

Principles of good Scripture interpretation

Quoting a scripture, that has more than one reasonable interpretation, in order to support one's particular point of view, proves nothing at all. And it makes no sense to suggest that the opposing point of view is not supported by Scripture. Being inspired by the Holy Spirit does not guarantee error-free interpretation of the Bible, otherwise we would not be hearing a variety of opposing points of view being preached from the pulpits across America, and everywhere else, by so-called "inspired" preachers who got their "inspired" message directly from the same source (ie. the Bible through the Holy Spirit). It flies in the face of logic. Most of the dogmas of the Christian evangelicals are derived not directly from an impartial study of the Scriptures, but instead from traditions that have been passed down over the centuries. The main reason for this is the threat of "excommunication" or "eternal punishment in Hell" for deviating, even in the slightest way, from established dogma.

This all sounds very complicated, the truth of the matter is simpler than one might expect. Jesus said that unless we become like children we won't enter the Kingdom. All that the children of Jesus' day knew, theologically speaking, was that Jesus loved them, and they loved Him back. Each aspect of most "statements of faith" may be given a variety of detailed and highly specific "interpretations," any one of which may be used as a means of excluding most of the human race from the salvation that God has provided for all on Calvary. We especially see this in the first few ecumenical councils of the church in the 4th and 5th Centuries AD. Prior those councils, there were many, many different descriptions relating to who Jesus was/is, exactly. Was he fully divine or fully human, or both, or something in between. There were many different views on this, all derived from Scripture. It was decided at these councils that you would be condemned to Hell for all eternity unless you subscribed to only one highly detailed and specific point of view. Good Scripture interpretation does not have to be complicated. It's not rocket science. Here's a good rule of Scripture interpretation. The least important doctrines are the ones that are the most highly disputed. The most important ones are the ones on which most people agree, both Christians and non-Christians. You can boil it all down to the children's song, "Jesus loves me, this I know." Many people, who would never set foot in a Christian church, have a more correct view of the scope of God's love than many "card-carrying" church members. When discussing, and arguing over Christian theology, what parts of the conversation would you want your children to hear.