

The Things We Believe
Wednesday, September 30, 2020

- * There are words, phrases and beliefs that we hold that have no firm foundation in scripture!
- * While they do not really adversely affect our faith they can and do develop a way of interpreting scripture that can train us to misinterpret things that DO matter!

2 Timothy 2:14-16 (International Children's Bible)

14 Continue teaching these things. And warn people before God not to argue about words. Arguing about words does not help anyone, and it ruins those who listen. 15 Do the best you can to be the kind of person that God will approve, and give yourself to him. Be a worker who is not ashamed of his work—a worker who uses the true teaching in the right way. 16 Stay away from those who talk about useless worldly things. That kind of talk will lead a person more and more away from God.

- * Notice the phrase in this translation “a worker who uses the true teaching in the right way!” (from the International Children's Bible)
- * Which means we can use true teaching in the wrong way or that we can also use iron teaching!
- * The point of Paul to Timothy is to handle the teaching of Christ and scripture correctly!! He says this requires STUDY!

I. This week let's look at Matthew 23:9.

“And don't address anyone here on earth as 'Father,' for only God in heaven is your Father.”

- A. This has been used to denigrate Catholics and some Orthodox faiths!

1. It seems pretty “straight forward” doesn’t it? Obviously Jesus said don’t do it! Or did He?
2. The reason this is so important is because we can both injure relationships with other believers as well as use this line of interpretation on verses with great spiritual significance!
3. Also, we miss the benefit of the actual truth Jesus in this case is trying to communicate!

B. Before we go further let’s look at several other scriptures and what was being communicated along these lines!

Job 29:16 (NLT)

16 I was a father to the poor and assisted strangers who needed help.

2 Kings 6:21 (NLT)

21 When the king of Israel saw them, he shouted to Elisha, “My father, should I kill them? Should I kill them?”

Isaiah 51:2 (NLT)

2 Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah who gave birth to you in pain. When he was but one, I called him. Then I brought good to him and made him many.”

1 Corinthians 4:15 (NLT)

15 For even if you had ten thousand others to teach you about Christ, you have only one spiritual father. For I became your father in Christ Jesus when I preached the Good News to you.

C. The Early Church never had a conversation about this concern some people seem to have!

1. This comment and concern that is spoken by some is actually a non-concern and actually a very

inaccurate interpretation of this Matthew 23 scripture!

2. There are many other words, titles and references that are non-concerning as well that are a part of tradition!
3. Rather than being “concerned” over this “title” it was actually a “term of endearment!”
4. It was used as a sign of relationship and respect!
5. We find it used in Corinthians, Timothy, Philippians, Titus and Philemon, Peter and the Epistles of John!
6. The term “father” shows the deep and respectful relationship of believers to one another! More than just a “pupil and teacher!”

1 Peter 5:13 (NLT)

13 Your sister church here in Babylon (a reference to Rome) sends you greetings, and so does my son Mark. (this also should assist us in our interpretation of the book of Revelation)

1 John 2:1 (NLT)

1 My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate who pleads our case before the Father. He is Jesus Christ, the one who is truly righteous.

D. We often refer to the “Early Church Fathers!”

1. For some reason we either forget that or we place them on another level completely!
2. In Church History the term is “The Patristic Age” which literally means “The Age of the Fathers!”
3. The discussion we are having tonight only came

about in the early to mid 1,800's ! Literally!

II. So, what WAS Jesus trying to say or communicate in Matthew?

A. A quick read of the entire context gives us a quick and thorough answer!

Matthew 23:1-12 (TPT)

23 Then Jesus addressed both the crowds and his disciples and said, 2 “The religious scholars and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ throne as the authorized interpreters of the Law. 3 So listen and follow what they teach, but don’t do what they do, for they tell you one thing and do another. 4 They tie on your backs an oppressive burden of religious obligations and insist that you carry it, but will never lift a finger to help ease your load. 5 Everything they do is done for show and to be noticed by others. They want to be seen as holy, so they wear oversized prayer boxes on their arms and foreheads with Scriptures inside, and wear extra-long tassels on their outer garments. 6 They crave the seats of highest honor at banquets and in their meeting places. 7 And how they love to be admired by men with their titles of respect, aspiring to be recognized in public and have others call them ‘Reverend.’ 8 “But you are to be different from that. You are not to be called ‘master,’ for you have only one Master, and you are all brothers and sisters. 9 And you are not to be addressed as ‘father,’ for you have one Father, who is in heaven. 10 Nor are you to be addressed as ‘teacher,’ for you have one Teacher, the Anointed One. 11 The greatest among you will be the one who always serves others from the heart. 12 Remember this: If you have a lofty opinion of yourself and seek to be honored, you will be humbled. But if you have a modest opinion of yourself and choose to humble yourself, you will be honored.”

B. Did you notice Jesus said to not “be addressed” as Master, Father or Teacher!

1. For some reason we only mention the “father” title,

which should cause us to realize our error!

2. “Master” is actually where we get our english title of “Mister”! So that really messes things up!
3. No, lets get the deep rich meaning of Christ’s words here!!!
4. He is saying to humble ourselves to each other and not be arrogant and prideful in our positions!!!
5. This could also be seen as the “gifts given to men” in Corinthians and other places!
6. We may all have “different functions” in the Body of Christ, but we must never allow the craving of power to treat each other differently!