



**"You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."
Psalm 16:11**

"Not all dragons are evil, but all dragons are dire. And the last is more to be feared than the first." – D.



Taken from "A Dragon Comments - The Human Propensity to Sacrifice Virgins, and Other Oddities."

James, you've nailed one of the greatest and most serious problems with Christianity today. Human believers make sheep look like Ivy League graduates!

In Hebrews 13:17, believers are instructed to "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves:" This phrase from Scriptures is used almost exclusively to force believers to unquestionably follow and obey their church leadership without questioning said leadership.

A better and clearer translation of this phrase would be: "Rely upon them that rule over you, being convinced by their testimony that they are faithful, and voluntarily yield to their leadership:"

This falls back on the earlier context of the original passage, verses 7 & 8 of chapter 13, which state in reference to church leadership, "Remember them which have the rule over you... whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever."

A better and clearer translation of this phrase would be: "Exercise and review your memories of the lives of those who have the rule over you... whose consistent testimony you should imitate, earnestly inspecting and reviewing their behavior and manner of life. Whose testimonies should reflect Jesus Christ, the same..."

So, together we end up with this sage bit of instruction from the writer of Hebrews (possibly the Apostle Paul):

"Rely upon them that rule over you, being convinced by your earnest inspection and review of your memories of their testimonies that they are faithful, their testimonies consistently reflecting Jesus Christ's own character. In your own lives, imitate their consistent testimonies and being convinced of their continued faithfulness, voluntarily yield yourselves to their leadership:"

This leaves a believer with the scriptural option of not following a church leader should that leader's testimony not reflect the character of Jesus Christ. This is quite contrary to the generally accepted concept in churches today that you are to blindly and unquestionably obey and follow church leaders.

Believers should study the Scriptures, keep a close eye on the testimony of their leadership. They should never accept an endorsement or condemnation from that leadership unless they are absolutely assured that they can trust their leadership, or, should they have any unanswered questions, until they have checked the topic out for themselves.

Or, they could still practice saying "Baaaaaa", and sending us virgins to frighten to death.

Truly Yours in Friendship,

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