



HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE FOR YOURSELF

PART 2

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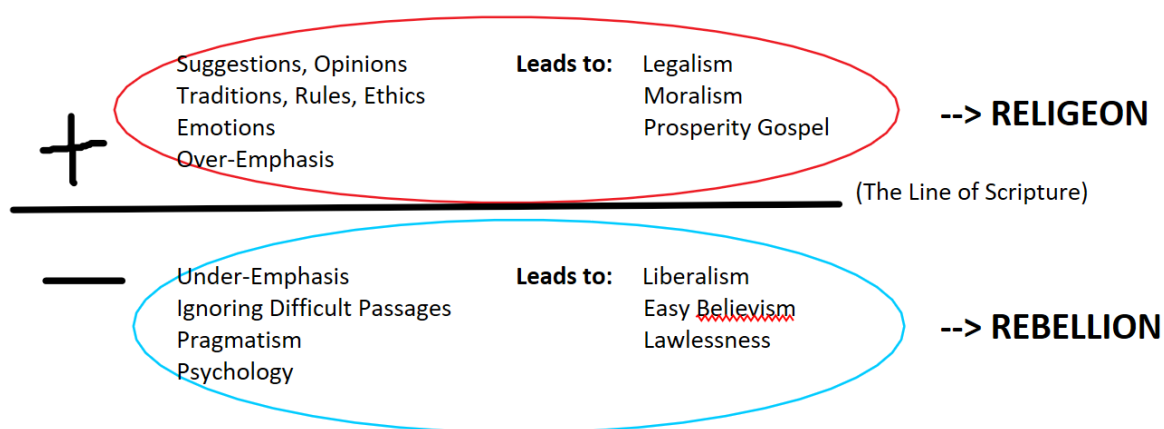
Introduction

Principle: We must stay on the line of Scripture, never straying above it or below it.

2 Timothy 2:15 (ESV) — ¹⁵ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

Deuteronomy 4:2 (ESV) — ² You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you.

Revelation 22:18–21 (ESV) — ¹⁸ I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, ¹⁹ and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book. ²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, “*Surely I am coming soon.*” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! ²¹ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.



Explanation: We are often tempted to require more than the Scriptures, venturing into religious pietism and expressing a zeal that becomes a kind of legalism. We judge others who do not maintain our extra-Biblical traditions and standards. In so doing, we add to the Scriptures.

We can also be tempted to dip below the line into liberalism and pragmatism, ignoring both the content and point of Scripture. In so doing, we subtract from the Scriptures.

As students of God's Word, we must commit ourselves to saying nothing more or less than the Scriptures say. It is a matter of obedience.

Practice Texts: Mark 7:1-13, Genesis 3:1-3, John 19:3-9

Mark 7:1-13

Question 1: Identify who is Adding to & Subtracting From the Word of God?

- The Pharisees ADD the Traditions of Men to the Word of God (vs 3-8)
 - Washing hands, pots, cups, couches etc
 - Demanding obedience to Traditions - vs 5
 - Teachings as Doctrine... the Commands of Men (vs 7)
- The Pharisees also SUBTRACT the actual requirements / commands of God's Word (vs 8-12)
 - They reject the clear commands of God (vs 8, 9)
 - They replaced the honouring of Parents with the new teaching of "Corban"
 - If the money they would have used to support their parents was given to God, then they no longer carried any responsibility to care for their family.

Question 2: What is Jesus Response to this Adding and Subtracting?

- He Rebuked them as Hypocrites (vs 6)
- He corrected them from Scripture (vs 6-7)
- He explained that Adding and Subtracting from Scripture, actually "Wipes out the Line!" (vs 13)
 - Deviating from the line of Scripture makes it VOID!

Implication:

- And deviation (adding or subtracting) from scripture is not just hiding the meaning, or confusing the meaning, or presenting a valid alternative... it is actually nullifying the Word of God.
- This means we have to be very careful to rightly understand the Word of God for ourselves... and then then to rightly speak, teach, communicate, share it with others.

Genesis 3:1-7

Question 1: Identify who is Adding to & Subtracting From the Word of God?

- Eve

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| Adding | Vs 3 "neither shall you touch it" |
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- Satan / The Serpent

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|--------------|---|
| Subtracting: | Vs 1 "Did God really Say" |
| Adding | Vs 1 "You shall not eat of ANY tree in the Garden?" |
| Subtracting | Vs 4 "You will NOT surely die" |
| Adding | Vs 5 "You will be like God" |

Question 2: Is there a difference to Eve's Adding vs Satan's Adding?

- YES
 - Satan's Motive was purely evil to undermine the Word of God in order to bring destruction and chaos into God's world.
 - He did this simply by adding and subtracting from God's Word.
 - His motive was REBELLION against God
 - Eve's motive seems good... to add what she thought was human wisdom to God's word...
 - God said, "Don't eat"... so Eve added "Don't even touch!"
 - Nevertheless - whenever we add or subtract, we nullify... and soon will be caught in the sinful implications of messing with God's word.
 - She thought... RELIGION (More Rules) will help me please God
 - We often do this today...
 - God says, "Don't get drunk"... so we add, "Don't even take a sip."
 - Jesus says, "Be in the world, but not of the world" and so we add... "Have nothing to do with the world." (This lead to Monasteries... and exclusive Baptist Church meetings!!!)

Question 3: What was the implication of Adding and Subtracting from God's Word?

- Irrespective of the differing motives of Eve and Satan, the consequence of both RELIGION and REBELLION was:
 - Sin
 - Disobedience
 - Curse
- The Very word which was intended to protect and bring life, was made VOID and the end result was great suffering and death.

Matthew 19:3-9

Question 1: Who is adding or subtracting from the Word of God?

- The Pharisees are subtracting (Vs 3)
 - Is it lawful to get divorced for any reason?
- They even then appeal to Scripture to back up their argument!!!
 - See vs 7
 - Once you add or subtract... distorting the rest is not far away!

Question 2: How Does Jesus Hold the Line?

- He firstly goes back to clearly drawing the line
 - vs 4 - "Have you not read"
- He appeals to God's created Order from Scripture
 - Vs 4 - He Quotes Genesis 1
 - Vs 5-6a - He quotes Genesis 2
- He then draws his conclusion from Scripture - vs 6b
- When Pressed with their counter argument by distorting Scripture in vs 7...
 - Jesus explains the Mosaic concession as exactly that! A Concession (vs 8)
 - He then returns to the Line of Scripture "but from the beginning it was not so"
 - He then rightly applies the Scripture into a modern context - vs 9

Strategies: What Strategy can we consciously apply when reading Scripture to stay on the Line?

- Consider the text in light of both extremes, and anticipate how those who furthest above and the furthest below might treat the text
- Always test consistency of your reading with the rest of Scripture
- Come Back Next Week to learn the first two tools of Bible Interpretation :-)

Conclusion:

- Staying on the Line is not essentially a tool / strategy / technique... it is fore mostly a CONVICTION!
- God has spoken. His word is perfect and true. I need to treat it with the respect it deserves.
- I cannot play loose and fast with Gods word.
- It is a matter of Obedience and Worship to Stay on the Line of Scripture... anything more or less is to destroy it.