

The Bible #1

Revelation, Inspiration, Inerrancy, Authority

Ascent

Fall Session, Lesson 2

Review of the Gospel

Garden Fall Cross Response

The Bible: Revelation

“The act of God by which he discloses truth to mankind which would otherwise be unknown.”

General Revelation

Special Revelation

The Bible: Inspiration

“God’s oversight of the human authors of Scripture so that, using their own individual personalities, they composed and recorded without error His revelation to mankind in the words of the original writings.”

The Bible: Inerrancy

“Being wholly and verbally God-given, Scripture is without error or fault in all its teaching.”

The Bible: Authority

“The Scriptures are the God-given standard for determining the beliefs and practices of the Christian. To obey their words is to obey God – to disobey their words is to disobey God.”

Digging Deeper:

“Inspiration” <https://bible.org/seriespage/3-inspiration>

“The Reliability and Authority of the Bible”

<https://www.esv.org/resources/esv-global-study-bible/the-reliability-and-authority-of-the-bible/>

“Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy” <http://www.bible-researcher.com/chicago1.html>

Next Week: Survey of the Old Testament

Believing That Which is Hard to Believe

Posted on June 18, 2013 on sabbaththoughts.wordpress.com

by Mike Gaston

I'm troubled at the increasing reluctance of Christians to believe that which is hard to believe. In the name of relevance, open-mindedness, or (insert reason here), more and more of my fellow Christ-followers seem eager to turn away from positions that rub people wrong. "Hey world, you know those ideas and teachings of ours that bother you, that make us seem old-fashioned, irrelevant, out of touch? Well, good news! We don't believe those things anymore. Come give us a second look."

Please understand, I'm glad to see Christians thinking about how we are perceived by those who don't share our convictions. In some areas, like our tendency to blend faith and politics, it has led many of us to some much-needed course corrections. But I'm concerned that we are taking this idea too far.

The core of our faith will, by definition and by Scriptural affirmation (see 1 Corinthians 1:21), appear to be foolish to those who do not embrace it. By most standards, it is beyond bizarre to think that my response to the brutal crucifixion of a Jewish Rabbi two thousand years ago will determine my eternal destiny – yet that is THE central tenet of our faith. If we are unwilling to believe the hard things, sooner or later the hardest of all, the gospel itself, will fall by the wayside.

So I embrace some of the hard things of my faith:

- I believe that God created the universe out of nothing, simply by speaking it into existence, and that He did so in 6 days. Yeah, He is THAT good.
- I believe that He created a literal man and a literal woman and placed them in a literal garden, where their pride led them to violate the only constraint He placed on them, and condemned them and their descendants to serve the worst god of all – themselves.
- I believe that the Bethlehem night was pierced by the cry of a baby whose mother had never had sex, and whose arrival signaled the beginning of the most incredible rescue mission of all time.
- I believe that this baby grew into a man who was God in human form, proving His identity by healing diseases, controlling the weather, raising the dead, and walking on water. That's right, He REALLY walked on water.

- I believe that His execution was the culmination of God's plan to show His love for rebels like me by taking our punishment on Himself.
- I believe that the lungs that stopped breathing, the eyes that stopped seeing, and the heart that stopped beating on the cross suddenly and miraculously resumed their normal functions three days later.
- I believe that this same Man will come back to us some day, as He promised, and make things right.

Does my confidence in these areas (and many others) exist in a tension-free state? Can I embrace these convictions without other questions arising? Of course not. I have lots of questions. I always have, and I probably always will. But my inability to resolve every tension, and answer every question, will not cause me to abandon my belief. Wouldn't it be arrogant of me to assume that God would only do that which I am capable of understanding?

When my girls were little, I sometimes had to respond to their questions by saying "Honey, I honestly can't explain it to you – you'll just have to trust me." They were too little to grasp what I would have needed to tell them.

God is big. I am little. It makes sense to me that I would not be able to understand all of the nuances and complexities of His plan. In fact, it would worry me if I DID understand it all, because I would wonder if I had reduced it so it would fit into my mind.

Sometimes, I just have to figure out what He has said, and trust Him. I have to believe that which is hard to believe. And I'm OK with that. I hope you are, too.