

Part 2 – Bible Study vs. Scientific Method

Bible study is critical to each believer, male or female, to ensure that we “*teach and exhort,*” whether by word or example:

“And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness....” (1 Timothy 6:2-3)

If we do not “consent to wholesome words” we may find ourselves becoming like the description which follows (reading from the ESV v4)

“he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions,” (1 Timothy 6:4)

Where we can find ourselves going astray is if use the worlds methods of study and apply them to the truth. This may seem like a radical statement but consider the basis of scientific method:

“The overall process involves making conjectures (hypotheses), deriving predictions from them as logical consequences, and then carrying out experiments based on those predictions to determine whether the original conjecture was correct.”

This seems fair enough, but in terms of the Bible this would mean making a conjecture, and then searching the scriptures for proof of our ideas. This is what we accuse the apostasy of doing when it comes to doctrines like the immortal soul: they have an idea, and then scourer the scriptures for verses that seem to support their hypotheses.

This flies in the face of the admonition of the Father himself who exhorts us:

““Seek the LORD while he may be found; call upon him while he is near; let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that he may have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares 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.” (Isaiah 55:6-9)

The seeking of God involves abandoning our own thoughts and adopting His, not trying to justify our hypothesis by finding verses to support our ideas in the Bible. This is a fundamentally different approach.

The first independent thought in the Bible was floated by the serpent:

“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” (Genesis 3:1)

He places doubt in the mind of Eve, but she still gives a faithful answer:

“And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.” (Genesis 3:2-3)

Having placed doubt, questioning God’s word, the serpent then asserted his own ideas:

“And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” (Genesis 3:4-5)

We all know where this hypothesis ended up, even though he drew on the words of the Elohim to prove his idea. The Lord states of his reasoning:

“He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it” (John 8:44).

This was what the prophets did in Israel in Ezekiel’s time:

“And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say thou unto them that prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Woe unto the foolish prophets, that follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!” (Ezekiel 13:1-3)

Remember the admonition in Isaiah:

“To the law and to the testimony: If they speak not according to this word, It is because there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20).

The Lord Jesus Christ would bring God’s word to the people, and not his own, as Moses predicted:

“I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him” (Deuteronomy 18:18).

He was not to speak his own words, but God’s. This he affirmed:

“I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things” (John 8:28).

This was a fulfillment of the prophecy that God had given to Eli about the faithful priest:

“And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.” (1 Samuel 2:35)

He was to be faithful, which is the Hebrew word Amen, meaning truth – or truthful. This becomes one of the titles of Christ:

“And unto the angel of the ecclesia of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;” (Revelation 3:14)

We are to be faithful witnesses of the Father’s words, not putting forth our own opinions. It doesn’t matter what you think, or what I think, but what does the father say?

The apostles were found to have the same spirit, even though they hadn’t been schooled in the religious schools of the day:

“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” (Acts 4:13)

If we speak God’s words, then what we say will be powerful and lifesaving, and we can say it with boldness, because they will not be our own, but the Father who sent us. This is what Titus was exhorted to do:

“These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.” (Titus 2:15)

So when we speak God’s word we speak with authority, because it is not us that speaks, but the Father himself. This pleases him because we are faithful and true witnesses.