

Chapter Three

The Word of God

And

The Law Of Language

Scripture Memory...

Deuteronomy 29:29

The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.

Isaiah 55:8 & 9

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.

Scripture Review:

Revelation 22:18 & 19

II Timothy 3:16

II Peter 1:21

The Word of God And The Law Of Language

God Introduces Language Into The History Of Mankind Without Explanation

A. Written Language – Genesis 1:1

1. Does God explain why He is chose to use language?
2. He had other alternatives.
 - a. What are some other ways God could communicate with us?
 - b. Did God in fact have to communicate with us?
3. He chose written language.
 - a. If we do not agree on laws of language, where does that leave God's revelation to man?
 - b. For instance, if we do not agree that words have definitions, then where does that leave the meanings of God's Word?
 - c. Consider the statement, "Well, that is not what that verse means to me", where does this leave the authority of the Word of God?
 - 1.) With what God has said?
 - 2.) Or with what man says God has said?
 - d. Twenty years ago the most common question in a Bible Study Workbook was – "What is the meaning of this word?". Now the most common question is "What does this verse mean to you?" How does this change reflect a move away from the authority of language in the study of God's Word?

- e. If words do not have meaning, then all of language and all of life will be chaos.
 - 1.) Give examples of how life would be chaos if words do not have meaning.

 - 2.) Give recent examples of how men in politics or business have tried to twist laws to their purposes by not adhering to the meaning of words.

 - 3.) Give examples of how the church would seek to change the Word of God by interpreting words rather than submitting to their definitions.

B. Spoken Language – Some of the most amazing events in scripture occur without any explanation. They are so lofty that they often slip by us. One of these is that God has chosen to communicate with us through language, through the spoken and written word. Consider the events below, how do they substantiate that the Word of God is to be received and understood in the context of language?

1. The Bible, all that we know about God is based upon language - His spoken and written Word.
2. Genesis 1:3 – God spoke when there was no one with whom to speak.
3. Genesis 2:16 – God spoke to Adam
4. Genesis 2:23 – Man speaks in language
5. Genesis 3:1 – satan speaks
6. Genesis 3:2 – Woman speaks
7. Genesis 3:9 – God continues to speak to man after the fall
8. Genesis 3:13 – God continues to speak to woman after the fall
9. All this use of language is given without explanation, it simply is. God does not explain why or how, He simply presents it as fact.

C. The Introduction of Language Is Simply A Fact

1. As such we have to submit to certain, “Law’s Of Language”

2. Though not given in scripture, they are simply existent by their origin in God's design at creation. This is not inconsistent with God's creative powers.
 - a. With the creation of light and matter came certain "Laws of Science"
 - b. With the creation of life came certain "Biological Laws".
 - c. With the creation of language came certain "Laws of Language".
3. What other forms of communication could God have chosen?

4. How does satan try to interject these other forms and try to supplant the Word of God?

5. What forms of spiritual communication are we most susceptible to in the church today?

I. Laws Of Language

A. The Rule Of First Meaning

1. The Word of God is not "hidden" nor is it "secret" and as a result the first meaning, the obvious meaning, is the meaning to be taken.
 - a. Deuteronomy 29:29 "The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.
 - b. Deuteronomy 30:11 "For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach.
Deuteronomy 30:12 "It is not in heaven, that you should say, 'Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?'
Deuteronomy 30:13 "Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?'
Deuteronomy 30:14 "But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.
 - c. What does this tell us about books that claim to have the "secrets" of the Bible revealed? Secret numbers, secret dates, secret events, secret people, the list goes on?

- d. What does this tell us about ministers who claim to have been selected by God to understand the “secrets” of the Bible. Passages which all have but only they and a few select actually know the meaning?

 - e. What does this tell us about ministers who claim to have had angelic or divine visitations where secrets have been revealed to them? Secrets about heaven, hell or other spiritual matters that those of us who just have the Bible are deprived of?

 - f. What does this tell us about those who would take obscure uses of the word as found in ancient texts only available to an elite few, rather than the obvious meaning of the word? As an example, I was once told that the meaning of “submit” in Ephesians 5:22 – 24 had to do with violence in the home because in an ancient Greek play this same word was used in conjunction with violence by a wife to her husband. Therefore wives were free from submission as long as they did not resort to violence.
2. Words have meaning.
- a. Since words have meaning we must subject ourselves to the definition of words.
 - b. This means that when interpreting a verse we must first know the definition of the words.
 - c. This also means that interpretation is subject to definition.
 1. How many times have we shared a passage and heard the response, “Well that is just your interpretation, not mine”. In this line of thinking, where does the authority of the Word of God lie, in the Word of God or with man?

 2. We are not free to interpret a passage outside the boundaries of the definition of the Words.
 3. If our interpretation of the Word of God is not subject to definition, then what are we free to do with passages to which we react negatively?
 4. If interpretation is not subject to definition then who has the final say on what God’s Word says, the Holy Spirit who chose the words, or man who interprets what the words mean?

5. How did this tendency to want to believe the Word of God says what we want it to say, e.g. “interpretation”, rather than submitting to the literal meaning of the Word of God, “definition”, get Eave in trouble?

Genesis 2:16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely;

Genesis 2:17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die. "

Genesis 3:3 but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said,' You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.' "

Genesis 3:4 And the serpent said to the woman, "You surely shall not die!

Genesis 3:5 "For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Genesis 3:6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate.

6. What are some areas in the church today where people would like to interpret the Word of God apart from the definition of the terms? Consider the passages below and circle the word or words which men would prefer to limit to “What does this mean to you?” rather than, “What is the definition of this word?”
- a. Matthew 24:31 "And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.
 - b. Luke 16:18 "Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery; and he who marries one who is divorced from a husband commits adultery.
 - c. Acts 4:12 "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved."
 - d. Romans 1:26 & 27 For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.
 - e. Ephesians 1:5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,
 - f. Ephesians 5:22 Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.
 - g. 1Timothy 2:5 For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,
 - h. 1Timothy 2:12 But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.

B. The Rule Of The Clear VS The Obscure

1. The Word of God often does not explain itself fully. Isaiah 55:8 & 9 "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.
2. As a result, often times we understand difficult passages by what is clear. True, God's Word is presented but it is too lofty for our finite minds to understand.
3. There are times when we do not know what a verse means, rather we know what it does not mean.
4. In these cases, the obscure is understood in the light of the clear and not vice versa.
5. We do not take fifteen verses which are clearly understood and bring them into questions because of one verse that seems to contradict them.
 - a. Our unwillingness to accept the fact that some things are revealed to us,
 - b. yet too high for our finite minds to comprehend, causes us to bring into question the Word of God, rather than our own reasoning.
6. It is essential that we learn to say, "I am not sure what this passage means, but I know what it does not mean, because these verses are very, very clear..."
7. The essentials doctrines of the Word of God are presented clearly and without contradiction. How do the following passages speak to this truth?
 - a. II Timothy 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.
 - b. II Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;
 - c. I John 2:27 And as for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.
 - d. I John 5:13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.
 - e. I John 5:14 And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.
 - f. I John 5:20 And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding, in order that we might know Him who is true, and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.

C. The Rule Of Written Revelation And The Church Age

Revelation 22:18 I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book; Revelation 22:19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.

1. God has chosen to reveal His Word during the Church age through written revelation.
2. The Word of God is a complete and finished document.
3. Revelation has ceased for those living in the Church age.
4. Many will say, "I wish I lived in the days of Jesus, so I could just ask Him."
 - a. If you lived in the days of Jesus would you have been chosen as one of the twelve?
 - b. Since you would not have been chosen, what opportunities would you have had for long, one on one discussion with God? Consider the following passage and reflect on who has the better deal, the born again Christian or one of the multitude trying to get near to Jesus during His earthly life and ministry.

Matthew 13:2 And great multitudes gathered to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole multitude was standing on the beach.

Matthew 13:10 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

Matthew 13:11 And He answered and said to them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.

Matthew 13:14 "And in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, 'You will keep on hearing, but will not understand; And you will keep on seeing, but will not perceive;

Matthew 13:15 For the heart of this people has become dull, And with their ears they scarcely hear, And they have closed their eyes Lest they should see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart and return, And I should heal them.'

Matthew 13:34 All these things Jesus spoke to the multitudes in parables, and He did not speak to them without a parable,

Matthew 13:35 so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden since the foundation of the world."

Matthew 13:36 Then He left the multitudes, and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

5. Think how you approached your book studies in High School, the University and at work. Do you approach your Bible study with the same fervor.
6. Do you approach the Bible with the same seriousness you would if God were talking and you were taking dictation? If God were talking and you were recording His Words?

7. What changes need to be made in your approach the Word of God to reflect the conviction that you believe this is indeed the literal Word of God?

8. What changes need to be made in your approach to the Word of God to subject definition to your own personal interpretation?

9. If God's Revelation has ceased then all that we know about God and His workings is found in the Bible. What does that tell us about so called revelations in the church today. How would each of the following events cause people who only had the Bible to be at a disadvantage, while those who had these additional revelations would have a deeper and fuller understanding of God than those of us who are stuck with the Word of God?
 - a. After death experiences
 - b. Angelic appearances
 - c. Demonic encounters
 - d. Visions
 - e. Prophetic utterances
 - f. Angelic tongues and interoperations
 - g. Divine dreams

QUIET TIMES ALONE WITH GOD

JEREMIAH 15:16

THEME: The Word of God Has Meaning

PASSAGE FOR MEDITATION: Genesis 1:3; 2:16, 23; 3:1,2,9,13

How does this passage relate to the theme?

When I reflect on this passage, does it primarily convict, encourage or challenge me?

Explain why:

How will I apply this passage to my life in the coming week and is there anything I can do today to make this passage a part of my Christian life?

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