

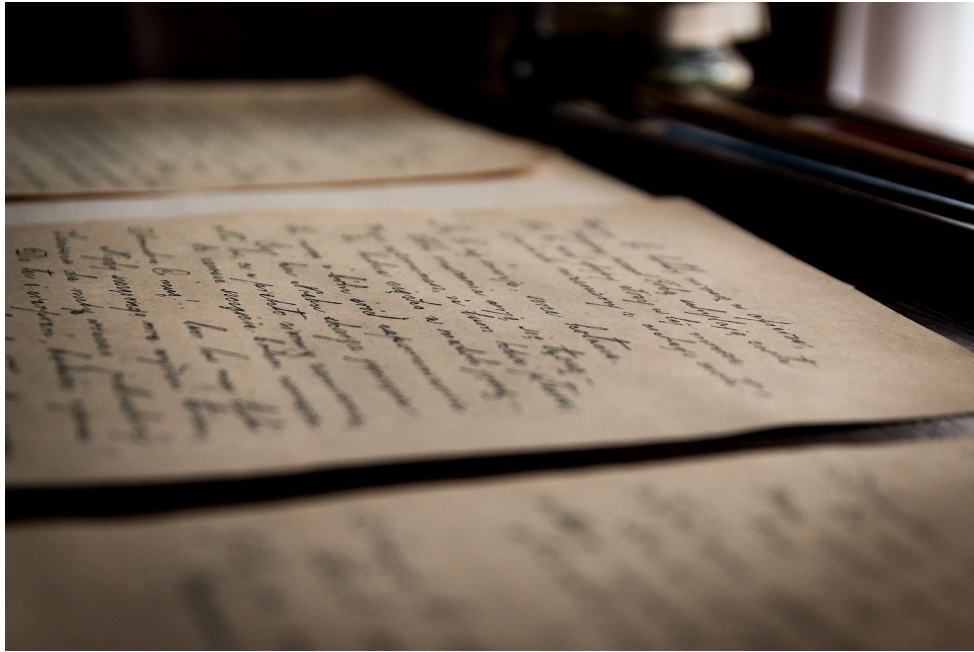
Revision 1: 26Apr2025

Additional Material: 4. Misinterpretation 3: Misinterpretation by Omission

Biblical Interpretation

F o u n d a t i o n
O f O u r F a i t h P t . 2

B y S i m p l i f i e d T h e o l o g y . o r g



1. Interpretation

One of the most important things we'll do as believers is properly interpret the Bible. 2 Timothy 2:15 states we should be diligent to present ourselves as those who *rightly* divide the word of truth and are thus approved by God. If we do not, then we have cause to be ashamed and are logically speaking not approved by God, which may imply a questionable salvation status.

Across Hipsteranity (the perversion of the faith which contorts Christianity to affirm and validate whatever is trending in the culture), one of the most popular things to do is to claim we can't know the truth. One of the most important skills you can learn is to identify the self-refuting statement. This one item will weed out of your life the nonsense which is crouching at your door asking to devour you.

The statement, "We can't know the truth", purports to be true. It also is stated as if it can, in fact, be known. This is a statement which violates its own premise. If the statement is in fact true, it **MUST** (by its own definition) be false. It's a contradiction. These two ideas cannot co-exist in the same space and at the same time. Post modernism holds that two contradictory statements can exist in the same space and at the same time, and making the mistake of believing this obvious error, is the height of enlightenment. They would argue that Christianity could believe "God does exist" and "God does not exist" as both being true and valid. This brain-dead gibberish is obviously too idiotic to take seriously. It's primarily the domain of pseudo-intellectuals who are educated beyond their intelligence with too much time on their hands. This is the type of person who believes him/ herself to be wise but confirms he/ she is in fact a fool. Unfortunately, society has demanded we view them with the breathless exhilaration of a fangirl waiting to be asked to go "backstage" at a rock concert by her idol. Personally, I adhere to the, "suffer no fools" philosophy. Words can hardly express my vitriolic disdain for celebrity and those who suffer from "Main Character Syndrome", regardless of the field they're in. They make me laugh-it's not a compliment. "Main Character Syndrome" is one in which the sufferer views him/ herself as the center of the universe and all others are their supporting cast, existing to help them live out their fantasy/ ideological fetish.

What's the point of this rant? I've noticed those who say a proper way to view the Bible is oppressive are the same group who will pontificate on race and "social (in)-justice" and (insert MSNBC, CNN, DNC cultural talking point here) with something to the affect of "The Christian View of: (copy and paste viewpoint from MSNBC, CNN, DNC here)". Or perhaps, "The Most Christianity Christians Respond to: (copy and paste article from MSNBC, CNN, DNC here)". This set-up is making the claim that their view is the correct one and a rejection of this view is anti-christian/ anti-Christ. Which is good if you're trying to justify purging your religious organization of conservative members to yourself.

So...how should we interpret the Bible?

Buckle up buttercup...let's get into it.

2. Misinterpretation 1: “Did God Really Say...?”

The first heresy we’re given as an example to avoid is the original one that started it all.

¹⁵ Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” -*Genesis 2:15 (NKJV)*

3 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, “Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’”

² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; ³ but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, God has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’ ”

⁴ Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. -*Genesis 3:1-6 (NKJV)*

What was the original heresy? Sleight of mouth. What is that? Do me a favor, please. I need 14 minutes 9 seconds of your time. If you would, go to You-Tube and search for the following: Derren Brown pays with “Paper” at stores on the UltimateMastermind channel. After that, please watch: Paying with paper breakdown: NLP analysis of how Derren Brown's Paying With Paper on the Peter Schwarz channel. Why’s this relevant? *Simplifiedtheology.org is not endorsing those individuals or channels and those individuals and channels are not endorsing simplifiedtheology.org nor are we affiliated in any way.*

Years ago, when I was driving commercially, I was responsible for selling tickets to riders and accounting for the cash, which could be substantial. Every so often a customer would ask me for a refund. Here’s how it worked: 1. they would pop onto the bottom step of the bus as I was getting ready to close the door and pull away from the curb, so I could not close the door nor pull away, 2. they would start talking very fast using word salad and contradictory events, etc. giving me their “story”, 3. they would then slow way down and deliver the command line, “Just go ahead and give me my refund/ replacement ticket/ valuable part of ticket, etc.”, 4. any hesitation on my part triggered the high-pressure tactics-”You’re delaying these people from going home” (in reference to me), “You’ve stolen from me and I’ll report you to management/ police, etc.” (not joking-this was a real threat on occasion), 5. they would refuse to go away and start repeating themselves often escalating the threats and becoming animated and aggressive, verbally and on occasion threatening physically.

To be honest, especially the first time this happened, I was tempted to comply. The only thing that kept me from that mistake and thus having to reimburse the company out of my own pocket was me sticking to the fact I was not the one who had interacted with them and as a result was not responsible to make them whole. I insisted they take it up with the driver they originally did business with-this really seemed to irritate them which was a red flag, and they would become very insistent. Looking back on it, when they described the driver they’d interacted with it sounded a lot like me. I think they were describing me, but doing it so generically I was filling in the blanks with someone else I knew and they were then just affirming that to give it legitimacy. Some of these people were obvious professionals in their huckster pursuits. The second time it happened, the affect on me was greatly diminished. Every time after that I would roll my eyes when they popped on because I knew what was coming. I even got to the point where I would have a little fun with them just to push their buttons.

What’s the point of this little trip down memory lane? When you’re unsuspecting you can feel real pressure to comply with something, especially when you’re in an innocent mindset (one of wanting to be genuinely helpful, etc.). It can be difficult to discern and dare I say downright uncomfortable to label someone you don’t know (or even more so, those you do know) as having nefarious or suspect motives especially when you want to believe they’re being genuine because you are yourself.

Nonetheless...

¹² But what I do, I will also continue to do, that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast. ¹³ For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder! ***For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.*** ¹⁵ ***Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.*** –2 Corinthians 11:14 (NKJV)-added bold print is mine for emphasis.

We have to accept the reality there are people who are agents of chaos and that's what they thrive on. They will oft times present themselves as "servants of light". They will come across as knowledgeable, sophisticated, respected, someone to be admired and followed. In fact, that's just a façade. It's extremely uncomfortable/ disorienting to realize then acknowledge them for what they truly are. Disorienting because for those of us who value genuineness, truth, mutual respect, it will cause us to question the validity of those things although we have no desire to. To a degree, this cannot be helped until we come to terms with the harsh reality of life and are willing to accept it, unfortunate as it is.

Let's dive in, shall we...?

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"-Genesis 3:1 (NKJV)

No, God did NOT "indeed" say, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'? What did God say? "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." -Genesis 2:15 (NKJV)

Satan is brilliant (and extremely dangerous). Think about what he said here. It's psychology. Satan probably knows you better than you know yourself. When Eve responds she must respond with a, "no". However, what Satan said sounds enough like what God did say to be confusing. Remember, at this point Eve is innocent. I imagine she's mulling over what Satan said trying to resolve it when he drops the embedded command, "You will not die, eat the fruit and be like God." This is essentially what he's saying. It's the same thing the hucksters tried to do to me on the bus. While my mind was busy listening to their tragic story word salad and trying to sort it out and relieve the psychological tension, they were just setting me up for the very clear command which seemed to make everything make sense, "Just go ahead and give me my refund." As I mentioned it was very compelling-especially the first time.

As Eve is trying to sort out what Satan said, she's already planted (inadvertently) the seed of doubt because her response was the equivalent of God did not "indeed" say... When Satan frames God as malicious for wanting to withhold knowledge from her she unintentionally takes the bait and magnifies her own doubt. Even though this was true, both Adam and Eve were at fault for allowing this to happen. They both could have prevented it at any time. Was God trying to withhold knowledge from her? Yes! He mentioned as much. Was his intent malicious? NO! He was trying to save her and Adam from something they were not equipped to deal with. Does God withhold knowledge from us today? Of course. What makes this worse? Satan lied...by telling the truth(ish). What? He uses double speak in reference to the word "death". He's equivocating. Satan said they would not surely "die" as in drop dead on the spot after disobeying God. Obviously, they didn't, which makes Adam and Eve mistakenly give legitimacy/ validation to what Satan said vs. what God said. God never said that would be the case. God's use of "death/ die" was in reference to being separated from Him and physical death being implied at some point in the future although not specified when. This latter scenario was in fact the true one.

If you hear someone saying, "Did God really say..." and it's derivatives: "We shouldn't speak in black and white, things are more gray", "We can't know what's true", and the like, start taking note and keeping track of these things. These are MAJOR red flags. Especially from ministry staff or those who've made the mistake of nominating themselves to be "teachers". When someone asks one of these questions, "Did God REALLY say...?", go to the Bible and look-up the reference and answer the question for yourself. Did God REALLY say (insert item here)? If yes, then yes he did. If no, then no he did not. It's that simple. Stick with simplicity.

3. Minsinterpretation 2: Temptation of Jesus

⁴ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. ³ Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.”

⁴ But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’ ”

⁵ Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written:

‘He shall give His angels charge over you,’

and,

‘In *their* hands they shall bear you up,
Lest you dash your foot against a stone.’ ”

⁷ Jesus said to him, “It is written again, ‘You shall not ^[a]tempt the LORD your God.’ ”

⁸ Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to Him, “All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me.”

¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, ^[b]“Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’ ”

¹¹ Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him. -*Matthew 4:1-15* (NKJV)

The focus of this section is verses 5-7. Why is this the case?

Are ya’ chicken?

In verse 5 Satan takes Jesus to the pinnacle of the temple and challenged him to put his faith into action by throwing himself off the temple because...

‘He shall give His angels charge over you,’

and,

‘In their hand they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.’

Didn’t the Bible (God) say the angels will protect Jesus from striking his foot against a stone? Therefore, if he throws himself off the temple, he won’t hit the ground. Shouldn’t we take the Bible seriously?

Let’s examine this, shall we?

91 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High
Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
² I will say of the LORD, "*He is* my refuge and my fortress;
My God, in Him I will trust."

³ Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the ^[a]fowler
And from the perilous pestilence.
⁴ He shall cover you with His feathers,
And under His wings you shall take refuge;
His truth *shall be your* shield and ^[b]buckler.
⁵ You shall not be afraid of the terror by night,
Nor of the arrow *that* flies by day,
⁶ Nor of the pestilence *that* walks in darkness,
Nor of the destruction *that* lays waste at noonday.

⁷ A thousand may fall at your side,
And ten thousand at your right hand;
But it shall not come near you.
⁸ Only with your eyes shall you look,
And see the reward of the wicked.

⁹ Because you have made the LORD, *who is* my refuge,
Even the Most High, your dwelling place,
¹⁰ No evil shall befall you,
Nor shall any plague come near your dwelling;
¹¹ For He shall give His angels charge over you,
To keep you in all your ways.
¹² In *their* hands they shall ^[c]bear you up,
Lest you ^[d]dash your foot against a stone.
¹³ You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra,
The young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.

¹⁴ "Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him;
I will ^[e]set him on high, because he has known My name.
¹⁵ He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him;
I *will be* with him in trouble;
I will deliver him and honor him.
¹⁶ With ^[f]long life I will satisfy him,
And show him My salvation." -*Psalm 91:1-16* (NKJV)

One of the most important things we'll do when interpreting Bible is allowing it to inform us how it is intended to be read. Let's look at some examples. The book of Ecclesiastes has this dynamic. How does the book open?

1 The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

²“Vanity^[a] of vanities,” says the Preacher;
“Vanity of vanities, all *is* vanity.”-*Ecclesiastes 1:1-2* (NKJV)

It opens with the speaker identifying himself, then providing a circular reference. Every verse in the first chapter describes a circular reference. Verse 3: there's no end to our labor in life (circular). Verse 4: generations come and go (never-ending/ circular). Verse 5: the sun rises and sets (never-ending/ circular). Verse 6: the wind whirls about continuously on its circuit (never-ending/ circular). And so on through verse 11. This establishes the context for the entire book. Chapters 1 and 2 are very logical/ analytical. Chapter 3 talks about doing things in a proper time and a proper way as a way to deal with the cyclical nature of things from which we cannot escape. It also acts as a transition into the emotional side of things which is chapters 4-12(ish). This illustrates the internal conflict with things we observe in life but have a hard time resolving. This is a conflict between the mind (chapters 1-2) and the emotions (chapters 4-12), another endless cycle we all deal with. Lastly, chapter 12 ends in verse 8 where we began in chapter 1 verse 2.

⁸“Vanity of vanities,” says the Preacher,
“All *is* vanity.”-*Ecclesiastes 12:8* (NKJV)

²“Vanity^[a] of vanities,” says the Preacher;
“Vanity of vanities, all *is* vanity.”-*Ecclesiastes 1:2* (NKJV)

If our ending and starting point are contained in the same point we have a...circle. The book of Ecclesiastes is one giant circle. The exception is chapter 12 verses 13 and 14. These are presented as outside the circle/ cyclical nature of life. The point being: the conclusion is to put our hope in God who exists outside the circular/ cyclical nature we find ourselves in. As a result our only hope is to trust Him to make sense of it/ put it all in its proper context.

The book of Matthew opens with Jesus' genealogy and his birth. This ties in nicely with the continuation of the prophets after a 400 year “silence” by God. Matthew, thematically puts a lot of emphasis on rebuking the religious leaders of the day, another continuation of where the Old Testament left off 400 years ago with the prophets. This is all set-up in the first chapter which establishes his authority/ lineage.

The book of Mark opens with a composite quote from Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3 which sets the stage for John the Baptist arriving on the scene and performing actions.

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ² As it is written in ^[a]the Prophets:

“Behold, I send My messenger before Your face,
Who will prepare Your way before You.”
³ “The voice of one crying in the wilderness:
‘Prepare the way of the LORD;
Make His paths straight.’ ”-*Mark 1:1-3* (NKJV)

The entire book of Mark is like a handheld, shaky camera being used to record a documentary of all Jesus' actions. The first few verses/ chapter set the context for the entire book.

The book of Luke is written to be an orderly and detailed account of everything that happens. This is expressed in the first paragraph where Luke states as much to Theophilus. He does not disappoint! Mark is typified by short punchy statements that cover the time period being recorded. There was a guy. His name was John. He came. He baptized. He prepared the way for Jesus. Luke is insanely detailed. We get the complete backstory for John, his parents, the time of his birth, Mary's concurrent pregnancy with Jesus. Good grief, compare the first chapter of each book. The entire book is like this. It's obvious Luke taps into his talent as a physician, having performed many slow, meticulous, detailed head-to-toe assessments of patients to determine what was ailing them. If I didn't know he was a physician I might have thought he was an attorney.

The book of John really ties together the Old and New Testament. It does so by making it impossible to separate the "persons" of God and Jesus. It focuses on their deity and their intrinsic ties to each other. It implies an intrinsic/ timelessness to the link of the Old and New Testament. This theme is reinforced throughout the entire book. What pastors like Andy Stanley are doing to "unhitch" the Old Testament from the New is apostasy of the highest sort. There's no excuse/ justification for it.

Does this work for every book of the Bible? I don't think so. It does work for enough of them we need to respect it. It does work for our subject passage of Psalm 91.

When Satan (mis)-quotes Psalm 91: 11 and 12 he frames it as though it should be taken literally. Because it states the angels will intervene, Jesus should literally throw himself off the temple so this passage can be fulfilled and Jesus can truly prove his faith. Is this an accurate framing?

91 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High
Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

² I will say of the LORD, "*He is* my refuge and my fortress;
My God, in Him I will trust." -*Psalm 91:1-2* (NKJV)

If you are a believer, as you go through your life, do you see a physical shadow being cast by God in your life? As you go through your day do you see a literal brick and mortar refuge/ fortress surrounding you? Of course not. These examples are not meant to be taken literally. They're figures of speech. Imagine yourself watching your children at the playground. You're letting them play but you're "casting your shadow on them". You're close enough to protect them if need be although you are not right next to them. This is what's being referenced. Although we don't see God, literally, he's close enough to be attentive to us if we need Him. We should believe he's providing us with protection like a refuge/ fortress although we don't see a physical wall around us. It's meant to give us a sense of security although we don't see God literally.

Read verses 3-6. Does God have literal feathers with which he covers us? Of course not. It's an allusion to a mother bird protecting her loved ones. This is the real message of this figure of speech. God is using these to describe the security we should have as a result of our relationship with him. We should not be afraid of wars, disease, misfortune, etc. No matter which block of text you read; verses 1-2, 3-6, 7-8, 9-13, none of them are meant to be taken literally. God is not saying we should rush out and provoke a lion or a cobra (v. 13). It would be ridiculous to do so.

¹⁴ "Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him;
I will ^[e]set him on high, because he has known My name.

¹⁵ He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him;
I *will be* with him in trouble;
I will deliver him and honor him.

¹⁶ With ^[f]long life I will satisfy him,
And show him My salvation." -*Psalm 91:14-16* (NKJV)

In verses 14-16 God is talking. He sums up what he wants us to take away from this entire passage (Psalm 91). **IF:** we set our hearts upon God, and call upon Him, **THEN:** He will be with us. He will deliver us. He will be with us in trouble and honor us. He will give us long life and satisfaction and most importantly...He will show us salvation.

Does this imply we'll have a bulletproof life with no challenges? Of course not. Read Ecclesiastes or the book of Job. Job was considered righteous by God himself but experienced hardship (for a time). Is it possible some of these things could be literal? It's possible. When the Israelites were in Egypt they were literally protected from the 10 plagues. When they went into the Promised Land they were literally protected by God in combat when he fought for them. David and his mighty men are another example of God giving someone literal protection. Regardless of what God chooses to do or not do in our lives we should take comfort in knowing we're secure with Him. DO NOT play with fire and rush out to "test your faith" by doing stupid things under the belief God will bail you out. You may be shocked when he doesn't. There's nothing in this passage to indicate we should do those things anyway.

And that brings us back to our text in Matthew 4...

First, let's restate the text from Psalm 91:

¹¹ For He shall give His angels charge over you,
To keep you in all your ways.

¹² In *their* hands they shall ^{be}bear you up,
Lest you ^{do}dash your foot against a stone. -*Psalm 91:11-12* (NKJV) **Bold emphasis mine.**

Compare that to:

‘He shall give His angels charge over you,’

‘In *their* hands they shall bear you up,
Lest you dash your foot against a stone.’ ” -*Matthew 4:5-6* (NKJV)

Obviously I left out the word “And” in the quote from Matthew. I think it's appropriate. In his quote, Satan left out an entire sentence. Read the difference it makes. In the correct quote from Psalm 91 the angels are given charge over someone **so that** the person will be kept in all their ways. Verse 12 is a figure of speech to reinforce the idea of being protected by supernatural intervention/ guidance. It in no way suggests you will never stub your toe in a literal sense.

Whereas...in the (mis)-quote by Satan in Matthew it sounds as if you'll be literally protected from stubbing your toe because of the angels. And, it sounds reasonable. The difference couldn't be more profound. That one sentence makes **all** the difference!

There are certain other principles which govern how we **must** interpret the Bible.

1. “I am the Lord!” Do me a favor, look-up in your Bible the number of times this phrase appears in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. Why those two books? Because these are the books where God is giving **commands** to the Israelites on how they should live/ conduct themselves in order to be holy.

At the end of the day we need to take God at his word simply because He says so. God's commands begin and end with Him. This is simply part of the circular reference as found in Exodus 3:14, John 8:58, Ecclesiastes, and too many to list here. There's no way to get around it. It comes down to either acceptance and obedience or rejection and disobedience. It's not open for a vote or a discussion or anything.

2. “Let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’, and your ‘no’ be ‘no’”. Matthew 5:37 implies we should take things at their common, simple understanding. It also implies we should operate in a black and white paradigm as opposed to making everything “gray” or complex. It implies gray areas or complexity are the domain of Satan himself. This requires a more thorough discussion than I have time for now but I find it to be accurate throughout the Bible.

3. Do NOT add to or take away from God's word. This is referenced in Deuteronomy 4:2 and Revelation 22:18-19. This is intended to be taken literally. Please refer to the example of Satan's temptation of Jesus in Matthew compared to Psalm 91 above.

What's one of the most popular examples of this corruption of God's Word today?

“Do not judge...”

Why is all of this important?

Because...

The fashionable faith today is Hipsteranity. Hipsteranity says you can pull one verse out of the Bible and make an entire theology out of it. The Bible is less of a divinely inspired book to which we are obligated to conform our lives, but rather a big book of quotes that can be mixed and matched any way one pleases. There are some guidelines however. One of which is, the proper frame must be progressive. Anything that smacks of objective reality to which we must conform our subjective selves is a form of oppression and is meant to be rejected/ denounced.

Another guideline is revolution. Everything one does as a “believer” should be to upset the status quo and “turn the world upside down”. The exemption to this is the status quo achieved by those who perceived themselves to be the revolutionaries when they were in their prime. Because they’re now nearing the end of their earthly journey, their status quo must NOT be interfered with.

There are a few others, but they are not the focus of this commentary. If you want to sum-it-up it can be done as follows: anything progressive is good, anything conservative is evil. If you pay attention to these religious organizations you’ll notice they only speak (affirm and validate) when the DNC, MSNBC, CNN speak, and are silent when these groups are silent. The definitions for “love” and “justice” are derived by copying and pasting directly from these groups web-sites, not the Bible.

Can you imagine one of these religious groups isolating Acts 17:30 where God **commands** everyone everywhere to repent? Neither can I, because repentance/ obedience are not values consistent with their true worldview.

These organizations like to take things which are clear and clearly stated and to make them complex and obscure. All of this is done because God is not revered. Jesus is ‘boyfren’, not lord. The idea of someone being lord to whom we all owe allegiance is anathema to their primary dominant value system. Thus, it’s rejected.

We must be very careful how we choose to interpret the Bible. The consequences for not doing so properly...could be eternal.

4. Minsinterpretation 3: Misinterpretation by Omission

Judge: 1: to form an opinion about through careful weighing of evidence and testing of premises. **2:** to sit in judgment on: TRY **3:** to determine or pronounce after inquiry and deliberation **4:** GOVERN, RULE-used of a Hebrew tribal leader **6:** to form an estimate or an evaluation of; *esp:* to form a negative opinion about **6:** to hold as an opinion: GUESS, THINK. -*Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary 11th ed.*

“Do not judge...”

Or so they say. What do “they” mean by this? If you’d like me to get to the bottom line, I believe this is a Freudian slip. Why do I say that? Please refer to the definition above. I believe “they” really do mean,

“Do NOT form an opinion about (insert topic here) through careful weighing of evidence and testing of the premise(s) I’ve presented you with. Do NOT determine or pronounce after an inquiry or deliberation of what I’ve said.”

More than likely, “they’ve” presented you with a highly emotional argument about (insert topic here) which will not hold up if scrutinized objectively. “They” need you to turn off your critical thinking so they can manipulate your emotions for (insert reason/ goal here). If you examine (insert topic here) objectively, it will fail, and “they” will not be able to manipulate you. I’ve heard it said, although I don’t remember by whom,

“Those who will be the most angered by you having boundaries, are those who will benefit the most by you having none.”-*unknown*

Let’s dive-in and examine this shall we?

In the NKJV, “Do not judge...” (I must include the ellipsis because it’s only part of the whole quote) translates into, “Judge not,” This is only half of the sentence. You’ll note the comma after “not”. The other half of the sentence is, “...that you be not judged.” Again, the ellipsis must be used to show there is a section of the text missing. This is never done with the, “Do not judge...” portion. It’s given as a complete statement, “Do NOT judge!” This changes the meaning entirely. This, of course, is intentional. Please refer to the discussion about Psalm 91 compared to the Matthew 4 “Temptation in the Wilderness” example from Chapter 3. It’s the same thing.

Let’s begin with the FULL “Judge not...” quote from Matthew 7:1-6, shall we?

1 “Judge not, that you be not judged. 2 For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. 3 And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank *is* in your own eye? 5 Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

6 “Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.”-*Matthew 7:1-6 (NKJV)*

What’s the real message of this passage? The real message is to judge *correctly*! That’s a big difference compared to not judging at all. What I’ve found to be consistently true is the individuals quoting the axiom, “Judge not...” are, in fact, some of the most judgmental people around. The reason they quote, “Judge not...” is because they don’t want to reap what they’ve been sowing. It’s that simple.

Let’s paraphrase verses 1-5. I think it’ll be beneficial. Don’t judge or else you’ll be judged! By what standard? The same one YOU used to judge others. By whom will you be judged? By those you yourself judged and then ultimately by God. How can you justify condemning someone else if you’re doing the same thing? Hypocrite! Stop sinning yourself before playing your “Karen” card and demanding someone else stop that sin. You’re NOT the manager!

Remember, it’s Jesus talking here. How does he say to treat someone who is being hypocritical/ using a double standard? Don’t waste your time on them. If you try to “get through” to them, you will be wasting something valuable. Not only will they not appreciate it, but they will also turn on you and rip you apart for pointing out their hypocrisy/ double standard. Would you like to test this premise? Go down to the nearest Tesla protest and point out a few years ago these same people were protesting for everyone to buy a Tesla to “save the planet”. Let me know their response.

Jesus referring to those who use a hypocritical/ double standard as “dogs” or “swine” is not very winsome or empathetic. That violates the 11th commandment, the greatest commandment. What is that? Thou shalt be nice! That’s not very “Christlike”-scandalous!

Like the Psalm 91 and Temptation in the Wilderness example we need the full context. The rest of Matthew chapter 7 expands on this conversation. Let’s paraphrase 7-12, the next section. The first part is also axiomatic. It’s used primarily as a self-help one-liner that will cover any topic you want. Why is Jesus saying to “Ask, seek, and knock?” Doing surgery on oneself can be challenging. Even more so if you’re trying to remove a plank from your own eye. This requires outside (divine) help. We’re promised God will help us with that. Because we, who are sinful, know how to let our “yes” be yes and our “no”, no when dealing with those important to us, we can expect God to do the same. It also points out that treating others with duplicity/ hypocrisy/ a double standard is sinful. Simply treat others the way you want to be treated-this sums up the Law and the Prophets. This also has overtones of the necessity of life AND doctrine being in alignment. It’s NOT life OR doctrine.

Why do we do all that? The next section, verses 13-14, answers that. It will be challenging to make it to Heaven, few will find the way. Acting with duplicity/ hypocrisy/ double standards towards others is a deal breaker. Also, introducing duplicity/ hypocrisy or a double standard into your community will also be a deal breaker. How do we know?

The next sections, verses 15-18 and 21-23 spell it out. First, anyone who introduces duplicity/ hypocrisy or a double standard into their community are false prophets and wolves in sheep’s clothing. This will be evidenced by their fruit of promoting these sins to divide their community. Jesus response to them will be, “I never knew you.” He doesn’t say he “doesn’t” know them (present tense) and then something changed. He states he “never” knew them. In other words, at no time were they in a right relationship with Jesus although they professed to be.

What’s the answer? The last section, verses 24-29 answers that. We need to “hear” these sayings AND “do them”. Again, life AND doctrine NOT life OR doctrine. Having these two things being in alignment with each other will put us on solid ground and our “house” will survive the storms.

Chapters 5 & 6 have Jesus on the mountain giving the “Sermon on the Mount”. His sayings for these chapters seem a little disjointed (although, not really). It’s like listening to the Psalms or Proverbs. The overall context is to trust God, be genuine in our faith, “walk our talk” and the like. Chapter 7 needs to be read as such, a whole chapter, not just a few axiomatic quotes. In chapter 8 this conversation ends, and the subject changes focus to Jesus coming down from the mountain and performing various healings, etc. I would encourage everyone to read their Bible from cover to cover. Upon completing, read it from cover to cover again. It’s too easy to simply hunt and peck for a few inspirational quotes which are taken out of context and thus distort the intended meaning.

In the next chapter I’d like to talk about the sin of omission method of interpreting the Bible. Why? It’s a natural extension of what we’ve already talked about here and has special relevance today. How so? I will address one of the most fashionable theological outfits all the “cool kids” are wearing at churches today and why it’s an error.

One of the most common perversions of the Word of God is to misuse the parable of the Good Samaritan to justify unlimited, unrestrained immigration. Anyone who does not agree wholeheartedly is obviously part of the patriarchal-misogynistic-hetero normative-cis gendered-xenophobic-transphobic-Islamophobic-fascistic system of colonial oppression and must be destroyed.

The real point of the parable of the Good Samaritan was an individual with no natural affinity for another (and perhaps an irreconcilable ideological difference) chose to care for that individual out of his *personal* resources. This is given as a contrast to those who should have been willing to care for him but, were too focused on their self-righteous pursuits to care.

Think back to the time circa 2020. Think about the stereotypical slacktivist who couldn’t stop yammering about how committed they were/ are to “justice” and the “poor and oppressed”, etc. Now, ask yourself, “How many police officers did they take into their home to care for out of their personal resources until they were fully healed, regardless of the damage to their reputation or social standing?”

Let me guess, the answer is “zero”. They talked a good game but, didn’t deliver. It was never about the delivery. Buzzwords like “justice” and the “poor and oppressed” are not principles or ideals by which the slacktivist lives their life. They’re simply social credit modifiers the slacktivist uses to boost his/ her own ego and social standing within their ideologically inbred peer group.

The ideologically inbred slacktivist, condemned the world for not throwing off restraint, opening the border to anyone without “judgment” and providing a blank financial check with housing, food, medical, (insert all other charges here) to be charged to the taxpayers through the national budget. Strangely, I don’t know of any cases of said slacktivists opening their personal residence to a “poor and needy” person who was allowed to enter without a background check and given, food, medical, (insert all other charges here) at the personal expense of the slacktivist homeowner.

What’s the point?

The ideologically inbred slacktivist who hides behind a religious façade will quote their greatest commandment by saying, “The Bible says...”

“You must not exploit a resident alien or oppress him, since you were resident aliens in the land of Egypt.” -*Exodus 22:21 (CSB)*

...but treat the rest of the Bible as if it doesn’t exist. They may even go so far as lying to the public by saying they’re “New Testament” Christians and don’t follow the “Old Testament” (unless they can find an Old Testament verse to take out of context to support their leftist ideology).

Exodus 22:21 is a reminder to treat others as you would want to be treated. It’s a reminder that someone in an “out-crowd” should not be taken *unfair* advantage of by members of the “in-crowd”. It does not, expressly or implicitly, mean there should be open borders with unrestricted immigration of any kind.

When a false teacher programs those who’ve chosen to make the mistake of accepting their false teaching by anchoring an out of context verse exclusively to a meaning it does not naturally have, you have a big problem. There’s a reason theological activists will select one verse to take out of context and become their “greatest commandment” while all others are disregarded. Let’s see what else, “The Bible says...” about the immigration/ resident alien issue. All of these verses are from the Christian Standard Bible (CSB) as it uses the word “alien” and makes it easier to compare quotes.

- Lev 16:20-7th month and 10th day there was to be NO work for anyone-including the *resident alien*.
- Lev 17:12-No one, including *resident aliens* were permitted to eat blood.
- Lev 17:13-Everyone, including the *resident alien*, who hunts must drain the blood and cover it with dirt.
- Lev 17:15-Anyone, including the *resident alien*, who eats an unclean carcass must wash and bathe and would be unclean until evening.
- Lev 18:26-Everyone is required to keep God’s statutes and ordinances, including the *resident alien*.
- Lev 19:10-Leave some remnant of the harvest for anyone, including the *resident alien*.
- Lev 19:33-Don’t oppress the *resident alien*. Today: don’t pay them off book less than market/ working conditions, etc.
- Lev 19:34-Treat the *resident alien* as you would want to be treated.
- Lev 20:2-Anyone, including the *resident alien*, who offers to children to Molech must receive capital punishment.
- Lev 23:22-Again, don’t strip your crops after the harvest so the poor and *resident alien* may survive.
- Lev 24:16-Anyone, including the *resident alien*, who blasphemes the Lord’s name must receive capital punishment.
- Lev 24:22-There must be ONE standard for judging everyone, including the *resident alien*.
- Lev 25:6-Everyone, including the *resident alien*, could benefit from the food produced during the Sabbath year. No one was to be denied.
- Lev 25:35-If an Israelite became destitute, he should be treated as a *resident alien* so he could continue to live among his people.
- Lev 25:47 & 53-If an Israelite became destitute and sold himself to a *resident alien* who was prospering, the *resident alien* must be prevented by the community from ruling harshly over the Israelite.

There’s nothing in the Bible which implies or requires unlimited and/ or unrestricted immigration. It doesn’t exist. It’s forced into the text by those who’ve made the mistake of only searching for verses which appear to confirm this line of thought while disregarding others which don’t confirm it. There is *no* exemption for the resident alien/ immigrant, etc. from God’s laws regardless of their sob story regarding their journey to Israel to find asylum or whatever.

What you’ll notice about religious organizations, the shepherds, who intentionally misrepresent this topic, is they’re becoming more open (tearing down God ordained barriers) to anti-Christian ideas and are complicit in allowing them into the fold to corrupt the sheep. Things which are obviously sins in God’s eyes are being viewed with increasing flexibility. Conversion itself is becoming increasingly optional. It’s not an accident. The common denominator is the theological hipster who has a disdain for God and any boundary he’s set. They’ve abandoned faithfulness to God’s word and have taken it upon themselves to get rid of all God mandated boundaries so they can “progress”.