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Session 9

The Most Dangerous Person

From someone studying a book with a group of people that says:

We can't look at God as "only" a loving Father or we can't appreciate the cross. He's citing passages in the Psalms about how He not only hates sin, he hates sinners & Habakkuk 1:13 to prove God can't look at evil.

I feel compelled to share with others how harmful this view of the Father is but I'm realizing I will have to point out that the Old Testament writers got some things wrong about as a result of their fallen, pre-redemption condition. How do I lovingly share this? I'm anticipating people really struggling to process that through their ideas about biblical inerrancy.

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(Of Paul:)

His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

2 Peter 3:16

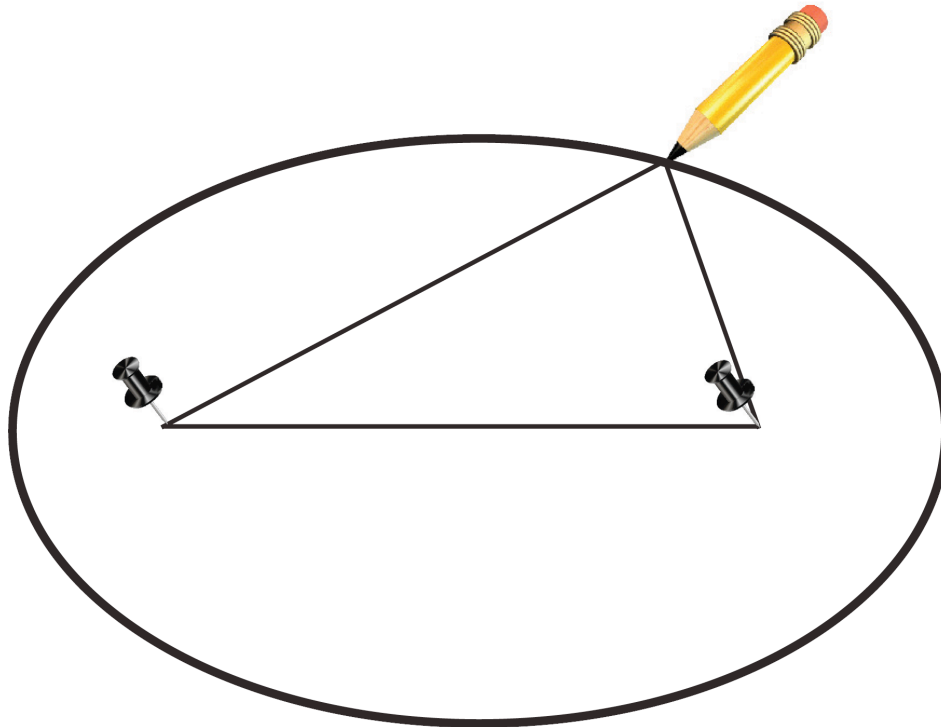
1. The danger of the Schofield Bible and subsequent study Bibles
2. Those who don't know they are interpreting
3. Letting Scripture say what it says
4. The less we know about a subject the more overconfident we pretend to be about it
5. Embrace the mystery of the book – 2 Peter 3:16

The Elliptical Playground

Truth is inside a person, not a set of principles, so often two things orbit each other, neither exclusive of the other. The objectivity inside A Relationship -

The playground in which we get to live – elliptical theology

First Amendment example



The boundaries in which God makes himself known and guard against seeing God as the projections of our own best intentions.

- Love and Truth
- Grace and obedience
- God as Abba and God as Judge
- Predestined and Free Will
- Kingdom present – Kingdom future
- Individuality – Unity
- Accountability and Mercy
- God's Activity and Our Participation
- Scripture and Spirit

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or denying the free exercise therefore..." *First Amendment to the United States Constitution*

Session 11

The Early Letters

	Paul	Others
Early Letters	1 & 2 Thessalonians	James
	Galatians	
	1 & 2 Corinthians	
	Romans	
Middle Letters	Ephesians	Hebrews
	Philippians	
	Colossians	
	Philemon	
Later Letters	1 & 2 Timothy	1 & 2 Peter
	Titus other	Jude
		1, 2 & 3 John
		Revelation

James

- Author: James, the brother of Jesus, didn't believe at first but became leader in Jerusalem, martyred in 62 by being thrown from the temple and stoned
- Date: Probably the earliest: 47-48 AD
- Theme: The Practice of True Religion
- To encourage them in trials, and rebuke for neglect of the transforming power
- Characteristics:
 - Authoritative - lots of imperatives
 - Relationship to Sermon in the Mount
 - Very little theological--emphasis is on practical Christianity

1 & 2 Thessalonians

- Paul after his abrupt departure (Acts 17) to establish them in the kingdom and deal with problems they had
- Date 50-51 within six months of each other.
- 1 Thessalonians: an apostle's encouragement to a young group in persecution (2:12,4:18) and answering questions concerning the dead in Christ. Gentle in tone: mother caring for children (2:7)
- 2 Thessalonians: again an apostle's encouragement.
 - Further instruction on the second coming of Jesus
 - Further instructions on Christian conduct – including a warning to the idle
 - Tone: more direct, terse

Galatians

- Paul's authorship never questioned, with secretary
 - Date: 48-49 before Jerusalem Council (Acts 15)
Mentions 2 of his 5 visits to Jerusalem
 - Visited Galatia twice (Lystra, Iconium, Derbe)
 - Theme – Justification by Faith in Christ (5:1)
False teachers (1:7,5:10,12,6:12-13)
 - Tone: Sharp rebuke (3:1-5, 5:12)
 - Next to 2 Corinthians the most biographical
 - Versatility in presentation – Scripture, experience, logic, warning, exhortation, allegory
- Only letter of Paul to a group of churches

1 & 2 Corinthians

- The Church at Corinth- Acts 18 major port 12 temples
- Four Letters 1st letter – 2 Corinthians 5:9
2nd Letter – I Corinthians
3rd letter – 2 Corinthians 2:4
4th Letter – 2 Corinthians
- Date: Toward the close of his time in Ephesus (16:5-9), around 55 AD with second cor. 4-5 months later
- 1 Corinthians: Unity in the body of Christ
 - Tender concern
 - Problems in Corinth: Division, lawsuits, immorality, selfishness
- 2 Corinthians: motives of true and false ministry
 - The most personal
 - Most autobiographical (sufferings, motives, weakness)

Romans

- Author: Paul on his way to Jerusalem with offering (Romans 15:25-26; Acts:18-21)
- Rome, where he'd not yet been
- Theme: The righteousness that trust produces (1:16-17)
- Most intense doctrinal and theological writing in the New Testament (justification, sanctification, glorification)
- Many Old Testament references
- Section on God's desires for the Jews (9-11)
- Has had a profound and powerful effect on many key individuals in the history of the church, including Martin Luther, John Calvin, John Wesley and William Tyndale.

Session 12

The Middle Letters

Reading the Epistles

- Example: Galatians 3:1-5
- Who is involved?
Paul: 9 to churches 4 to individuals
General: 8 to various locales
Recipients

- Structure
Paul: from indicatives to imperatives
- Context of the Letter
Where does it fit in the Biblical story?
The situation they are in
Counsel/teaching given
- What does this speak to my life?
Where does it signal my heart out of bounds?
How does it inform me to live in him today?
What does it reveal about the ways God works?

The Prison Epistles Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon, Philippians

- All four written during some kind of imprisonment or at least house arrest (Eph 3:1, 4:1; Phil 1:7, 13-14; Colossians 4:18, Philemon 1, 9) Three possibilities:
In Caesarea for two years? Acts 23ff
In Rome for two years? Acts 28
Some suggest Ephesus but no record of that
- Three are obviously at the same time, given their bearers: Tychichus (Col 4:7, Eph. 6:21) and Onesimus (Col 4:17 and Philemon)
- Different temper to the Philippian account, Paul is confident of release (1:25), others contain no such hint
- Probably the Roman imprisonment, 59-61 AD, the three around the middle and Philippians at its end

Ephesians

- History with Ephesians: Acts 19-20 – 2 visits
- Not writing to address any particular problem, but to expand their understanding of the church.
- Theme – The Church as the fullness of Christ
- Major Characteristics:
No personal greetings, perhaps a circular letter
Equality of Jew and
A developed sense of the trinity
Two prayers (1:15-23; 3:14-21)
- Relationship with Colossians
Both stress 'fullness', 'mystery', and 'wisdom'
Christ is the head of all things
Both speak of putting off the old man and putting on new and make practical applications in life

Colossians

- The Church at Colosse (Acts 19:10, Col 1:7-8)
Founded by Epaphras and possibly Timothy (1:1)
- Theme: Christ is all in all! (Christ in you...)
- Major Characteristics
Problems they were facing with false teachers
Warmly personal
Joy and rejoicing major themes, even though he was in prison
Two major Christological passages (1:13-20, 2:8-15) as well as two minor

(1:27-28, 2:2-3)

Philemon

- To Philemon of Colosse, an escaped slave
- Theme – personal letter to help a new convert make restitution for his failure
- Characteristics
 - Shortest letter of Paul, only 1 not centered on church issues
 - Shows us how early Christianity deal with slavery – not force but freedom
 - Shows us Paul's inner life and love for people

Philippians

- Philippi- The first European outpost for the Gospel
- Theme: Unity, emphasis on 'one', 'all' 'same',
 - Major Christological passage – Ch 2
 - Jesus Christ was the center of Paul's life
- Major Characteristics
 - Tone: Warmly personal ("I" used 52 times)
 - Joy and rejoicing used often, even though in prison
 - Major passage on righteousness from faith (3)
 - Paul an example of enduring persecution of ambition and contentment
 - Only time overseers and deacons referred to in salutation and closing

Hebrews

- Author unknown Possibly Barnabus, Apollos, Priscilla
 - Author was second-generation believer (2:3)
- Recipients - a group of Hebrew Christians, very familiar with Old Testament, in persecution and near desertion
- Date: Probably before 70 AD when temple was destroyed, for it is not mentioned. Timothy released from prison (13:23) probably same as 2 Timothy
- Theme: The superiority of Jesus and his Covenant
- Characteristics
 - High literary quality
 - Saturated with Old Testament quotes
 - An incredible study on the nature and work of Jesus
 - "Draw near." Pivotal passage: (10:19-25)
 - Faith Hall of Fame (11)

Session 13

The Later Letters

The Pastoral Letters Timothy and Titus

- How accurate is this designation?

- To two men Paul had left to function as in his absence
- Common Themes: Life in the local church
 - Sound Doctrine
 - Leadership
 - How to treat various groups of people
- Take into account the difference between church as they knew it, and church as we know it today

1 Timothy

- Timothy, Paul's traveling companion and representative in Ephesus.
 - Native of Lystra (in Galatia) of Greek father and Jewish mother
 - Brought up in Jewish faith
 - Joined Paul on 2nd Missionary journey (Acts 16:1-3)
- Tradition says he was martyred under (81-117)
- Ephesus Timothy helped establish it with Paul. The third of six different snapshots of Ephesus
- After Paul's release from prison around 63-65 AD
- Theme: The importance of sound
 - Deal strongly with false teachers.
 - Very affectionate – Father to Son
 - Qualifications for elders and deacons

Titus

- Titus (Gal 2:3) Gentile possibly from Antioch
 - Paul used him to quell problems in Corinth (2 Cor 7:6-16; 8:16-24)
 - Probably visited Crete on fourth journey and left Titus
- The church of Crete
 - A new church in a morally depraved society
 - A weak church, reflecting that
- Date: after Paul's release from prison around 63-65 AD
- Theme – Calling the church to purify in lifestyle
 - Solution: Godly leadership and sound doctrine
- Major passage on how grace teaches us to say no to worldly passions (2:1-14)

2 Timothy

- To Timothy again
 - Paul had been re-imprisoned in Rome and put on trial.
 - Most of his friends had deserted him – only 2 left
- Anxiety for a great falling away
- Wanted Timothy and Mark to come to him
- Date: during a second imprisonment in Rome, much harsher than the first
- Theme – Fulfill your ministry, Timothy
 - Keep the gospel pure – no matter the cost.
- Great encouragement in the face of hardships and hope in the face of death

1 Peter

- Author: Peter, the fisherman
 - I Peter is terrific, and II Peter is sloppy

- Silvanus (Silas) was secretary of the first (5:12); Peter wrote the second himself
- Epistles are very consistent with his preaching (Acts 2) and his life with Jesus (the transfiguration, his own fiery trial)
- To Christians scattered in what is modern-day Turkey (Galatia) Probably toward the end of his life. Peter was martyred in 68 AD under Nero
- The second Epistle refers to the first (3:1)
- Theme: hope in the coming age (1:3; 5:12)
 - Heavy persecution and fear (1:6, 4:12)
 - Sets their hope in the age to come

2 Peter

- Authorship – Already covered
- Theme: True knowledge frees us from error (2 Peter 3:17-18)
- Where 1 Peter deals with persecution from without, 2 Peter deals with error from within
- To expose the false teachers, and set people free to really discover God's truth
- Characteristics
 - The account of the transfiguration (Ch1) and possible hint of Mark's gospel
 - Common ground with the Epistle of Jude — Same illustrations and layout, possible Peter may have made use of Jude

Jude

- Author: Most likely Jude, the brother of Jesus
 - He nor James refer to their relationship with Jesus, but others did (1 Cor 9:5, Gal 1:19)
 - Not an apostle, but a second generation Christian (3)
 - Identified as a traveling missionary in 1 Cor 9:5
 - Recipients: Unclear, possibly circular?
- Probably mid 70's - 80's
- Theme: Oppose False teaching (3)
 - False teaching had crept in, especially Gnostic idea that the body is evil so just indulge it
 - Sound doctrine and right practice go hand in hand
- Style is direct and aggressive
- Uses nonbiblical writings - Assumption of Moses, the Book of Enoch

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- doesn't matter how you indulge it
 - B. Sound doctrine and right practice go hand in hand
 - C. Where you find false teaching—expose and eliminate it
4. Characteristics
- A. Style is direct and aggressive
 - B. Organized in groups of 3
 - 1. Salutation
 - 2. OT examples of judgment
 - 3. Rebellious characters
 - 4. Classifications of those who need help (22-23)
 - C. Use of natural phenomena in illustrations (12-13)
 - D. Uses nonbiblical writings - Assumption of Moses, the Book of Enoch

Session 14

John's Letters and Revelation

1 John

- Author: John the disciple of all 3 (all very similar in vocabulary and terms to each other and John's Gospel)
- Recipients: Gentile believers with whom John was personally acquainted probably Ephesus (See Rev 1:11)
- Theme: "That you might know—you are loved!"
 - A faith based on surety
 - Living loved is transformative
 - Battles Gnostic heresy that led to asceticism (Colosse) or licentiousness (here)
- 1/5 of all references to love in NT occur in these books
- Simplicity of content and structure
- Bluntness of the language--no middle ground, light or darkness

2 John

- "To the chosen lady and her children" -- a woman, or figurative for church
- Theme: Truth--receive it, obey it, cherish it!
 - The nature of Christ
 - The call to love one another
- Background: False teachers were coming with a distorted gospel, don't receive them!
You are linked to what you support.

3 John

- A personal letter to Gaius

- Theme: True and False Leadership
- Background: To encourage Gaius and Demetrius in their commitment to truth and faithful service Demetrius may have been one of the rejected missionaries
- To identify the error in Diotrephes who 'loves to be first"-- putting people out of church. John himself coming to set him straight

Seven Snapshots of Ephesus

- 1.Paul spreads the gospel in Ephesus (Acts 19)
- 2.Paul meets with elders in Miletus (Acts 20)
- 3.Paul writes the Ephesian letter to them about the nature of the church and its unity
- 4.Paul writes to Timothy about the confusion and need for true elders in Ephesus (1 and 2 Timothy)
- 5.Peter's Letters (1 & 2 Peter)
- 6.John writes three letters there (1, 2, & 3 John)
- 7.John writes in Revelation about their loss of first love.

Revelation

- Author: John, the Apostle
- Same concepts as other books: logos, Lamb, witness, overcome, truth, light and dark
- Recipient: Seven specific churches in Asia, c.90's
- Theme: Encouragement in the Last Days
 - To reveal the glory of the Risen Christ
 - To inform about the future
 - To fortify the church and foster her endurance
 - To bring consolation to suffering saints
- Dramatic interplay of cataclysmic events and between heaven and earth.
- Of 404 verses, 278 refer to Old Testament (69%)
- Number 7 used 50 times
- A series of visions
- Last 2 chapters bookend with the first two of Genesis

Promises To The Church In Revelation

Chapter

- 1 The time is near
He has made us kings and priests
He is coming and every eye will see Him
- 2 You can have the abundance of resurrection life
You will not be hurt by the second death
You will have guaranteed access to the marriage feast
You will share His authority
- 3 You will have guaranteed entrance into eternity
You will have a place in God's presence
You will have victory in Jesus
- 4 God does reign on His throne
- 5 Jesus is worthy to bring history to its end

- We will reign upon the earth
- 6 He sovereignty controls the affairs of history
- 7 Not one servant of God will be lost in the tribulation
- Many believers will know the true victory God can give over the enemy's greatest attempts to destroy
- We will enter a rest with God and never have needs again
- 8 No believer will face God's wrath
- 9 God will give strong calls for all to repent
- 11 He does reign over all and will reign over the earth totally
- 12 The enemy has already been defeated at his every attempt
- 13 The enemy will not prevail over the saints
- His reign will be short
- 14 Evil will be totally destroyed
- The harvest is coming
- 16-18 The works of the enemy will be laid waste
- The Lamb will overcome
- 19 Jesus Christ will return
- We will see Him face to face in the joy of a marriage feast
- He will bind up Satan and destroy his followers
- 20 He will establish His earthly kingdom
- We will reign in peace with Him
- He will finally put Satan and his hosts in the lake of fire forever
- 21-22 He will give us the new heaven and new

Admonishments To The Church In Revelation

Chapter

- 2 Live in simplicity and love
- Be faithful, even if it demands death
- Don't compromise with the lifestyle of the world
- Live in purity
- 3 Complete the walk you've begun
- Persevere through any trial
- Be zealous
- 4-5 Worship His worthiness
- 7 Find your identity and purpose only in Him
- Be washed in the blood of the Lamb
- 8 Prayerfully release the promises of God
- 8-9 Have confidence in God's ability to protect and sustain us
- 10 Be a prophetic voice to your generation
- 11 Be confident again in God's victory
- 12 Overcome by the blood of the Lamb, the word of our testimony, and by not loving your life even if it means death
- 13 Persevere in faith
- Be true to God only, no matter how the world goes
- Be faithful in righteousness at any cost
- 14 Live undefiled

- Learn to follow the Lamb wherever He goes
Be set apart to Him as His possession
Be truthful in all things
Give no cause for you to be blamed - be blameless
Be confident in the destruction of evil
Choose God and His eternity; don't give in to the way or ends of sin
- 16 Keep awake and alert
Be ready in spite of anything that goes on around you
- 17 Be faithful and overcome with the Lamb
- 18 Don't follow the destructive path of the world - selfishness, greed
- 19 As the bride, make yourself ready to greet

Session 15

The Rescue

1. Old Testament History
 - A. Luke 15 – Jesus
 - B. Psalm 78 - David
 - C. Acts 7 – Stephen
 - D. Acts 13 - David
2. The Value of the Old Testament
 - A. Jesus revealed there (Luke 24)
 - B. An example for us (Cor 10)
 - C. Bereans understood the reality of the New covenant from the Old Testament

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Genesis	Exodus	1 & 2 Samuel-1 & 2 Kings	Ezra	Matthew	Acts
Genesis	Leviticus	1 & 2 Chronicles	Nehemiah	Mark	James
	Numbers			Luke	Thessalonians
	Deuteronomy	Amos	Haggai	John	Galatians
	Joshua	Hosea	Zechariah		Corinthians
	Judges	Jonah	Malachai		Romans
	Ruth	Isaiah			Ephesians
		Zephaniah	Esther		Colossians
		Micah			Philippians
		Habbakkuk			Philemon
Job		Joel			Hebrews
	Psalms	Jeremiah			Timothy
	Proverbs	Lamentations			Titus
	Ecclesiastes	Obadiah			Peter
	Song of Songs	Nahum			John
		Ezekiel			Revelation
		Daniel			