

Wednesday, March 30, 2022

MAKE IT MAKE SENSE

ALL WORDS MATTER

CONTEXT

In this episode, we want to continue looking at the how of studying scripture and provide you with tools to help you in your personal study. When it comes to scripture, all words matter. All Scripture is God-breathed, so every word has purpose and meaning. In this session we're going to talk about word studies and how to properly conduct a word study.

The Bible's Languages

- a) The Old Testament is largely written in Hebrew. The New Testament largely written in Greek. Both include a third language important to know: Aramaic.
- b) Koine Greek
 - 1) Common Greek (as opposed to classical)-God used the common language of the day, spread by Roman authorities to communication the truth of the Gospel.

Why Words Matter

- i. God has chosen words as the medium for his special revelation (previous episode).
- ii. The meaning of words change over time and across time. (Example: Bad and Dope over the past four decades)
 - a) Psalm 23:1: "...shall not **want**." CSB: I have what I need
 - b) 1 Kings 18:21: "...how long **halt** ye between two opinions?" ESV: How long will you go limping..
 - c) Colossians 2:8: "Beware lest any man **spoil you** through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." ESV: take you captive
- iii. Translations don't always capture the range of meaning of the words or what they might mean in context of the text around them.

How to Conduct a Word Study

- i. Read the text in multiple translations (NASB, NIV, ESV, and NLT), looking for differences in translations for specific words.
- ii. Count the frequency of certain words in your chosen passage. Words that appear more often or words that are rare are good candidates.
 - a) *Hapax Legomenon* (*Greek meaning "to say once"*)-hapax legomena are words that only appear on time in Scripture
 - 1) Stephen calls folks "stiff-necked" in Acts 7:51. Greek: hard neck (*trachelos*-medical term *trachea*).
 - 2) Paul as "master builder" in 1 Corinthians 3:10. Greek word is *architekton* (*archo*-begin and *tekto*-trade)-where we get architect.

- 3) Paul bears the “*stigma*” of Jesus in his body in Galatians 6:17. Where we get Latin *stigmata* and movie by the same name.
- iii. Find the original language word in a word study resource (Concordance or Bible Dictionary).
 - a) This will help you find the other occurrences of the word.
 - b) When looking at other occurrences make sure you read inside/out (start with book, go to other books written by author (if applicable), then the OT/NT usage of the word.
- iv. Identify the definition of the word and all the ways it is translated in Scripture (blueletterbible.org is a good resource for this)
- v. Questions to Ask
 - a) How does this word connect with the larger biblical story?
 - b) What kind of word meaning seem most likely intended by the author?
 - c) What kinds of word meaning can determine are unlikely interpretations?

Righteousness Word Study

- i. Romans 1:16-17-Paul on righteousness.
 - a) *Read in multiple translations:* Most use “righteousness” here. NLT uses “makes right in sight”
 - b) *Same book:* Paul uses the word righteousness 33 times in Romans.
 - c) *Author’s writings:* Paul uses the word righteousness 57 times in all of his writings. By far more than any other writer in the New Testament.
 - d) *Old Testament usages:* Hebrew-*sedeq/sedaqa*
 - 1) Where someone does right by another in context of relationship.
 - (1) Joseph negotiates wages with Laban (Genesis 30:33-honesty is the word *sedaqa*, or **righteousness**).
 - 2) Behavior that aligns with God’s will.
 - (1) Blessed are they who observe justice, who do **righteousness** at all times! (Psalm 106:3)
 - 3) Being in right relationship with God.
 - (1) Abraham believed God and it was counted to him **righteousness** (Genesis 15:6)
 - (2) Cognate found in Isaiah 53:11.
 - e) *New Testament:* Matthew (7), Mark (0), Luke (1), John (2), Revelation (1)
- ii. Matthew 3:15 “...fulfill all **righteousness**.”
 - a) Matthew uses the word **righteousness** seven times. Remember, he’s writing to a Jewish audience. Very intentional with using the word seven times.
 - b) John concerned about power relationship. Jesus is saying “I’m about to do right by God” by publicly appearing as a servant. Power inversion.
- iii. Paul’s use of righteousness in Romans 1:16-17 is the third sense. Being put in right relationship with God. He even uses Genesis 15:6 to get the reader there.
- iv. FOR NEXT TIME: Conduct a word study on the words *joy* and *rejoice* in Paul’s writings. Read Philippians 1:1-30 to help you get started.

Resources for Word Studies

- v. Key Word Study Bible
- vi. Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance
- vii. Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words