

The Rock: 07-31-2022

A year with the master

Title: Iotas and dots

Scripture: Matthew 5:17-20, 2 Timothy 3:10-17

(Black bible Pg. 760 and 936 ESV)

Theme:

This week we are going to look at why this story matters, all of the story. How it is helpful as we understand God's grace and mercy toward us in and through Jesus.

Introduction:

We talked a couple weeks ago about Adam and Eve and the creation story we find right at the beginning of the Bible.

As we tried to understand what Jesus was saying about Himself, we needed to really understand His worldview.

That ancient story is as important for us today as it was then, because it is part of the whole story which will only make sense if we keep it all together.

That is what we are going to unpack today, or at least begin to, as we see

that all of it matters to us and for us here in 2022.

Not one iota, not one dot will disappear until Jesus returns. In other words: "It all matters!"

"No man indulges in an error in judgement, without sooner or later tolerating an error in practice." -C.H. Spurgeon

I was reading my devotions, as many of you do. This year for me I am doing Morning and evening, by Spurgeon again.

The fourth of July was helpful for me, as Spurgeon wrote about John 17:17, an important statement that Jesus makes about the Scriptures:

-John 17:17 (ESV)

"Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth."

The entire devotional actually was very powerful as it reinforced who Jesus was and is, and why "the Word" is good for so many things, as Paul states in our opening text.

His word is truth. The Bible is not a truth among truths, it is The Truth. Another claim made about this book which

you will have a hard time finding
elsewhere.

This book is the anchor for our soul in
the storms of life and the darkest
corners of night. When we feel all alone,
lost or adrift -His word lights the way -
it is the unchanging path home:

-Psalms 119:105 (ESV)

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a
light to my path."

Remove truth, and you remove the light
and we are adrift at sea, unanchored and
unable to find our way forward.

Alistair Begg asked in his sermon on July
4 the following question:

"How do we live in a 'Christian country',
which no longer desires the Christian?
How do we live in a 'Christian nation',
when the Christian is no longer welcome?"

This seems to become more evident each
day. Yet, the joy that the believer in
Jesus, (Christian) finds even in this, is
that God's Word remains for us: TRUTH -
The Truth.

Again, as we look to Jesus, and through the text by Paul to Timothy, we find again that it all points to Jesus. The author and perfecter of our faith. The fulfillment of all the Law and the Prophets.

He circles everything around Himself. This is very important to understand as we look to get a hold of the question: why the Bible. Also. what makes it so different and unique?

I certainly don't want to turn us all into theological egg-heads-although there sure are worse things, I do however, desire that we all understand TRUTH. Not as some concept, but rather as a definitive thing as the Bible shows us.

Looking again to Spurgeon, he talks about "sanctification", our growing as followers of Jesus and he makes this comment on John 17:17:

"Sanctify them", Jesus said, "through your truth: Your word is truth." The passage of Scripture which proved the Law and the Prophets comment which Jesus made.

"I have come to fulfill..."

The uniqueness of this book over and against other religious books is found in its subject - Jesus. Everything points to

Him, the God-man, that Jewish carpenter from Nazareth, our redeemer, Immanuel - God with us.

The Story:

So, when we come to Paul here in his letter to Timothy, worldview once again plays a critical role. What we believe, why we believe it, and that we can believe it because the Bible brings its own authority with it.

-2 Timothy 3:14a (ESV)

"But as for you..."

The challenge is being directed right at Timothy. First, as a Christian, and as importantly, as the young pastor over the church in Ephesus.

-2 Timothy 3:14-15 (ESV)

"continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."

Remember what you have learned, what you believe, and why. All the way from your youth (childhood)- you were taught the sacred writings.

Paul here, is referring to the Old Testament. The worldview and framework under which Timothy was raised. Again, real people, at a real time in history, living in a real place called Lystra.

How did Timothy learn all these things? Let's look for a minute at a couple of places. First a page or so back in our bibles, Paul opens his letter:

-2 Timothy 1:5-7 (ESV)

"I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control."

Timothy had a faithful Mom and grandma, who took the time to teach him the Bible and to raise him in the faith. Teaching him all that the Law and the Prophets had to say.

Also, it is clear that at the some point, they all came to believe and see that Jesus was the fulfillment of all the promises they had read about.

A little more background on Timothy can be found in Acts 16, and this is where we learn about his home town:

-Acts 16:1-2 (ESV)

"Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. A disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek. He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium."

It's important to take the time and see these things because it helps us to see the connectedness of the Bible.

It is not just a random bunch of stories thrown together. It is all there for our benefit. More on that when we return to 2 Timothy.

Also, that these people were just regular people doing life -just like you and me. Moms and Dads, Memaws and Papas, all trying to figure out how to navigate each day with all of its joys and struggles that go along with doing life.

I think too, as we consider "worldview", this becomes important because Timothy was taught the Bible, "from childhood".

In other words, Proverbs 22:6 was being followed and applied at least by his mom and memaw:

-Proverbs 22:6 (ESV)

"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it."

Not much can be said of his dad except to say he was a Greek man, as we aren't given any more than that.

My point here is that contrary to many of the opinions today, we are to take the responsibility of raising our kids in the faith, very seriously.

If we do not help them understand, not just the Biblical worldview, but also the Truth of it and of Jesus, someone else will be defining their worldview for us.

I have heard on more than one occasion, that I should not "indoctrinate" or teach others to do the same, especially as it relates to kids. As if it is some sort of evil and abuse.

Most especially when it comes to the Christian faith. The problem with that, is this: If we do not follow the command of God to teach our children, someone else will, and they too have a worldview into which they desire to indoctrinate kids and adults into.

This becomes dangerous for so many reasons if we allow the world to determine what is taught.

Enough on that, and back to Timothy and why every iota and every dot that Jesus is talking about is so important.

-2 Timothy 3:16-17 (ESV)

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

The ESV does a good job with the Greek word Paul uses here. "Theopneustos", means literally "God breathed out."

So, when we come to this book, the Bible, we can and should come to it as if we were listening to God speak, because we are.

That is what Paul is saying here. These people who wrote weren't trying to create a nifty story to compete with other stories of the day. In fact, the Bible stands unique in the way in which it "speaks to us."

Written by 40 authors over a 1,500 year period, and yet is completely cohesive in its direction, its story of redemption, as well as to who it constantly points,

as the fulfillment of all that the Law and Prophets spoke about: Jesus

It is almost as if they are, at the same time, unique individuals, writing in their own style and into their own situation and circumstance. Yet all of them doing so with one and the same voice.

A beautiful symphony -each instrument having its own part to play, and yet when all together, they create a perfectly cohesive piece of music.

Perhaps, just perhaps, it looks and seems that way because they were speaking with one voice. God breathed out through these men, and they wrote as themselves.

Peter, who happened to be sitting with Jesus as He taught this Sermon, heard from Jesus Himself that He was the fulfillment of all these promises, wrote this:

-2 Peter 1:19-21 (ESV)

"And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no

prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

Men spoke from God - the consistency of this book -even in the seeming "inconsistencies" is unreal, and should cause anyone to at least pause for a moment to honestly ask: "Is this all true?"

I will say, especially if you are here this morning and are not a believer, or perhaps you are and you are experiencing a lot of doubt -

That I found it very hard to believe. Yet, the more I studied, the more I researched, the more convinced I became that it was and is true.

That this Jesus of Nazareth was just who He claimed to be -the promised one who came into the world to fix what Adam and Eve broke.

He came to save sinners, of whom I am the worst, as Paul would say, and I say this morning.

Jesus, in His fulfilling of all the Law and Prophets, makes me acceptable before God the Father, because of His righteousness.

I stand, not in my failures and sin, but rather, I stand clothed in His righteousness, because He fulfilled all that the Law and prophets said, this Messiah King, THE savior, is THE answer to all of the world's problems.

Paul makes it clear to Timothy, that all the Bible has been given in order to make the whole Christian. Me, you, and anyone who will believe. Do you believe?

It is profitable Paul says in verse 16 -

-2 Timothy 3:16 (ESV)

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness..."

Listen, you don't think all those people sat around listening to Jesus on that hillside for no reason, do you? No!

His words were and are profitable for teaching -this is what is going on right now, here this morning. This is how we learn and how we grow.

It is good for reproof -helping us to be reminded that there is a right way to be and behave. Jesus will continue in Matthew 5-7 to frame that out when he goes into the: "You have heard it said", statements.

It is good for correcting -In other words there is a right way and a wrong way. If there wasn't, why would my way need to be corrected, and why would the word, the Bible, the TRUTH be needed to show me that, if there wasn't a right way to live.

Correction hurts at times, but it is always profitable and beneficial, if I do not let my pride get in the way and ask the "why" question.

Why are you correcting me LORD? What am I doing that is outside of your framework for me? Because I have learned and come to know that you want what is best for me, but that happens only when I am inside of your story and your will for my life.

It is good for training in righteousness. Remember Proverbs 22:6, about training a child up. Why? Why does Paul say all of these things?

Verse 17:

-2 Timothy 3:17 (ESV)

"...that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

That we may be equipped to do all the things God, through Jesus, has created us to do in and through the Holy Spirit:

-Ephesians 2:8-10 (ESV)

"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."

Equipped for every good work. Not one dot, not one iota will pass away, until He returns. Until He returns, we have work to do in His world.