

### Connection

How do you respond to being contradicted?

### Content

God desires to be in relationship with us. Through the Bible, He wants to speak to us.

But some people say the Bible is full of contradictions.

They say Jesus invalidated the Old Testament.

They say God endorses violence and war in the Bible.

1. What is your initial response to each of those claims?

### **The Bible Is Full Of Contradictions?**

2. Read Proverbs 26: 4 and 5. Do we answer a fool, or not? The two verses seem to contradict each other. But an understanding of the book of Proverbs makes clear that these are two of the book's many generalities about life. Whether to answer the fool or not is a matter of the context.

A second example: Read Exodus 32:14 and Numbers 23:19. Does God change His mind? God doesn't, but through His expression of displeasure to Moses He elicits the appeal on behalf of the Israelites. Again, it is a matter of context.

A third example: Read Matthew 7:21 and Acts 2:21. Will everyone who calls on the Lord be saved? Jesus and Peter are talking to different audiences from different perspectives. The context reveals their separate meanings.

3. How would you differentiate the contexts in one of the examples above?

## **Jesus Invalidates The Old Testament?**

4. No. Look at Matthew 4. Jesus, when He is tested in the wilderness, affirms the Old Testament scripture over and over by quoting it repeatedly to the devil. Now read Matthew 5:21-22.

Jesus could talk about the scripture because He knew it word for word. What parts of the Bible would you like to start memorizing?

5. Read Matthew 5:17-20. Even before addressing the subjects of murder and the rest, Jesus affirms the Old Testament instead of invalidating it. And He delivers a stern warning against "anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands..."

Does this discussion change your view of the Old Testament? How can it help you in your relationship with God?

## **God Endorses Violence and War In The Bible?**

Read 2 Chronicles 20:15-17. The Bible does not hide the fact of war or its terrors. In the Old Testament, God even instructs the Israelites when they are to engage in war and even how to wage it.

Read Genesis 15:16. God's purpose in war at times clearly was to punish great evil, but it was always to secure His people in the land of Israel, which he promised to Abraham.

God wanted His people at the crossroads of humanity, where He intended to speak to the entire world, ultimately through the Messiah, Jesus, who would die on a cross there to save humanity, and you.

6. How do you respond to this magnificent plan of God?

## **Commitment**

And that's what God has done for us. The bottom line: God seeks a relationship with us, He speaks through the Bible and we can trust it.

7. For your life and this relationship, you can trust God. What can you do differently to spend more time in your day reading the Bible?

## **Challenge Assignment:**

This week, memorize Matthew 7:21.

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

"so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." (Vs. 17)