

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

1 John 5:6-12
Lesson #19
Gospel Witnesses
05/08/2022

1 Corinthians 1

“22 For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, 24 **but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.**”



Why do some
believe the Gospel
when others see it
as foolishness?

1

1 John 5

“6 This is the one who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. 7 And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is the truth. 8 **For there are three that bear witness, the Spirit and the water and the blood;** and the three are in agreement. 9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; for the witness of God is this, that He has borne witness concerning His Son.”

The witness of God to Jesus Christ, come in the flesh is through the Spirit, water, & blood.

(NOTE: The Scripture is not included?) 2

“10 The one who believes in the Son of God **has the witness in himself**; the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the witness that God has borne concerning His Son. 11 **And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life,** and this life is in His Son. 12 He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.”

The witness of man to Jesus Christ, come in the flesh is through the Spirit living in and through those who believe - a theme in 1 John. 3

1 John 5 (interpretive paraphrase)

“The incarnation of God in the man Jesus Christ was authenticated by God at his baptism (water) and by his death (blood). The coming of Jesus’ Spirit at Pentecost is a third witness affirming this through the lives of those who believe.”

4

The call of the Gospel is heard as we listen to:

- ✓ **“the Story”** - that we might know the story of God’s grace and truth through the Word of God.
- ✓ **“our Soul”** - that we might sense the deepest longings of our heart through knowing ourselves.
- ✓ **“the Spirit”** - that we might abide in the fellowship and fruits of the Spirit through loving one another.

5

Listen to the story.

What constitutes the Word of God?

The Word of God is more than a book.

Point (enlightenment of believers)

The Word of God is a living message.



Propositions (oral narratives - written truths)
Scripture



Personification (flesh & blood)
Son of God

6

The Torah's entrance initiates the Jewish service



7

The Bible is central to many Evangelical congregations.



8



The Cross initiates the Christian service.

9

John 5

“³⁹ You search the Scriptures, because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is these that bear witness of Me; ⁴⁰ and you are unwilling to come to Me, that you may have life.”

It is possible to love the trees
but miss the forest.

The living and abiding Word of God is
the story.

Bibliolatry, churchianity, & scientism can each become forms of idolatry.

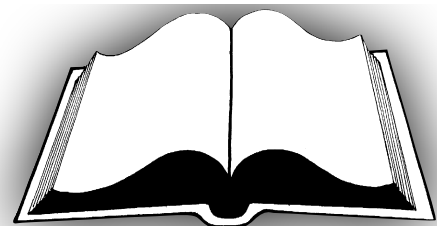
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How should we view Biblical inerrancy?

Information


Scientific
historical

Theological
spiritual



11



How should we view Biblical inerrancy?

	Information		Interpretation 
	Scientific historical	Theological spiritual	
Absolute	accurate	accurate	accurate
Full	through human eyes	accurate	wisdom
Limited	reflecting ancient culture	accurate	wisdom
Purpose	reflecting ancient culture	reflecting ancient culture	wisdom

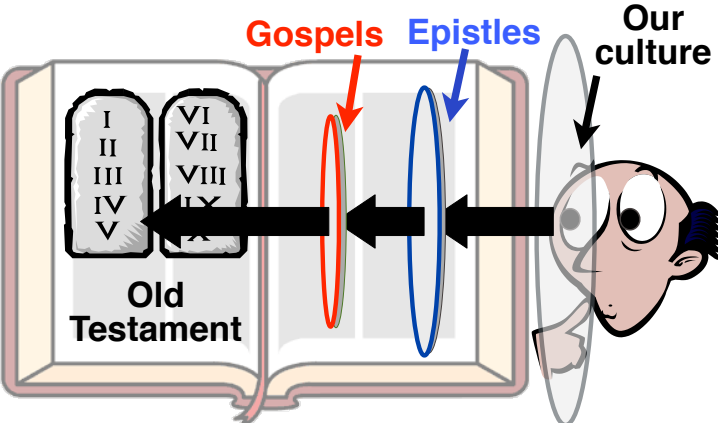
12

“ Everyone knows that at times they have [the early church fathers] erred as men will; therefore, I am ready to trust them only when they prove their opinions from Scripture, which has never erred ”

—Martin Luther
Weimarer Ausgabe, 7:315

13



Gospels **Epistles** **Our culture**

Old Testament

All scripture is written FOR us but not TO us or ABOUT us.


We read the Bible though lenses.

14

Mark 1:2
“As it is written in **Isaiah** the prophet, “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way;”

Malachi 3:1
“Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me.”

Matthew and Luke cite the same event without this “mistake”.



15

2 Kings 17:37
“The statutes and the ordinances and the law and the commandment which He wrote for you, you shall observe to do **forever**;”

Greek $\alpha\iota\omega\upsilon$ aion, Hebrew עולם olam

These words while translated “forever” or “eternal”, have various meanings including “an age” or “duration of time”

The word “forever or eternal” is used 56 times in the Old Testament in connection with things **that have already ended or will end!**

Ex.21:6, 31:16 (Heb.8:13), 1 Sam.1:22, Eccl.1:4 (Isa.65:17) etc.


16

Concerns about “absolute” inerrancy

- ✓ **The nature of language** - human language does not lend itself to the level of precision that it demands.
- ✓ **A text always requires interpretation** - by less than inerrant people.
- ✓ **Bibliolatry** - giving too much attention to the trees while missing the forest.
- ✓ **“Majoring on minors”** - getting preoccupied with the wrong things.

17

“Fundamentalism has fallen into the error of textualism, which is simply orthodoxy without the Holy Spirit - “Bible taught” but not “Spirit taught.”



A.W. Tozer

18

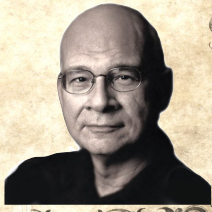
A robust, healthy faith is:




- ✓ Intellectually **convincing**.
- ✓ Spiritually **satisfying**.
- ✓ Behaviorally **transforming**.
- ✓ Morally **enlightening**.
- ✓ Socially **connecting**.
- ✓ Culturally **inspiring**.

19

“The Scripture and science do not give us “proofs”, they give us data and clues. **Proofs are a function of commitment.**”



Tim Keller


20

The Word of God is more than a book.

The nature of the story’s impact on the longings of the human soul is **the compelling call of the Gospel.**

Authority of the Bible Historicity of the resurrection

An inner “heart” response, rather than an outer intellectual response is what calls us.



The Gospel is a “storyline”, not proof texts.

21

John 7:17
 “If any man is **willing to do His will, he shall know** of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from Myself.”

John 6:68
 “Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? **You have words of eternal life.**”

We are assured of the Gospel because of the nature of its life giving message.

22

Philippians 2:16,
 “holding fast the **word of life,**”

Hebrews 4:12
 “For **the word of God is living and active** and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

1 Peter 1:23
 “for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring **word of God**”

23

The Point

Context, context, context
(cultural, literary, theological)

Major on majors, minor on minors
(The main thing is to keep the main thing, the main thing.)

Principles over “proof texts”
(The Spirit of the letter)

24

Listen to your soul.

Know yourself
(get in touch with your heart)

Accept yourself
(apply grace to yourself)

Forget yourself
(remove defensive strategies)

Give yourself
(minister grace to others)

25

Listen to your soul.

Casual longings

Critical longings

Core longings



26

A false messiah's focus is superficial.

Casual longings

Critical longings

Core longings

2 Corinthians 4:4
“in whose case the god of this world has **BLINDED THE MINDS** of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”

27

“American spirituality can be reduced to moralistic, therapeutic, deism . . . that sees the human dilemma as dysfunction more than sin, with Jesus as a life coach that leads us to a better marriage, happier kids, and greater success in our race for the American dream.”

Christian Smith
(Sociologist)



28

The true messiah's focus is the heart.

Casual longings

Critical longings

Core longings



Hebrews 4:12



29

Hebrews 4:12

“For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and **piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.**”

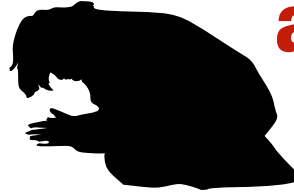
The message (oral or written) calls out to our heart (**not just our mind**).

30

Luke 15:11-32

The Prodigal's 1st blessing

**He saw himself
as a needy
sinner.**



31

Luke 15:11-32

The Prodigal's 2nd blessing

**He recognized his
father as a
gracious
savior.**



32

Luke 15:11-32

The Prodigal's 3rd blessing

**He dined with his
father as an
honored
son.**



33

Matthew 5:3

“Blessed are
the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the
kingdom of heaven.”

34

Points to Ponder

Listen to the story
Listen to your soul

Listen to the Spirit
*(John links this with
loving the brethren.)*

35

