



5 MINUTE LESSONS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Looking at a Passage That Is Hard to Understand

When looking at a passage of Scripture that is hard to understand, look for the concept and meaning of words and phrases that are not stated in the passage, but are there in meaning.

For instance, “*who by patient continuance in well doing*” (Romans 2:7) is expressing ongoing repentance although the word “repentance” is not used in the passage.

Or Matthew 25:31-46,

“³¹When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

³²And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:

³³And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

³⁴Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

³⁵For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

³⁶Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

³⁷Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?

³⁸When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?

³⁹Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

⁴⁰And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

⁴¹Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

42For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

43I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

44Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

46And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.” (Matthew 25:31-46 King James Version)

In these verses everlasting life and everlasting punishment are pronounced on two kinds of people. The only difference between these two groups are what they did and what they didn't do. One group acted in a righteous manner (Matthew 25:46) and the other group acted in an unrighteous manner (Matthew 25:42-43). What word (or concept) is in the text, but the word itself is never used? I would say, "faith." A dead faith that has no works or actions, and a living faith that expresses itself in works or actions.

Or Matthew 7:21-23,

21Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 7:21-23 King James Version)

The person in this passage said the right words. He said "Lord, Lord." But Jesus said, I don't know you. In fact what He really said was, "I never knew you." Was that person religious? Of course he was. Read Matthew 7:22.

Why was this religious person turned away from God's Kingdom? The passage tells us the answer in verse 23,

“And then will I (Jesus) profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” (Matthew 7:23 King James Version)

He was turned away from the Kingdom because he was a worker of iniquity, he practiced lawlessness. He failed to do the will of the Father (Matthew 7:21). He failed to "repent." Although the word "repent" is not used in the passage, the concept is.

So it is with faith, repentance, baptism, etc. The concept could be there in the passage without using the word.

For instance with the conversion passages:

³⁸Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

³⁹For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” (Acts 2:38-39)

The word “repent”, the word “baptized”, and the phrase “remission of sins” is there, but there is no mention of “faith.”

John 3:16 — *“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

“Faith” and “everlasting life” are mentioned, but not “repentance” or “baptism.”

Mark 16:16 — *“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”*

“Salvation” is mentioned with “faith” and “baptism,” but “repentance” is not mentioned.

Acts 3:19 — *“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out...”*

“Repentance” is mentioned with “conversion,” but not “faith” or “baptism.”

Because a word or words are not mentioned in a passage does not mean that the concepts are not there. Look for the foundational doctrines of Christ to be present (Hebrews 6:1-2) — Repentance, faith, baptisms, laying on of hands, the resurrection, and eternal judgment.

Don't push a meaning into a passage that is not there, but look for a meaning that might be there.

Questions

1

Read 2 Timothy 3:16.

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God...” - 2 Timothy 3:16

The whole Bible in all its parts is fully and equally inspired.

True or False

2 Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV).

"¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." - 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV)

All Scripture is useful for:

- A. teaching
- B. rebuking
- C. correcting and training in righteousness

3 By "canon" of Scripture we mean an officially accepted list of books which is recognized by the church as God's Word.

True or False

4 Read Acts 2:42.

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." - Acts 2:42

The primary standard applied to a New Testament book was that it must be written by an Apostle or by someone close to the Apostles.

True or False

5 Read Romans 6:23.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." - Romans 6:23

What does a passage actually say? Do we read our own meaning into a passage?

Yes or No

Answer Key

- 1** Read 2 Timothy 3:16.
The whole Bible in all its parts is fully and equally inspired.

True

- 2** Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV).
All Scripture is useful for:

A. teaching

B. rebuking

C. correcting and training in righteousness

- 3** By “canon” of Scripture we mean an officially accepted list of books which is recognized by the church as God’s Word.

True

- 4** Read Acts 2:42.
The primary standard applied to a New Testament book was that it must be written by an Apostle or by someone close to the Apostles.

True

- 5** Read Romans 6:23.
What does a passage actually say? Do we read our own meaning into a passage?

Yes

**We usually read our own interpretations into at least some passages.
Example: The wages of sin is hell. What the passage says is, the wages of sin is death.**

- 6** Read 1 Timothy 6:3-4.
Sound doctrine in the Scripture always leads to a godly lifestyle.

True

7 Read 2 Timothy 4:3.

Do you believe that time has come (when people will not tolerate sound doctrine)?

You decide!

We want to hear from you!

We would love to hear your feedback on these lessons and how you use them in your own study or in discipling others. If you have any thoughts, stories, testimonies, comments, or questions we would love to hear them!

delessons.org/contact

DKM
10065 Sun Ridge Circle
Rogers, AR 72756 U.S.A.
delessons.org