



"Something I've Always Wanted to Ask God is...", Series - Will Mackey - Oct. 9, 2011

How Can Christians Look at the Same Scriptures and Get Very Different Interpretations From Them?

Answer?

Because Christians Approach the Bible With Very Different Bible-Study Ethics.

Five Safe-Guards For Ensuring A Correct Understanding:

1. (Understand: We are Reading Other Peoples' Mail)
 - The books (letters) of the Bible were written to specific people for a specific purpose.
 - Integrity in Bible study means we study to know what the original authors (under the Spirit's guidance) meant their original audiences to understand. Then we can apply those truths to our lives today.
 - Examples: (Acts 1:1-2; Rom. 1:1, 7; 1Cor. 1:1-2)

2. (No Folk-Theology)
 - Never let the teachings of men become a lens through which we interpret Scripture. Even if you love and respect the "folks" never base your relationship with Christ on the beliefs of others.
 - The Spirit wants to teach us personally.
 - Examples: (1Cor. 12:7-11)

3. (No "Add to the Bible"-Theology)
 - We don't develop doctrine on what Scripture does NOT say.
 - Revelation not imagination
 - Examples: (Catholics' Mariology from Luke 1:46-48; Catholics' purgatory from 1Cor. 3:14-15; and the non-Christian Mormons' baptism/marriage for the dead from 1Cor. 15:29)

4. (Context is Everything)
 - Looking at the verses around the verse in question helps us to know more completely what the author is talking about.
 - Examples: (Rom. 7:19 in light of 7:1, 9-10; 6:1-2, 6, 12, 14; 8:2)

5. (Cross-Reference with Other Passages)
 - No writer of any passage meant to say all there was to say about any subject. Solid theological thought requires the whole counsel of God's Word.
 - Examples: (Eph. 1:5 needs Rom. 8:29; 2Cor. 5:15; 2Pet. 3:9; Matt. 22:14 and 2Pet. 1:10-11 for a more accurate understanding).