

BIBLICAL CONTRADICTIONS

Part 3-“The Gospel Contradiction” Discussion Questions Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, and John 11

Introduction to the Topic

1. If we ask the Bible, “What event led to the crucifixion of Jesus?” the four Gospels respond with:

Matthew: Jesus’ teachings after his riot at the Temple.

Mark: Jesus’ riot at the Temple.

Luke: A combination of Jesus’ teachings and riot at the Temple.

John: The resurrection of Lazarus (which occurred two years after Jesus led a riot at the Temple).

This is a major contradiction in scripture. In Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus is executed within a week of his Temple riot, while John tells us that Jesus’ entire ministry unfolded after his Temple riot. Does this contradiction between the Gospels change how you value the Bible? Why or why not?

The Central Metaphor

2. The central metaphor of this film is Craig discussing how an environment housing a map changes our interaction with that same map. He pointed out that there is no such thing as an incorrect map, as long as that map is in the correct environment. Was this metaphor helpful to you, or confusing to you? Why is that?

3. The reason Craig discussed maps at length in this film is because he wanted the viewer to see that the doctrine of inerrancy¹ moved the Bible

¹ The doctrine of inerrancy is the idea that the Bible is incapable of being wrong.

from a theological art gallery to a theological history museum. How might things be different if that never happened? In other words, how might things be different if Christians in America testified that the human expression in the Bible is more important than the Bible's historical accuracy?

4. The doctrine of inerrancy looks at the four diverse paintings of the gospels, and insists that they are all saying the same thing. This was symbolized in the film by the four paintings being covered by identical portraits of a white Jesus. How did it feel when you saw these paintings covered up? Have you experienced anything like this in your own human experience?

5. Contradictions inspire us to embrace the Bible as an art gallery, instead of a scientific or historical document. Is it possible that the contradictions of the Bible can teach you about God? How does that work?

Application

6. The closing wish of this film is that we might be able to embrace the beauty of the Bible as an art gallery. What can you do in this coming week to see the art gallery of God's inspiration all around you?