

What have we done? Part 3

By

Former Pastor Dr. Joel Minto *

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While getting my Doctoral degree in Biblical Studies at Masters International University of Divinity, I was very fortunate to study under Dr. Skip Moen. He caused me to think and take apart the doctrines that we have today and re-examine them in the light of the context and culture of the original hearers. Some people take his views as contrary to the current doctrinal norm, but I find that his insights and understandings of the language make him a valuable thought leader in Christendom today. In one of his daily writings he wrote: "History is a record of the impact of the events usually understood within the culture of the victors."

At first blush this seems like a very docile statement, then I started to take apart the history of the Church and realized that his statement is a tremendous insight into the how and why questions we have concerning our Church's today. Last week we asked the question; what have we done? How did we go from a loving spirit filled group who witnessed miracles daily to our monotonous decorum and liturgy today? Or even more concerning how and why did we do away with the Sabbath and begin to worship on Sundays? Something changed. I seriously doubt that God changed. We have scripture that is very emphatic on the non-changing aspect of God. What changed is us, and we did it systematically and thoroughly. So thoroughly that even the history we read today reflects an anti-Semitic bias so strong and subtle we see it in our very doctrinal statements. Remember "history is a record of events usually understood within the culture of the victors."

1 Corinthians 10:11 "all these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages have come." So history is important and how we got here is all wrapped up in history. But if history is tainted within the culture of the victor it takes a lot more discussion and digging to know the how and why things happened to the first group of believers.

When I talk about these kinds of things typically I am met with a doctrinal statement from one group or another that states and intends to prove the how and why. In the last 100 years or so, most of the creeds of the various denominations have had to address inspiration and the accuracy of the Bible. In fact this had to come about since there were inconsistencies in the writings of the apostles and the Tanakh. In the end, the connection between inspiration and inerrancy can be boiled down to this statement: the Bible is God's primary method of revealing Himself to us; therefore, we can rely on that revelation to be as reliable as God Himself. So what did we say to make the writings of the Apostles acceptable as we read them today?

Well there are two words we have to consider; inspired and inerrancy. Here is how one group twists through this: *As we consider the doctrine of inerrancy, we need to remember that both inspiration and inerrancy apply only to the original manuscripts of God's Word. In other words, when Paul wrote his letter to the church at Ephesus -- what we know as [the Book of Ephesians](#) -- he was inspired by the Holy Spirit in that moment (inspiration), and he produced an epistle that was free from any kind of error (inerrancy).*

However, those truths only apply to that specific manuscript written in that specific moment -- what we call the original manuscripts.

Therefore, the Bibles we read and use today are not considered "inspired" in and of themselves.

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They are extremely accurate copies and translations of the original manuscripts that have been passed down to us through the many centuries of the church -- and there is a lot of evidence for [the historical reliability of the Scriptures](#).

So, while modern Bibles are not technically "inspired," they are extremely accurate copies and translations of the inspired Word of God. Which means we can feel confident in the power of God's Word to shape and transform our lives.

So we play the original documents card to keep our minds clear and worry free of doubt about the validity of the Bible, But since we do not have those original documents we cannot examine the validity of what we have today. Please do not get me wrong I am not doubting the validity of God' Word to us today, but I must accept that what I read has had some changes made to it that were perfectly acceptable to the way a Rabbi taught in the 1st century. What was the intent of these writers, doctrinal statements and creeds or was it how is one as a follower of the Messiah supposed to live in this world? The difference between western Greek thinkers and Eastern Semitic thinkers. My prayer today: God may we live and act as you would have us live in the Light of your Son the Messiah and may we cast of the doctrinal snares that tear us apart and keep us from being the communities of believers living out Your love for all to see.

We said that "Scripture" I am simply trying to live as a Gentile and live the life described in the scriptures, but as I study I find that the doctrines of today do not reflect what we read in the scriptures. The events have been twisted to fit the victor's culture and doctrine. Now when you explore the scriptures and see some of the intentional inaccuracies of the early writers

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