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Monday, March 11, 2024

INTRODUCING SOME ISSUES REGARDING THE BIBLE AND OUR THEOLOGY

1. We are called to become scholars of the LORD God Almighty's word (i.e., the revealed will via Scripture, natural world, history and providence). Learners withhold; scholars share (Matthew 28:19).
2. Neither soteriological sentience nor soteriological security occur because we possess perfect epistemology regarding the LORD God Almighty. Nevertheless, we must continuously assess our epistemology—it always affects and effects our understanding of the LORD God Almighty. Our declarations of Truth and truth are direct outcomes of our epistemology. *How we know affects and effects what we presume to know.* So? Epistemology is core to Bibliology.
3. Neither soteriological sentience nor soteriological security is found through having error free translations of the undiscovered autographs of Scripture. Apparently, we will be forever dependent on apographs.¹ The word of the LORD God Almighty is what we seek to understand, not translations of Scripture. Nonetheless, we must continually compare and contrast translations to achieve an understanding of the WORD.
4. While we assume (i.e., possess faith) the LORD God Almighty has revealed the purposes of the LORD God Almighty perfectly, we know our culture, language, and other human biases affect our understanding. The complex wonder of the natural world, providence, history, and Scripture defy full comprehension. Ergo, we hold Scripture, the word of the LORD God, to be inerrant, not our understanding of same.
5. A proper study of our theology of the LORD God Almighty is fundamental to knowing whether said theology is idolatrous, mere esoteria, or eternally significant. Remember—all people have a theology. It may be shallow or uninformed or irrelevant or patently false, but all sentient humans have some notion about who the LORD God is, or whether the LORD God even is.²

¹[Porter's First Law of Theology](#) is—"God is smart." I believe the LORD knew we would make an autograph of Scripture an idol, something to be revered, treasured, and put in a museum, or sold to the collector with the deepest pockets. Nothing like competing apographs to humble scholars of Scripture.

²But what about "agnostics?" Yes, there are folk who genuinely assert and effectively argue there is insufficient evidence for the LORD God's existence. As an undergraduate, one of my professors, J.D. Bales, said an "agnostic is an atheist without guts." Agnosticism is indeed oxymoronically easy and simultaneously hard to explain and defend.

6. So then, why do we need “graduate work” on how people use the Bible to understand the LORD God?

7. Why is it useful to believe one translation is superior?

A. It becomes a litmus test for theological legitimacy. Why?

B. According to the _____ version, your view of creation is flawed. Genesis 1:1 does not say “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” It says...

C. Comparing different scholars’ translations is no longer necessary. After all, the truth is simple—just read it. (Why is this not true?)³

D. _____

KNEADING THE THOUGHT
Monotheism—revealed, not evolved. What is the significance of this distinction? For theology? For Bibliology?

8. Why is it idolatrous to believe Father God answers to the Son? Or, the Son reports to Father God? Or, Holy Spirit answers to both the Son and Father God? Or, the Son reports to Holy Spirit? Just what created this notion of Trinity? Why is this construct useful?

9. How do we distinguish between these three types of theological authority? And, what are the advantages and disadvantages of each?

Canonical authority: _____

Theological authority: _____

Ecclesiastical authority: _____

KNEADING THE THOUGHT
What issues do a “plenary” or “partial” view of Scripture’s inspiration present?

10. What are the fundamental problems with these three approaches to understanding the Lord God Almighty?

Pantheism: _____

Agnosticism: _____

Polytheism:⁴ _____

³Our culture, language, and human bias always affects and effects our understanding of the Scriptures. Our declarations of Truth and truth are direct outcomes of our human bias. We cannot understand Scripture without understanding our biases. For example, how does one explain “Father God” to a culture in which the father is not the dominant adult, but the mother?

⁴Careful—our Islamic friends and brothers challenge Christians for our polytheism; i.e., believing Allah is comprised of Father, and Holy Spirit.