

Bible Forensics

Rightly Dividing the Depths of Truth

July 10, 2022

Today we're looking at Bible Forensics and learning to *un-lean* on ourselves.



So when push comes to shove, **do you go with your gut or with God?** Said another way: if your every word and action in 2022 was divided into **those that align with God's Word and will and way**, and **those that don't**, how do you think you'd *do*? When those two face off, and you're facing that choice, and you got'a choose a *winner*, **do you lean toward your Lord or yourself?** Best *not* to *try* to *lean* on *yourself*. Cuz when it comes to the straight and narrow, there's not a lot of *wiggle room*! So, you must:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. – Proverbs 3:5-6 NIV

That's a funny Scripture. Like, funny-ha-ha. Know why? Ever try? Stand up for a second. Now, without touching *anyone* or *anything*, *lean* on *yourself*. Get it? It's un-doable. Because **leaning means resting on something stronger**. Ever heard of a "trust fall"? Well it doesn't work out so well on your *own*! But, *take* it from the guy who said:

I said, "I am about to fall," but, Lord, Your love kept me safe. – Psalm 94:18 NCV

Uphold me according to Your Word, that I may live; ... Hold me up, and I shall be safe, and I shall observe Your statutes **[Your ways]** continually. – Psalm 119:116-117 NKJ

I cried out, "I'm slipping!" and Your unfailing love, O Lord, supported me. When doubts filled my mind, Your comfort gave me renewed hope and cheer. – Psalm 94:18-19 NLT

So learn to lean on your greatest Supporter and Cheer Leader! Cuz you just can't trust *yourself* when it comes to *truth*. Know why? *Your crooked heart!* It's just *waiting* to *stab* you in the *back*.

Thus says the Lord: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man ... whose heart departs from **[trusting]** the Lord. ... **[But]** Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, and whose hope is the Lord. ... **[So beware, because]** The *heart* is *deceitful* above *all* things, and *desperately* wicked; Who can know it? **[I'll give you one guess]** I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind ... to give every man according to *his ways* – Jeremiah 17:5-10 NKJ

And *that's* a test we don't want to *take*! I mean, *talk* about being *out* of our *depth*!

Can you discover the depths of God? – Job 11:7 NAS

Oh, the *depth* of the *riches* of the *wisdom* and *knowledge* of God! How unsearchable His judgments, and His paths beyond tracing out! Who has known the mind of the Lord? **[One guess; and it starts with "J"]** – Romans 11:33-34 NIV

So, if we can't *understand* Him, what *can* we do with Him? Here's a *hint*: we *just* went over *this*.



Trust in the Lord with *all* your heart, and *do not* lean on your own [backstabbing] understanding. In *all* your [crooked] ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths. – Proverbs 3:5-6 ESV



Remember that *rock* in the *wall*, that wasn't a *rock* at *all*, but a *wrong* way of *thinking*, based on a *lack* of *perceiving*? Do you *see* it for what it is, *now*? You *all* win *that* cigar! The only thing we should trust about the eyes of our heart, is that that **they're blind without pure truth**. And when we *lean* on our *own*, we're *on* our *own*. If we're not gonna trust Him 100%, why *trust* Him at *all*? Cuz **if you won't trust, He can't lead**. Not *effectively*. Know why? The blinders on the eyes of your heart. Last Sunday we saw that a **"doctrine" is a way of thinking about God**; and:



[An] idol is [simply] a worthless doctrine. – Jeremiah 10:8 NKJ

[And the Lord says] [Everyone] who sets up his idols in his heart ... are all estranged from Me *by* their *idols* [worthless ways of thinking about Me] – Ezekiel 14:4-5 NKJ

[And] [Everyone] who sets up his idols in his heart, and puts before him what causes him to stumble into iniquity, and then comes to the prophet, [for guidance] I the Lord will answer him who comes, according to the multitude of his idols, – Ezekiel 14:3-5 NKJ

Why?! Because God's perfect Word is *subject to* and *limited by* the warping from our lack of perceiving and worthless ways of thinking, i.e. the doctrine-idols hiding in our heart. So:

Do not listen to the words of the prophets who ... make you worthless; they speak a vision of their own heart, not from the mouth of the Lord. [i.e. Scripture] ... [For] Who has marked His Word and [actually] heard it? ... [If they] had caused *My* people to hear *My Words*, then they would have turned them from *their* evil way ... Indeed they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart ... He who has *My Word*, let him *speak* *My Word faithfully*. – Jeremiah 23:16-28 NKJ



Last Sunday we saw a "rock in the wall" when Legion was pleading with Jesus *after* He commanded the demon to come out. And I pointed out that *something* was *really wrong* with our *way of thinking* here ... because Legion was pleading with Jesus *after* He commanded the demon to come out! Which *opened* our *eyes* to the more complete story of Jesus obviously previously casting out the "many demons" that had "seized him" (literally: *caught* him) "many times". (Lk 8:29-30) Well try *this* one on: because, *several* times, Jesus *clearly* says that:

"The Son of Man ... must be killed and **ON the third day** be raised to life." – Luke 9:22 NIV

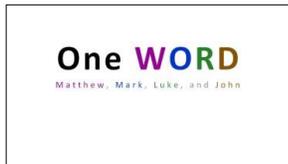
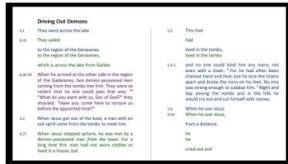
Except when He *clearly* says:

As Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and **three NIGHTS IN the heart of the earth**. – Matthew 12:40 NKJ

Now, He's in the tomb *Friday, Saturday, and Sunday*; so He's *definitely* "in the heart of the earth" three *days*. But Friday and Saturday *night* only equal *two*. So, *true* or *false*?

Those three nights really foul things up. Oh, did I mention that He also *clearly* says that:

The Son of Man must ... be killed, and **AFTER three days** rise again. – Mark 8:31



On the *fourth day*?! Yep. However you count it, *that's* what comes *after* three days, *about midnight!* See my *problem?* I'm afraid you *don't*. Cuz *that's* not my *problem*. *That's* perfect. My problem is *me*. The worthless eyes of my heart that can't see the perfect when it's staring me in the face! But how do you straighten *that*, let alone *weave it together?* As you may know, I mean to *harmonize* the Gospels, and I mean to *weave 'em together*, by hook or by crook, into One Word. And it's mostly *done*. *Has* been for some *time* – except a few little parts that really foul things up. Like *that* one! So my whole goal has become to get out of my own way, **by un-leaning on my own entrenched assumptions**, as learned from the *assumptions* of *others*, so that I can *finally*, hopefully sooner rather than *later*, **stop forcing God's Word to fit my way**. Which is way easier *said* than *done!* Turns out, **it's really tough to get out of our own way**, and stop *trying to straighten things out* on our own. Cuz **un-leaning requires so much un-learning**, cuz our biggest problem is how He *won't* say things the way we think *He means* to. Ever catch yourself doing *that?* Well, we might as well gag God, if we're going to keep forcing Him to speak through the deceitful filter of our *devious back-stabber!* Cuz, **if we're gonna force our faith to fit our agenda it's gonna fail**. How can it *not?* So, instead of putting my efforts into straightening out the Work of *God's* hands, I've been putting it into reading and listening very *carefully*, as *warned*, and crying out regularly for discernment and *wisdom*, as *encouraged*.

Yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek [wisdom] as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; then you will **[finally]** understand the *fear* of the Lord, and find the *knowledge* of God. – Proverbs 2:2-5 NKJ

[Cuz] Who can make *straight* what *He* has made *crooked?* – Ecclesiastes 7:13 NKJ

One guess! We need the Good *Shepherd* to lead us in the *straight* and *narrow*. *Jesus* is “the same *yesterday, today, and forever,*” (Heb 13:8) but *I'm* all over the place! God's Word is as solid and unbending as a shepherd's crook. So, **how can you straighten it without changing it?** By changing your perspective – the way you see it. Cuz there's only *one* angle from which that crook appears *straight*. *But*, and I quote: **“The general consensus on both sides is that you can't have three literal days and three literal nights”¹** And *therefore*, and I quote: **“On the basis of divergent, conflicting interpretations there is no correct interpretation of the sign of Jonah.”²** *However*, and I quote:

Do not listen to the words of the prophets who ... make you *worthless* ... they are prophets of the *deceit* of their own heart ... He who *has* My Word, let him *speak* My Word faithfully. **[And I mean to give it my all to do just that!]** – Jeremiah 23:16-28 NKJ

Cuz I think that simply means *trusting* with 100% of your heart, that it's 100% *true*. I mean:

¹ TalkGenesis.com “What did Jesus mean by 3 days and 3 nights in the heart of the earth?”

² Journals.sagepub.com “Jesus in the Heart of the Earth: Deciphering the Jonah Saying”

Does not wisdom call out? ... "All the words of my mouth are just; *none* of them is *crooked* or *perverse*. To the discerning all of them are right; they are faultless [lit. *straight*] to those who have *knowledge* ... and those who seek me *find* me." – Proverbs 8:1-9, 17 NIV

And those who won't don't. Because of that multitude of worthless thoughts cluttering our heart and warping His *Word* and His *way* and His *will*. So we need some Bible forensics, because:

The wicked is *snared* in the work of *his own* hands. – Psalm 9:16 NKJ

[Cuz] All the ways of a man are *pure* in his *own* eyes, but the Lord weighs the *spirits*. [i.e. *motives*] Commit *your works* [as *crooked as they may be*] to the *Lord*, and *your thoughts* [as *driven and tossed as they may be*] will be established. – Proverbs 16:2-3 NKJ

Want to *see*? I got'a *warn* you, it's kind'a embarrassingly *simple*. Cuz you know what *actually* happened on that third *night*? No? Well, *nobody* does. It's another *huge mystery*. But:

Now *behold*, two of [the disciples] were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus ... [And] [Jesus] drew near and went with them ... and He indicated that He would have gone farther. [Which direction: *horizontal or vertical*?] But they constrained Him, saying ... "It is toward evening, and the day is far spent." [And] ... it came to pass, [being the *third night*] as He sat at the table with them ... He *vanished* – Luke 24:13-30

And didn't appear again till about midnight in the upper room. But we know with 100% certainty where He went. Back into the heart of the earth. Know how we *absolutely know*? Cuz He *told us!* And He doesn't *lie*. And He's never *wrong*. And He said "the Son of Man [will] be ... *three nights* in the *heart* of the *earth*." **There's two things we all agree we don't know about that third night:** 1) **Where He was;** and 2) **Why He said exactly where He'd be.** Kind'a *embarrassing* when you look at it *that way*. And now, applying a bit of Bible forensics, do you suppose *this* is when:

The graves were opened; [By *whom*?] and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to *many*. [Think they did *all that on their own*?] – Matthew 27:52-53 NKJ

[Cuz I know that] He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago ... [like] in the days of *Noah* while the ark was being built. – 1 Peter 3:18-20 NIV

And after He appeared to His disciples, *after midnight*, He led them out so they could watch Him ascend into *heaven*. (Mk 16:19; Lk 24:50-51; Acts 1:9) But then, He was pretty *clear* that:

The Son of Man must ... be killed, and **AFTER** three days rise **AGAIN**. – Mark 8:31



See what I *mean*? Want to see what *else* is said about *this*? Me *too!* So I'm on the hunt! The *treasure* hunt. Problem is, so often when push comes to shove, **we don't trust His Word**, cuz **we don't believe His Word**, cuz **we don't know His Word**, cuz **we don't seek His Word** ... at least, to change *our* perspective. But *if* and *when* we *begin* to *seek* to know *Him*, **He can't not exceed our crooked expectations**. So the next time *you're* imprisoned below by your own dark *doings*, **cry out and seek to correct your perspective**; cuz we could *all* use some *un-crooking*, by *un-learning*, by *un-leaning* on our own *understanding*.

Trust me, **if you trust in Him, and lean on Him, He'll straighten you out.**

Father God, thank You for loving me in spite of my sin; forgive me and cleanse me by the sacrifice of Your Son, my Savior; and free me and lead me by Your Spirit and Word, as I seek to trust and follow Jesus Christ, as the Lord of my life. Amen.