely not in the same league; one was from the ordinary working class--and the other was royalty. A serious comparison of the two men fails to turn up very many similarities, and reveals a number of dissimilarities.

Analogy to Saul #2: IRVINE WAS LIKE SAUL...

Saul was called to be king through Samuel, God's known prophet.
Irvine was a mere MAN who claimed to be chosen of God.

Saul was called to be anointed; later he lost his anointing (1 Sam.-15:23).
Irvine never was anointed by anyone; though some claim he later lost his anointing.

Saul's appointment was confirmed by the prophet Samuel (1 Sam. 3:20)
Irvine was self-appointed; no other individual or Scripture confirmed he was chosen of God

Saul made no predictions nor delivered any messages from God.
Irvine made predictions which never came true. He also delivered the message that God saved only those who came through the ministry and fellowship Irvine started.

Saul never claimed he received any messages directly from God;
Samuel remained God's prophet in Saul's time to whom God entrusted His messages.
Irvine claimed he received revelation directly from God, and that he was a prophet of God.

Saul fell because he disobeyed God (1 Sam.15:22--23).
Explanations for Irvine's down fall are numerous; to having a weakness for women;
to losing his mind; to pride.

God's rejection of Saul was announced by Samuel.
Irvine's rejection was not announced, but hidden and kept secret by men who took his place.

Samuel didn't take control for himself. He later anointed David as God's choice of king; God confirmed Saul's call circumstantially when Saul was chosen by lot "before the Lord."
Irvine's leadership ended when he was ousted by others who took the control for themselves.

Saul was a divinely appointed king over God's children, a pre-existing body of people chosen by God and confirmed by signs and wonders.
Irvine was a self-appointed leader over a group of people who became a body who followed Wm Irvine's teachings and emphasis. No special circumstances confirmed God called Irvine to be a prophet.

Saul's ecstatic prophecies were signs that PROVED Samuel's predictions.
Irvine's unfulfilled predictions were signs spoke words the Lord had not given him to speak in the Lord's Name. Deut 18:20-22.

CONCLUSION: The similarities between Saul and Wm Irvine were very superficial, and the differences were significant.

Wheat & Seed Analogies

When the subject of William Irvine and/or the origin of the 2x2 church come up in a discussion with a worker, an analogy is often not far behind. In situations where there is no proof available—analogy abounds! If you allow it, the analogy will divert your attention from your original question. Remember:

AN ANALOGY IS MERELY A COMPARISON DRAWN BY MEN--IT IS NOT AN ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION. Don't be diverted by it--don't even give it a second thought--don't even stop to point out its faults. Just get back to the question you are seeking an answer to.

From the following analogies, it is obvious the workers believe they alone possess the TRUE Seed of the kingdom, and further, that they alone possess the TRUE Spirit. Their belief is derived in part from their conviction that no other group meets the requirements for salvation, AS THEY INTERPRET the Biblical "requirements." They submit analogies as "proof" that the 2x2 fellowship existed before William Irvine founded it in 1897-99. However, analogies are never conclusive or proof.

In the examples that follow, many times the workers refer to and build on the theme of the TRUE SEED. When the Bible sets out the theme of a TRUE SEED, did it not mean the promised Messianic Seed-line? The Seed of Christ? The 2x2 definition of the term "TRUE SEED" is their 2x2 ministry plus their church fellowship that meets in their homes. However, Jesus' definition of the "seed" was: "the word of the kingdom" in Matt 13:19; and "the word" in Matt 13:19, 20, 21, 22(2), 23; Mark 4:14. The parable in Matthew where the tares were mixed in with the wheat gives no definition for seed; however, it immediately follows the parable of sower, so the same definition likely applies.

Matt 13:37-38: "He (Jesus) answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; THE GOOD SEED ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;" In the parable of the seed and sower, it was GOOD seed that was planted—not TRUE seed. "TRUE" seed isn't even mentioned in the Bible. A seed is a seed is a seed. What seed isn't TRULY a seed? Perhaps A FAKE SEED? Something that is represented as a seed, but isn't REALLY a seed?

A seed is not in the same class or category as God's truth or God's dominion. Can we reliably infer anything to a seed from God's everlasting kingdom, dominion and truth--beyond what the Scripture says??? We are directed "...not to go beyond the things which are written," 1 Cor 4:6 NAS. The Bible never defines "God's truth" or "God's rule" or a "Seed" as being comparable or the same as a fellowship or method now called "the truth."

It is equivocation to apply verses praising God's everlasting truth to the 2x2 belief system called "the truth," that is barely 100 years old and was founded by a man. Just as it is not lawful to plagiarize the ideas, writings, etc. of another and pass them off as your own, neither can you legitimately ("rightly dividing the word of truth") take the meaning of a word/term and pass it onto another, or infuse its meaning into another word/term, where it doesn't belong. The Biblical meaning(s) of a word or term is an intrinsic possession of that word or term, and it cannot legitimately be transferred to another word or term on a whim, arbitrarily or at will.

There are at least four (4) different kinds of seed in the Bible, and possibly more:

(1) Natural: of plants or grain, agriculture.

(2) Human: of man: offsprings, descendants, children

(3) Human: of Israel: the Messianic Seed-line from which Jesus would be born.

"I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations...His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven...Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me." Ps 89:3-36. The seed of Israel that sprang from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will never become extinct and the world will always contain the descendants of Abraham. God's promise of redemption through the seed of mankind in Gen. 3:1-15. "Now to Abraham and his seed...which is Christ." Gal 3:16. Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah, literally descended from the "seed of David." Matthew and Luke both recorded Jesus' genealogy back to Abraham and Adam showing that Jesus met the qualifications of the promised Messiah from the "seed of David" standpoint of prophecy.

(4) In the Parable of parable of sower, Jesus defines seed as "the word of the kingdom," Matt 13: 3-9. Jesus defines seed as "the word:" in Matt 13:19, 20, 21, 22(2), 23; Mark 4:14. The workers believe they alone possess THE Seed of the kingdom and THE spirit. The 2x2 definition for seed is the workers gospel message, their fellowship, belief system.

Seed Analogy #1

"Some say that God's truth was revived or started over or began in the early 1900's. This serpent raises its ugly head periodically. "The same God who preserved wheat from Joseph's day until now, is the same God who has preserved the seed of the Kingdom from the beginning of time until now.

"Why `from Joseph's Day?' In Joseph's time, there was a 7 year famine. Every wheat seed could have died out, been consumed, and/or destroyed, but God put Joseph there for the purpose of preserving wheat, both for the present and the future, as well as preserving humanity. Ps.89:36.

"Did God have to make another Adam and Eve? The same God who preserved human seed from the time of Adam and Eve until now is the same God who has preserved the spiritual seed of the Kingdom from the beginning of time until now...the latter being far more important and precious than human seed. However, without human seed, God's spiritual seed could not live either. "We which are alive..." meaning Paul and on through....1 Thes. 4:17.

"God promised many times throughout His Word that there would be a 'remnant' and His promises are sure. In Noah's day, there were only 8 souls saved...but there were 8! He didn't let

the human seed die out then. He didn't have to make another Adam and Eve. Nor would He allow His Spiritual seed to die out! Ps.72:5; 89:1, 4, 29; 100:5;

"Did God have to send Jesus to earth the second time because He allowed His truth to die out? No, God has preserved Jesus' example and His Word and His Truth through the lives of men and women all through the ages. Ps. 145:13, 72:7; Dan. 4:3, 6:26." (Author Unknown)

NOTE: This essay by an unknown author traces the Biblically recorded preservation of God's seed, both humanly and spiritually, from Adam through Noah, Joseph and down to Jesus. It gives several Scripture references of which the common theme is things everlasting which will endure forever from generation to generation; God's dominion and kingdom-Ps 145:13, Dan 4:3, 6:26; mercy and truth-Ps 100:5; fear of God-Ps 72:5. The comparison is purely a Figurative Analogy because natural, human and spiritual seeds are not in the same class or categories, nor are any of them equivalent with God's dominion; therefore, one cannot infer anything from one to the other.

Seed Analogy #2

"It is no different now than in Joseph's day. When conditions were not right for the seed to grow, the seed was held for seven years, but when it was planted, it produced the same thing as before the dry years. Wm. Irvine was just the man who started planting the seed again."

This Analogy attempts to show a scriptural precedent; that God preserves a seed through men and brings it out again and again through men; and ultimately that Irvine was the most recent man given the genuine New Testament seed. The analogy compares items from two different classes: (1) Joseph storing natural seed for famine, as compared with (2) Irvine starting a belief system/fellowship. Since the two are not in same class, this is a Figurative analogy only, from which nothing can be inferred. The analogy disregards the purpose of the 7-year time period --a time of preparation for survival through the coming famine. The conditions were extremely good for seven whole years for the seed to grow. A good part of the seed was planted and grew and another part of the seed was stored for the future. There was a bounteous reaping, an overflow, a surplus! The conditions were VERY good or right. The writer said: "When conditions were not right for the seed to grow." The Bible doesn't indicate this was a factor.

What was the point of Joseph storing the grain for 7 years? Was it to prove that "what you sow, that shall you reap"? Was it to prove that when you sow corn, corn comes up; and when you sow tares, tares come up? It wasn't any big deal for the corn or wheat to come up when it was planted 7 years later. This wasn't news--it was EXPECTED. To see this as the point of Joseph's actions is to completely miss the point. What else could the seed do? What were its alternatives? Four possibilities: (1) that it wouldn't come up at all, (2) that it would come up inferior, (3) that it would come up superior, (4) that it would come up the same. The REAL point was that God used Joseph to help preserve the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the

Messianic Seed-line, which Seed God promised would endure and be established FOREVER. "His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven." Ps 89:29, Ps 89:4, Ps 89:36. In other words, if we believe the Bible, the Seed will never die out. So it wasn't necessary for Irvine to start planting any seed again--the Seed was there before Irvine was born, and was there when he started his 2x2 ministry and fellowship.

Seed Analogy #3

The following type analogy is sometimes given by workers concerning Wm Irvine's role in the founding of the 2x2 fellowship. Verifying the facts being used easily proved this analogy to be faulty, since it was built on a false premise:

When the ancient tombs in Egypt were discovered and opened, they found some wheat seeds in them. Some of these ancient seeds were planted, and wheat plants came up and bore wheat. Likewise, God gave His seed to Wm Irvine who planted it, and it came up the same as the New Testament church.

However, The Dictionary of Misinformation states: "Wheat found germinating in Egyptian tombs: A persistent story has it that wheat grains found in King Tut's, or other ancient Egyptian tombs, sprouted and grew when planted. If so, none of the persons who were involved in discovering, exploring or studying the tombs knows anything about it. There have been many experiments, often involving seed obtained from museums, to determine maximum viability. The extreme for wheat is about thirty-five years, though some seeds--notably the legumes--may sprout after a century or more."

[From [The Dictionary of Misinformation](#) Page 319-9 by Tom Burnam; see Amazon]

Seed Analogy #4

Sometimes seed/wheat analogies are used to infer that one shouldn't expect to be able to trace the 2x2 method back through time to the New Testament apostles, just as one would not expect to be able to trace wheat seed back to its origin.

"This way cannot be traced from generation to generation back to Christ any more than the origin of a grain of wheat could be traced back to a certain wheat stalk that was raised years ago."

This analogy is also built on a false premise. A grain of (hybrid) wheat CAN BE and HAS BEEN traced to the first plant of its kind. This analogy attempts to hinder, thwart, and deter the friends

from trying to trace the history of the 2x2 fellowship. By insinuating such a task is hopeless or useless, it is hoped that the friends will decide not to waste their time trying to investigate it, and will not find out the real truth. Overturning the speaker's assertion completely, is the fact that the contradictory is true. "This way" HAS BEEN traced numerous times by various people! The analogy infers that what is true about a wheat seed's history is true about "this way's" history. "This way" is in the class of fellowships, systems, organizations, groups, methods, churches, formats, ways, etc., while the other item is in a class of plants. "This way" is capable of many things that a wheat seed is not. They are definitely not in the same class. The similarities are few and far between, and the differences are great. This analogy gives no reliable basis whatsoever from which it can be inferred that the 2x2 fellowship is God's only true way on earth, whose history cannot be traced.

Seed Analogy #5

"Genesis 1:12...wheat seed. Wheat has always been wheat. If you were a wheat farmer, and I was a wheat seed merchant and you came to me to obtain a truckload of wheat seed, it would not be necessary for me to put into your hand a historical brochure with a written record of when and where that wheat has been grown in past years in several states and countries of Europe and the near East and back to the garden of Eden for that wheat seed to grow wheat. Every wheat seed is a living historical brochure of wheat clear back to Gen. 1:12.

"And so the spiritual lesson is: Jesus said in Luke 8:11, 'The seed is the Word of God.' The Word of God has always been the same seed. Whether anyone believes and receives the seed of the Word of God makes no difference in this respect, for God's Truth is God's Truth--if nobody believes and receives it, or a few do or many do.

"As with wheat seed, there could have been times in the centuries of time there may have been no wheat seed planted, but it was still wheat seed. And if farmers took wheat seed out of the granary and planted it again, there would be wheat growing and harvested again in the world. So it may have been there were times in centuries past if there was no one in the earth believing and receiving the seed of the Word of God for a time, and then God was able to raise up true ministers like Jesus established to sow the seed of the Word of God, then there would be the godly harvest in the world again. It is just that simple and certain." [Dan Hilton 1/1/84 Burlington, WA Special Meeting]

NOTE: The analogy infers that what is true about a wheat seed will also be true about "This Way," (the 2x2 method.) A wheat seed and belief system are not in the same class. Therefore, nothing can be inferred by comparison--it is merely an illustration of the speaker's viewpoint or opinion. The seed is the "Word of God" and it grows to fruit in the right soil, which is within people. Who sows the seed is irrelevant.

The following assertions in the above analogy are unsupported by Scripture:

1. THAT who sows the seed is significant--THAT workers are the ONLY sowers of the "TRUE" seed.
2. THAT definition of "Word of God" and God's Truth is their 2x2 ministry and fellowship
3. THAT there were times when "wheat seed was not planted;" and "when there was no one in the earth believing and receiving seed of Word of God for a time"

The following are major differences in the above analogy:

1. A grain of (hybrid) wheat can be and has been traced to the first plant of its kind.
2. Nearly all wheat seeds left dormant 5 years or longer will spawn and very few of the seed heads are anything like normal, and often the seed itself is incapable of reproducing normal wheat.
3. Source of seed. Man can't make a seed, nor cause one to grow. Man can and has made many belief systems.

THEREFORE, it is faulty to conclude from the above analogy:

1. THAT for a "godly harvest" to occur there must be "true ministers like Jesus established" (the workers) to "sow the seed of the Word of God."
2. THAT a mere comparison is sufficient evidence to conclude that the 2x2 ministry and church is historically continuous with the New Testament church.

Other Seed Analogies - Fruit Proves Source

The statement "Wheat is wheat" is NOT evidence. There isn't sufficient evidence to contend that the 2x2 method IS the New Testament church, or the SAME AS the New Testament church, or that it is historically continuous FROM the New Testament church. It has been claimed:

"We know that this is God's true way because this fellowship still produces the same thing today that it produced in New Testament days."

"Irvine just started planting the seed again that had lain dormant, preserved by God. Like the wheat seed that was found preserved in one of the pyramids--even though it lay dormant for a long time, it was still good seed; when planted, it still produced wheat."

"THIS is a seed and is governed after the law of the harvest. That is, a seed produces after its own kind. Whenever people are willing to accept the true seed in their heart, the results will be the same no matter time or connection."

"Because if grain was kept in a barn for many, many years, when taken out and sowed, it would still produce only wheat...and because what we have today parallels the New Testament teachings, we know we have what is True Seed will never produce but after its own kind, and when True seed is planted in hearts, it will produce the same.... and so this is satisfying to me...that when we have the New Testament ministry and church and fellowship today is proof that the seed is the same as was planted in hearts in New Testament days when Jesus was on the earth." [Letter by Muriel Erickson, Sister Worker, 1997]

"If you see an apple, you don't have to question that the seed which produced the apple came from an apple tree. Now all the apple trees could die, and the seed could lie dormant for years; yet when the apple seed is planted, it will still produce apples. On the other hand, we have 2x2 ministry which is the same as the New Testament Ministry . Just as apples are always produced by apple trees which grew from apple seed, the fruit in this fellowship is proof that the 2x2 ministry is from the New Testament."

The above faulty analogies all infer that a dormant natural seed produces after its kind--so therefore, a dormant belief system also produces the same New Testament fellowship, fruit and results. However, since wheat and apple seeds are natural seeds and are not in same class as the 2x2 belief system, nothing can be inferred from one to the other. It is true that wheat and apples may grow from dormant seeds, but the 2x2 ministry did NOT come from the New Testament ministry because of that fact. These are Figurative Analogies, and are only good for illustrating the speakers thoughts and opinions, and are not valid proof.

The definition used in the above analogies for "seed" is erroneous: Jesus defines seed as: "the word of the kingdom" in Matt 13:19; and as "the word" in Matt 13:19, 20, 21, 22(2), 23; Mark 4:14. THEREFORE: If the parable of the sower is Biblical basis for saying THIS (fellowship/belief system) is a seed, then apples are being compared to oranges.

The following assertions in the above analogies are unsupported by Scripture:

1. No Biblical proof/precedent THAT God's truth died out or was dormant.
2. No proof THAT what the 2X2 fellow-ship produces today is the same as produced in New Testament days.
3. THAT the 2x2 belief system Irvine started was in existence previously
4. THAT the 2x2 fellowship is "a seed" or the "true seed."
5. THAT Biblical seed (the Word) is governed after natural "laws of harvest."

The following are major differences in the above analogies:

There is Biblical text that opposes or is contrary to the asserted conclusion given:

1. THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE for God's way TO BE DORMANT.

The "gates of hell" will not prevail against His church (Matt 16:18); His Truth shall endure forever (Ps. 89:4, 29, 36; Luke 8:11; 1 Pet 1:24-25; Ps. 100:5; 117.2). Therefore, there was absolutely no need for Irvine to "start again" a religious church group when the real, genuine, authentic item was still around, which could not possibly be extinguished, and to do so only created a superfluous imitation.

2. THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE for the following to die out:

Abraham's seed (Jewish race)

David's seed (Christ) will endure forever

God's truth, dominion

THEREFORE, it is faulty to conclude:

THAT results prove source, or that effect proves cause.

THAT the nature of the 2x2 fellowship of today proves its source. Since the same "results" can be observed in other groups, the results can be caused by means OTHER than the 2x2 fellowship.

Analogy of Adultery

"This question is sometimes asked by those insisting on taking part in our meetings, while living in adultery: 'Is adultery an unpardonable sin?' No, it is not an unpardonable sin. We are taught in Prov. 28:13, 'He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.' There would be no mercy or forgiveness until the adultery is put away." [Eldon Tenniswood's comments to California Workers on Divorce & Remarriage dated 11/1/64]

An analogy used by Eldon Tenniswood to support his stand on the divorce and remarriage issue goes something like this. If a man robbed a bank and then repented, but kept the money, we would not believe that he had really repented. To show the true signs of repentance, he would need to make restitution. Eldon then draws a comparison to two people who divorce and remarry, and after a short time, return to meetings repentant. According to Eldon, if they were truly repentant, they would give up their marriage, just as a robber would give up money he had stolen. Is there any merit to this analogy?

He attempts to prove that just as a repentant robber should give back the stolen money, so also

a repentant remarried divorcee should give up his/her new spouse. Two categories of people and two actions are compared; a thief robbing a bank and a couple who get married after both were divorced earlier. Analogies do not prove a point when the situations are not in the same class or category, and there are significant differences in the two items being compared.

1. Remarriage and robbery--and money and human beings--are not in the same class.
2. The analogy overlooks the significant difference that money has no feelings or choice about who possesses it; while a wife/husband does.
3. The analogy overlooks the significant difference that generally speaking, robbing a bank is far more destructive than remarriage after divorce. Marrying someone--even after a divorce--is hardly equal to waltzing away with \$100,000 from a bank heist.
4. The analogy overlooks the significant difference that robbery is intentional and divorce is not intentional. No one enters a marriage INTENDING to make it fail. It is entered into with hopes, dreams for a long and wonderful mutual relationship. Failure for a marriage to work out is a great disappointment. The mistake and failure are grievous to those involved. Many are extremely sorry for the failure of their marriage; and are repentant over their mistake or weak will, and ask God to forgive them. God forgives those who ask, and remembers their sin no more. He wipes out their mistake--the first marriage. They have a clean slate. The analogy doesn't take into account the passages of scripture that contradict its conclusion, namely:

1. THAT: "Marriage is honorable for all" doesn't exclude divorcees OR workers.
2. THAT: "To avoid fornication, let EVERY man have his own wife, and let EVERY woman have her own husband" 1 Cor. 7:2-5

It is true that repentance offered absolutely VOLUNTARILY and not due to any outside force or pressure is generally viewed as pure repentance. To whom is repentance due? You? Me? The Church? The Workers? NO! One repents to those they have wronged--to God and to anyone else they have harmed or offended. The thief wronged the money owner. However, it is not always the case that divorcees have wronged their ex-spouses. Some have been deserted (1 Cor 7:15); some had adulterous spouses (Matt 5:32 & 19:9), etc. in which cases, the Bible specifically says that remarriage is acceptable.

The analogy is based on several UNPROVEN ASSERTIONS:
THAT the couple *should be* repentant about their remarriage.
THAT ONLY death can sever a marriage.
THAT remarriage constitutes "living in adultery"

Ralph Woodrow analyzes this identical analogy, in his book *Divorce & Remarriage*, pp 77-78:
THE CAR THIEF

"But, 'some object, a couple in a second marriage must breakup in order for God to forgive them just like a man who steals a car must return it!' We agree that a man who took a car should not keep driving around in a stolen car. He should return it to the rightful owner--if he

can! But in many cases he can not. It may have been years before that the crime was committed. He may not even know who the car belonged to. The former owner may have already collected insurance. He may be dead. Does this man who took a car remain forever unforgiven because circumstances will not permit a return? In such complex situations, God simply forgives a repentant heart and gives the man a clean slate.

"Besides, the return of a car and the return of a wife, as it were, do not provide a valid comparison. A car is a thing, not a person. A car does not love, does not have emotions, does not think, does not involve children. Did the man who is remarried actually steal the woman? Did he take her against her will? Was not the marriage by mutual agreement? The concept of returning stolen property could seldom apply here.

"For people in second marriages to return to their first mates is, in the vast majority of cases, impossible. God does not require the impossible. He simply forgives and that's that. According to Deuteronomy 24:4, at least, once one had actually remarried, there was to be no return to the previous mate, even if the second husband died. Only in a very unique situation might it be otherwise (cf. Jer. 3:1).

"Some teach that if it is impossible to go back to a first husband or wife, then a person must live single. But a forced celibacy is not God's plan. Suppose a car thief repents and tries to return a stolen car. He cannot find the owner. He feels it would be wrong for him to keep the car. So he takes it and pushes it over a cliff. The car is destroyed: no one has the benefit of it. As silly as this is, this is the 'logic' of those who insist that people with previous marriages must separate and remain single. Who benefits? A woman does not have a husband, a husband does not have a wife, children do not have their parents, their economic situation suffers, two residences must be maintained, etc. Such is legalism--that one should push his happiness, his effectiveness, his peace of mind, his marriage, over a cliff--all because of an interpretation some have forced on a very tiny portion of scripture!"

Suggested Replies To Analogies

RECOMMENDATIONS. In the Editor's opinion, the very best way to respond to an analogy that has been used to reply to your sincere question is to IGNORE IT. Don't even attempt to point out that it is a Figurative Analogy, worthless as evidence, full of flaws and weak points. Do the same (ignore it) if they answer your question with a tale about one of their experiences. Experiences and analogies prove nothing, as far as you are concerned. They are NOT the answers you are seeking.

I recommend ignoring analogies and experiences--even to the point of interrupting and cutting them short (if you care to) because your time to question is usually very limited. The workers will NOT be staying with you any extended length of time once you begin to question them. They will most likely cut short their visit plans with you once you get in to heavy questioning. I've know

of this happening time and time again. You may as well plan for it, and use your time to question wisely and efficiently. Therefore, any comments you make about the analogy will just take up valuable time that you can't afford to spare, if you REALLY want your questions answered. An analogy is an attempt to divert your attention. So don't get sidetracked by discussing the analogy. The BEST a good Literal Analogy can do is to point to a degree of PROBABILITY, which is not the answer or type evidence you are seeking. Quite frankly, I have yet to hear a Literal Analogy used for an explanation by a worker, and literal analogies are the only kind from which valid inferences can be made. The analogies given so far have all been Figurative, and only serve to illustrate the worker's thoughts and opinions--and are not a reliable basis from which to make inferences or to estimate probability. If the 2x2 group is what they claim to be, and the Bible is their ONLY textbook, then the basis for any practice they enforce or belief they expect you to hold should be easily found in the Bible. You are merely asking them to show you the chapter and verse.

SUGGESTION: Counter an analogy with an analogy of your own. Analogies are useful in presenting unwelcome information gently. When you want to present information in such a way so that it will not be rejected from the outset, consider using an analogy, such as the fake painting at the beginning of this chapter. Or make up one about Santa Claus--did you feel like a child who found out Santa Clause wasn't real, when you found out about Wm Irvine? Remember how Nathan used an analogy in 2 Samuel 12 about the rich man taking and killing the poor man's only precious ewe lamb to show David his sin concerning Uriah and Bathsheba? The picture that an analogy draws in the mind will usually stay much longer than a simple explanation.

OTHER SUGGESTED REPLIES:

The two items are not in the same class, so what applies to one doesn't necessarily apply to the other. Now, back to my question, why X?

The two situations are not analogous. What is your answer to my question X?

Similarities do not establish identity or proof. What is the answer to my question X?

Similarities do not establish a precedent for universal behavior. Where does the Bible say X?

That analogy overlooks the significant difference of Z. Could you just show me where the Bible says X?

The differences are too great for a comparison to be of any value. Could you just show me where the Bible says X?

The differences outweigh the similarities in that analogy. What is the answer to my question X?

The resemblance doesn't go far enough to draw a valid inference. So, back to my question, why X?

There are only surface similarities.

There are just too many dissimilarities in the items you are comparing for my comfort. This is a serious matter. My salvation is at risk here. I REALLY need to know why X?

The analogy breaks down when you carry it out to Z. So what is your answer to my question, why X?

If you carry this analogy our further, it breaks down. I need your help. Would you please show me the verse in the Bible that is your basis for X?

Can you show me an analogy a Bible author wrote that applies to my question X?
Where does the Bible plainly indicate that X (assumption) is the case? or is true?

Your analogy illustrates your opinion well. However, since “the truth” isn’t in the same class as a natural seed, the analogy offers no proof that it existed before 1897.

[Go to Chapter 6](#)