

God's Plan of Salvation:

1. Hear - Romans 10:17
2. Believe - Mark 16:16
3. Repent - Acts 2:38
4. Confess - Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized - Acts 22:16
6. Live faithfully - Revelation 2:10

Announcements:

Sick: Mr. Dowling, Mr. Garner, Mr. Hadley, Ms. Donna Law, Ms. Kim (Ashley Law's mother), Lamar Mathis, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Newsome, Mrs. Owens, Mrs. Siota, Ms. Ward, Mr. Winns.

If you would be interested in any of the following ways to study the Bible, feel free to let us know:

- Home Bible Study - We will come into your home or other place you feel comfortable and study the Bible with you. Bible questions are welcome in these studies and we will seek to give a Bible answer.
- Correspondence courses - We will be glad to mail you a correspondence lesson that you can fill out and mail back to us and we will send you the next lesson.
- Call us with your Bible question - #503-707-6014.
- Visit our website: www.oakgrovechurchofchristjenningsflorida.com
- Come and visit - We always strive to have good, practical Bible instruction at each of our assemblies.

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Presuppositions in Bible Study

By Derek Long

As we approach the study of the Bible, it is important to think about the sort of presuppositions we might be bringing to the text. Certain presuppositions can be a hindrance to allowing the word of God to direct our steps (Psalm 119:105). Certain presuppositions might cause a person to twist the scriptures instead of handling them accurately (2 Peter 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:15). Let's examine how presuppositions can get in the way of proper Bible study as well as some presuppositions which might help in our study of the Bible.

The Bible shows how people who approached situations with certain presuppositions were hindered from seeing what should have been some obvious truths. In 2 Kings 5:9-12 we read of Naaman going to Elisha to be healed of his leprosy. Naaman had a presupposition about how he would be healed from his leprosy. Elisha's instructions did not fit with what Naaman thought would be the case. As a result, Naaman became angry and was about to go away remaining in his leprosy. Naaman's servants help him see how his presupposition was leading him to act in an unreasonable manner (2 Kings 5:13). Naaman listened to his servants and followed what the prophet said and was healed of his leprosy (2 Kings 5:14). Presupposi-

tions can keep people from accepting very basic Bible instructions just like Naaman's presuppositions about kept him from following Elisha's simple instructions. Another Bible example of where presuppositions hindered people's ability to understand basic truths appears in John 9. In John 9, Jesus has healed a man who was blind from birth. The Pharisees end up interrogating the man about his healing and even question his parents. The Pharisees already have a presupposition though regarding Jesus which keeps them from seeing Jesus as He really is. John 9:22 tells us, "the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue" (NKJV). The Pharisees have already made up their mind Jesus cannot be the Christ. As a result, they have to reject the simple logical argument made by the blind man (John 9:24-34). Presuppositions can make us blind to clear and basic truths from God's word just like the Pharisees were blind to who Jesus really was.

What are some presuppositions which might hinder our understanding of the truth today? A person who approaches the Bible with the presupposition that a person cannot do anything which impacts their salvation is going to struggle to understand the Bible. The Bible teaches us to "work out your own salvation" (Philippians 2:12, NKJV), teaches us to "repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38, NJKV), etc. A person who approaches the Bible with the presupposition that a loving God would never send anyone to hell is going to struggle to understand the Bible. The Bible teaches God is love (1 John 4:8) but also shows us God is going to send people to eternal punishment in hell (Matthew 25:46). Presuppositions can keep people

from accepting very simple statements of the Bible if a person is not willing to simply let the Bible guide their thinking and be the thing which forms their beliefs.

Should a person approach Bible study with certain presuppositions? Are all presuppositions about the Bible bad? In order to properly understand the Bible, it is essential we accept certain fundamental truths about it. In order to properly understand the Bible, a person must accept it as being the word of God. Those who wrote the Bible make it clear they were writing God's word (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21; 1 Corinthians 2:6-14; 14:37). If one thinks the Bible contains the wisdom of men, then one can simply set something they do not like aside by saying it was simply the personal opinion of the human author rather than God's word. In order to properly understand the Bible, we must understand God is the creator of all (Genesis 1:1). If we do not accept God's authority as the Creator, we might be tempted to question His actions or commands. If we do not accept God's power as the Creator, we might reject the miraculous elements of the word of God, etc. In order to properly understand the Bible, we must believe it contains all the revelation God is going to give us (Jude 3; Galatians 1:6-9). The Bible is the standard by which we can test anything which would come along later and claim to be the word of God (1 John 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; Acts 17:11). God has made it plain He finished revealing His will to mankind with the close of the New Testament. As a result, we cannot appeal to later-day revelation to supposedly discount some Bible teaching. God's word contains for us all things pertaining to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3-4). We do not need anything else to tell us about God's will for us today!