

Biblical Studies #107

Burning up Straw Men

Contradictions... That is what many have said the Bible contains when I have pointed out its divine inspiration and authority. It goes something like: "How can I believe a book that contradicts itself?" My first and favorite response to such a statement is: "Oh really...(hand them a Bible); show me one please." In the majority of cases I have discovered that I am talking to a parrot, because they are just repeating what they have heard someone else say. They typically do not or have not read the Bible. Then they say something like: "Well, everyone knows they are in there."

The most common example of a contradiction in the rare case when I do get one is: "The Old Testament says, 'eye for an eye, tooth for tooth' and the New Testament says 'turn the other cheek.'" This would be a contradiction if the context were the same. However, that pesky 4th grade grammar tool "context" clearly shows two different contexts.

"Eye for an eye" is taken from Leviticus 24:20. You can clearly see (if you read...say 7 whole verses equaling one paragraph) that the context indicates the punishment should fit the crime.

"Turning the other cheek" which Matthew 5:39 never really says, but implies, is clearly (if you read the chapter) a list of loving responses to those who sin against us. Once we have been forgiven, it makes no sense for us to seek retribution against others for whom Christ also bled and died.

Some argue that the New Testament overrides the Old Testament, but that is a complete contradiction of Christ's words. Matt 5:17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." (ESV) The greatest example of the truth that He came to fulfill the Old Testament is the over 350 prophecies that he fulfilled in His 33 to 37 years on earth. Most of the aspects of His birth, lineage, life, ministry, death and resurrection were written 1200 to 500 years before His birth. While there is debate on when they were written, even the most liberal of theologians will have to concede that most of these prophecies were written at a minimum of 300 to 400 years before His birth. The statistical impossibility of Christ accidentally fulfilling even as few as 8 of these prophecies has so many zeros after the decimal point that no statistician would claim it to be anything other than impossible!

But with God, all things are possible, especially the things that He reveals in His Holy word. Instead of giving you a long list of contradictions and prophecies, I decided to give you homework. Take a few moments and Google these two phrases and the lists and biblical answers will astound you: #1 "Supposed or Alleged Bible contradictions;" #2 "Prophecies fulfilled by Christ." These two phrases, or some variation of them, will lead you on a long and interesting read. If you find yourself wondering who is correct, I suggest leaning on God's truth and not on your own understanding or any explanation of any fallible man.

A future wing of advanced biblical studies may be built, but fear not; you have the basic biblical principals and biblical world view from which the lessons here at the institute are written. So advance through the institute and enjoy the reading.

In Christ,
Pastor Portier