

Studying Scripture Carefully: The Great Danger of Misrepresenting the Word of God

Introduction

I. Misrepresenting God's Word (Genesis 3:1-7)

How do we know the devil is behind this?

2 Corinthians 11:3

John 8:44

Revelation 20:2

In Genesis 3:1-7, God's word was perverted in three different ways:

A. Misrepresenting God's Permission (Genesis 3:1)

Genesis 3:1	Genesis 2:16-17
He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You ¹ shall not eat of any tree in the garden'?"	"You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

1. The manner of misrepresentation by the devil

2. The method of misrepresentation by the devil

Lessons

- The devil's tactic is to counter faith with doubt.
- Religion forbids what God has allowed.

B. Misrepresenting God's Prohibition (Genesis 3:2-3)

Genesis 3:2-3	Genesis 2:16-17
And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die. '"	"You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

1. The manner of misrepresentation by the woman

2. The motive of misrepresentation by the woman

Lessons

- Most misrepresentations of the Scripture come from well-meaning people.
- Religion adds restrictions to God's prohibitions.
- Religion substitutes the certainty of God's judgment with a warning of God's judgment.
- These restrictions serve to invalidate the word of God (Matthew 15:1-9).

C. Misrepresenting God's Penalty (Genesis 3:4-5)

Genesis 3:4-5	Genesis 2:16-17
But the serpent said to the woman, “ You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”	“You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die. ”

1. The manner of misrepresentation by the devil

2. The meaning of the misrepresentation by the devil

Lessons

- Ignoring the future considerations of our actions increases our willingness to act sinfully or foolishly.
- Discontentment with our present circumstances increases our willingness to act sinfully or foolishly.
- People don't want to consider bad things that will come (e.g. Matthew 24:37-39).

II. Misapplying God’s Word (Matthew 4:5-7)

Matthew 4:6	Psalm 91:11-12
<p>“He will command his angels concerning you,”</p> <p>and</p> <p>“On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.”</p>	<p>“For he will command his angels concerning you</p> <p style="text-align: center;">to guard you in all your ways.</p> <p>“On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.”</p>

A. The Substance of the Difference in the Quotation by the Devil

B. The Significance of the Difference in the Quotation by the Devil

It is not uncommon for the NT authors to exclude a portion of the OT text that they quote.

Matthew 4:15	Isaiah 9:1
<p>“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan,</p> <p>Galilee of the Gentiles—</p> <p>the people dwelling in darkness</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">have seen a great light,</p> <p>and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death,</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">on them a light has dawned.”</p>	<p>But there will be no gloom for her who was in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he has made glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.</p> <p>The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.</p>

C. The Sinfulness of the Quotation by the Devil

The problem was not the interpretation of Psalm 91 but the application.

D. The Sufficiency of the Quotation by Jesus

Matthew 4:7	Deuteronomy 6:16
“You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.”	“You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.”

Lessons

- There is one interpretation and many applications, not every application.
- We can make wise applications and avoid foolish applications by knowing the Scripture.
- We can make wise applications and avoid foolish applications with wise counsel.
- God will “guard our ways” through His grace perfecting our weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9).