

## 21T19 Bible Bias Test

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me @ the PUNLA coffee table.

I heard a message from a pastor recently who referred to the different perspectives people have that influence their interpretation of the Bible. A Bible Bias Test. This caught my attention. He was talking about things he had been taught and believed and then taught others. But then years later he changed his mind after studying the Bible. The reason he changed his mind was what we will call the Bible Bias Test. So today I want to put the Bible Bias Test to the test.

First, I believe in the Bible. I believe the Bible has a consistent message cover to cover, Genesis to Revelation. I believe there are no contradictions in the Bible. I believe in the errancy of the Bible. That does not mean that I trust every word in my English translation, because to do that I'd have to determine which translation is correct. I'm not going to do this. But I do believe the core tenants of our faith are consistently presented contextually in every mainstream English translation of the Bible. And when in doubt you can dig a little deeper and see the original language words in Greek and Hebrew to better understand what the translators and how difficult language to language translation really is. We also have to remember a word's use changes over time, so it is important to use the words in the Bible as they were intended by the author when they wrote them.

In the past, I've said, if your interpretation of the Bible is not supported by ALL Scripture, then you are probably wrong. But this might not be the best test of a doctrine or belief. The Bible Bias Test is an even tougher standard.

The pastor I was listening to put it this way. One of four questions,

For scriptures that support a belief or doctrine. Question #1 would someone who did not know the doctrine, see the doctrine in the scripture. (this is thru the lens of someone who does not have a preconceived idea)

Question #2 would someone who does not believe the doctrine be convinced by the scripture. (this is thru the lens of someone with a preconceived idea opposite of yours) a very tough test.

And for scriptures that don't support a doctrine. Question #3 would someone who did not know the doctrine or the view against the doctrine, see either perspective in the scripture. (this is thru the lens of someone who does not have a preconceived idea)

And lastly, Question #4 would someone that believed the doctrine change their mind because of the scripture which does not support it. (this is thru the lens of someone with a preconceived idea) again a very tough test.

I think these four are incredible Bible Bias Test questions for any given doctrine. But before we start, just because a belief or doctrine does not pass this Bible Bias Test does not mean it's not true. And those that believe it cannot be proven right or wrong by using this Bible Bias Test. All we can say is the doctrine either passes the test or not. In reality, very few doctrines will be able to hold up to this Bible Bias Test. The Bible Bias Test, however, does reveal when our biases are influencing our interpretation of scripture.

So, I wanted to test these questions on some of the scripture I used in my series I called the "Great Escape" on the Dispensational Pretribulation Rapture doctrine.

So first, let's set the doctrine. The Concept is that the "Rapture of the Church will occur seven years before the second coming of Christ". Now I know there are many ways to say this, but this is my premise for this Bible Bias Test.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 is really the only true Rapture scripture in the Bible

1 Thessalonians 4:17 ***17Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.***

Let's read the whole scripture again in context, attempting to see the words from each perspective. First, Bible Bias Test Question #1: if I knew nothing about PreTrib Rapture doctrine would this verse convince me.

***13But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. 15For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18Therefore comfort one another with these words.*** (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 NKJV)

So, what did you think? First Paul wants us to understand something or not be "ignorant". Then at the coming of Jesus, the dead in Christ will be resurrected first before those who are still living are changed and caught up or raptured. And Paul goes further to say, this will happen after a series of events. The Lord or Jesus will himself descend with a shout, voice of archangel and trumpet blast

Did we pass Bible Bias Test Question #1? It mentions rapture, so okay so far. But no mention of when or even tribulation here. Only the sounds that will accompany this event. So, Bible Bias Question #1 is at best maybe. It would require additional scripture to resolve this for me.

Okay, let's look at this from the other perspective with Bible Bias Test Question #2: if I don't believe PreTrib Rapture doctrine would this verse convince you. This is a hotly contested verse by both those who believe PreTrib rapture doctrine and those who don't believe PreTrib Rapture. Since the timing of the rapture is not discussed, PreTribulation timing cannot be established by these verses. In fact, there is no mention of Tribulation or the Great Tribulation here. So, Bible Bias Test Question #2 is a firm No. This scripture would not convince me to change my mind, if I did not believe in a PreTrib rapture.

Of course, this does not determine if the doctrine is true or not. It is still up to us to interpret based on our own bias.

What about the other Bible Bias Test questions? Revelation 20:4-6 is a very difficult scripture to reconcile if you believe the PreTribulation Rapture. So, let's put it to the test.

Bible Bias Question #3 would someone who did not know the doctrine or the view against the doctrine, see either perspective in the scripture. So, let's try to read some of Revelation 20 as if we have never heard of dispensational PreTrib Rapture.

Revelation 20:4-6 (NKJV) *[4And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. \*\*This is the first resurrection.\*\* 6Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.](#)*

First, no mention of rapture in this scripture. It plainly states that those killed for not worshipping the antichrist will be part of the first resurrection. Oops, PreTrib rapture takes place before the tribulation and before the antichrist is revealed. So, how can the first resurrection be before this? It can't if you read this literally. The only way people killed by the antichrist are part of the first resurrection is if it takes place sometime after the last saint is killed. But I know there are many interpretations of this scripture, but each require a preconceived bias based on other scriptures or viewpoints to interpret it. Now literal interpretation may well not be the best method for this scripture but then what and who gets to choose.

Therefore, Bible Bias Test Question #3, answer is probably no. If you knew nothing about PreTrib rapture, you would never be able to see it in this scripture. You would have to cross reference with other scriptures like 1 Thessalonians 4:17 and Matthew 24 and others. But, standing alone there is no way you would be able to find the sequence of the rapture here, only the first resurrection as it is described here.

What about, Bible Bias Test Question #4 would someone that believed the doctrine change their mind because of the scripture which does not support it. The answer to this is probably no or at best maybe. If you had a preconceived idea, you could probably read it into this scripture. But rapture is not mentioned only resurrection. There is no mention of changing those who are still living. So, if you are convinced the rapture does not happen here, it must have happened prior to this event, then why is this called the 1<sup>st</sup> resurrection?

This shows you how difficult this Bible Bias Test really is. But is it a valid way to evaluate doctrines and beliefs.? Good question. And you have to answer that for yourself. One thing is for sure, if your belief or doctrine can pass this Bible Bias Test, it must be true. But like most evaluations, it is up to you if you apply it honestly and without bias.

Now I know many of you are going to say, you have to look at all scripture to formulate your interpretation. And I agree. But, I want to give a word of caution here. Trying to decipher a code or puzzle across many books of the Bible is a very dangerous thing to do. In fact, you might be able to find support for just about anything if you are creative enough. But that certainly does not prove it is true. It only proves you are creative. I don't believe the Bible is a code book, quite the contrary. Jesus promised he would give understanding to anyone who truly and honestly wishes to see the truth. The key here is truth, honest truth. **If we search for support for our bias or viewpoint, we can probably find it. But, if we honestly seek the truth and just read the Bible for what it says, then the truth will be revealed to you. God won't override your will, so you have to be open to the truth to find it.**

As I have read the Bible, it has become more and more apparent that many popular and commonly taught doctrines in the church today may not agree with ALL scripture. So, things like this Bible Bias Test are essential to separate human teachings from God's truth. Or at the very least help us identify when to study deeper and more intensely for ourselves. We should pray for wisdom on the specific topic. Ask God to reveal the truth and help us to view the scripture without our bias and preconceived ideas.

We must own our faith. The most important thing I want you to take away today is to test your beliefs with some criteria. Albeit with this Bible Bias Test or my personal view of "supported by ALL Scripture". Now I have to be honest, I don't think either of these methods are perfect. But it's a lot better than, I believe because this is what I was told or read that someone said.

Open your Bibles and test your beliefs. This is one of the most fulfilling exercise you can possibly do. God might reaffirm your belief or reveal a whole new perspective that broadens and deepens your walk with Jesus.

I'm sure you are asking why this is so important to me. Because the truth is important. I want to continue to study and learn and read my Bible to better my understandings. I

think one of the most dangerous things you can say is “this is what I’ve been told”. Own your faith. God will reveal His truth to you if you only keep looking. Seek and you will find. Keep knocking and the door will be opened, keep asking and the truth will be revealed. God will be faithful to show you the truth, you just have to be honestly open to hear the truth.

**Heavenly Father. Thank you for your word the Bible. Thank you for giving us the wisdom to understand and discern your truth. Help us to always search and study and learn from you through the Holy Spirit and your Holy word, the Bible. And help us to share our studies and questions with others so the whole body of Christ can grow in our relationship with you Lord Jesus And I pray all these things to the Father in your name Jesus. Amen.**

Thank you for joining me @ the PUNLA Coffee Table today, If you liked the message, please click like. And Please Subscribe to our channel. Leave comments here, or our website or mail me. See you next time @ the PUNLA Coffee Table. God Bless.