

Getting all we can from Scripture

Men's Bible Study at Park View

May 5, 2015

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Session 5

2 Tim. 3:16 - "All Scripture is God-breathed"

Assumption: All the human authors of Scripture were inspired by one Divine Author; so there is an underlying unity in the diversity and dissonance of Scripture

Discipline #5

Consider parallel passages

Have we compared our text with other similar texts?

Example: Mark 11:23-24. Compare 1 John 5:14; John 15:7; 16:23-24; Matthew 6:9-10

Example: Gen. 19:1-25. Compare Ezek. 16:49-50

For the original audience, the focus of the Sodom story was hospitality rather than homosexuality

The Sodom story is about the attempted gang rape of [the two "men" visiting Lot], because they are strangers, because they are vulnerable and because they are a juicy target for humiliation and violation. It is about a town that had sunk to the level of the most depraved battlefield or prison.

—David Gushee; baptistnews.com/opinion/columns/item/29133-the-sins-of-sodom-and-gibeah-the-lgbt-issue-part-9; also in *Changing Our Mind*, p62)

How do we find these parallel passages?

- Our memory of the Bible
- Concordance / keyword search
- Topical Bible / topic search
- Cross-references (in many Bible margins)

What should we do when Scriptures apparently contradict each other?

- When they describe God's nature and acts, let both stand

eg. God is one; God is three

eg. sovereignty of God; our responsibility

We should let both stand—if Scripture can use both sets of words, we can too.

- When they deal with ethics, follow the movement or trajectory

eg. violence / war

OT shows God using war, helping Israel wage it.

NT gives clear call away from violence and war: the church is to love and do good to enemies (Matt 5:43-45, Luke 6:27-36, Rom 12:19-21, 1 Pet 3:8-9).

eg. slavery in Paul's Epistles

Paul gives instructions for living within the system of slavery and teachings undercutting the system of slavery

What ways is the Spirit of God trying to move people in the NT?

call to value all people; gospel-energized
call to obey God; holiness-based

Questions for Table Discussion:

Share an idea that struck you during this session.

Is the example of dissonance in a jazz piece a helpful analogy for Scripture? Which is hardest for you to appreciate: the idea of passages in Scripture disagreeing with each other, or the idea of an underlying unity in Scripture due to it having one Divine Author?

Do you agree that strong Calvinists and strong Arminians may both be placing their theology higher than their Bible? Is the box below helpful?

How would you try to help someone who cites 1 John 2:27, saying they don't need anyone to teach them? Are any parallel passages significant? Consider 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 5:17.

An example of apparent theological contradiction in the Bible:

Many Scripture passages appear to teach that salvation is solely God's action. "It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy" (*Rom. 9:16*; see also *8:29-30*; *Eph. 1:11*; *2:8-9*; *John 6:35-40*; *10:25-30*; & many more).

And many passages appear to teach that Christ died for some who may be lost:

1 Cor. 8:11 - the weak brother "for whom Christ died" may perish.

Rom. 14:15 - "do not by your eating destroy one for whom Christ died."

1 Pet. 2:1 - the false teachers who bring "swift destruction on themselves" are "denying the sovereign Lord who bought them."

Or appear to teach that one who has received salvation

can be lost if he does not persevere in obedience:

Matt. 24:10-13 - "he who stands firm to the end will be saved."

John 15:6 - if we do not remain in Jesus, we are "like a branch that is thrown away."

Rom. 2:6-13 - God gives eternal life to those who persist in doing good.

1 Tim. 1:19,20 - some have "shipwrecked their faith."

Heb. 3:12-19 - see to it that none of you turn away from God.

Heb. 6:4-8 - warning lest we "fall away."

Heb. 10:26-39 - persevere to be saved

Heb. 12:14 - "without holiness no one will see the Lord."

James 2:14,17,24 - "a person is justified by what he does."

2 Pet. 1:10 - "make your calling and election sure."

2 Pet. 2:1,20,21 - those who have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior are again entangled in it and overcome.