

Attitudes towards the Scriptures

- “If the blind lead the blind, both will fall in a ditch.” Don’t waste time arguing with complexity. Focus on simple and consistent godly character in a messed-up world.
- “I desire mercy and not sacrifice.” Solve root causes; don’t be satisfied being a forgiven failure.
- “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.” Religion should make life easier, not harder.

Attitudes towards the Scriptures

First Attitude: The Scriptures have as their purpose to illustrate and build faith.

- It is not a book of one-liners, a rule book, or a pattern.
- The Scriptures provide documentation for real promises.

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- Old Testament
 - How a faithful minority lived.
 - How unbelievers fared with God
 - Building the stage on which Jesus would play
 - Addressed to Israelites, faithful and unfaithful

Attitudes towards the Scriptures

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- New Testament
 - Gospels: Godly character in a broken world
 - Acts: Faithful people fumbling to spread the gospel
 - Letter: How to fix when we drag culture and bad habits into the church

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- New Testament
 - Revelation: Comforting the early Christians that the horrors of the first century were part of the plan.
 - Addressed to faithful people worldwide.

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- “The Scriptures clearly state...” Maybe, maybe not.
 - Our backgrounds influence us
 - Reading comprehension is a skill
 - The problem could be me.
 - An example does not imply that it must be that way.

Attitudes towards the Scriptures

First Attitude: The Scriptures have as their purpose to illustrate and build faith.

- Building faith:
 - Develop confident expectations, not fear of failure.
 - Act on promises, not minimums
 - Match up promises to needs of outsiders
 - Foundation: evidence and logic

Attitudes towards the Scriptures

Second Attitude: Find the intention of the author, not support for what I already believe.

- Supporting my belief has many pitfalls
 - Stopping with less than all the passages
 - Proving you wrong doesn't make me right
 - Each letter must stand on its own
 - Look up Old Testament quotes.

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Second Attitude: Find the intention of the author, not support for what I already believe.

- Applying the passage
 - Learn the mindset and resources of the original audience
 - Make only the points of the author
 - Find the application to the original audience first
 - If it sounds complicated, it is probably wrong

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Third attitude: Completeness

- Topical studies have many pitfalls. Find every passage about the topic.
- Word studies are more useful.
- Find modern English substitutes to avoid church jargon

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Fourth Attitude: Know the goal of your study

- Memorization is nice; understanding is better
- Chronology is useful for both understanding and remembering
- Look for my own contradictions
- Keep it simple
- Endeavor to be filled with the Spirit
- Seek the miraculous, not the mundane

Attitudes towards the Scriptures

God's objective:

- A big family that will last.
- The essential characteristics for each member of the family are faith and love: mutual trust and selfless concern.