

The Gospels in Harmony

Ready to Be Wrong

August 5, 2018

Welcome to where we're learning how to be wrong!



Are you ready to be wrong?

We *hate* being wrong; and, we're *really bad* at it. Ever defend something you *know* is right; and then, *after* the fight, you *realize* you're *wrong* and you have to *admit* it? *Ain't that the worst?!*



And *why* is that? *Well sadly, we're more obsessed with being right than knowing truth.* It's part of the pride package that comes standard with *our model*. Admitting we're wrong is usually our last resort. But, it should be our *first*.

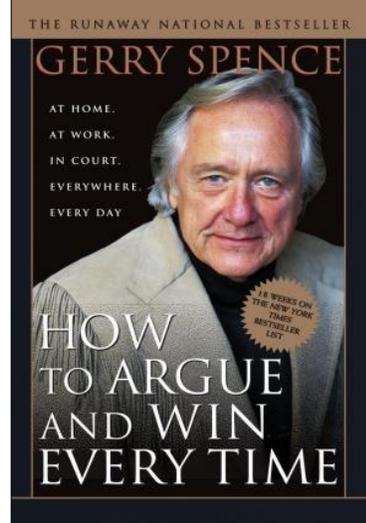
We need to develop an *expectation* of being wrong.

It's the *secret* to love, joy, peace, and nobility. Remember the *Bereans* who were of *more noble character*? (Acts 17:11) *Why?* They examined the Scriptures daily to see where they were wrong.

As Job told his well-intentioned, wrongheaded friends:

If only you would be altogether silent! For you, that would be wisdom. – Job 13:5 NIV

If we approached *each* conflict or quarrel with a *suspicion* of being wrong, we'd end up *far* closer, happier, calmer, and wiser. True with life, work, relationships ... *and God's Word*.



So often we turn to Scripture to *support* or *defend* our beliefs.

So seldom we turn to Scripture to *correct* or *realign* our views.

And yet, *this* is one of its *foremost intended functions!*

All Scripture is *God-breathed* and is useful for *teaching, rebuking, correcting* and *training in righteousness* ... – 2 Timothy 3:16 NIV

No discipline seems *pleasant* at the time, but *painful*. Later on, however, *it* produces a *harvest of righteousness* and *peace* for those who have been *trained by it*. – Heb 12:11 NIV

Whoever *loves discipline* *loves knowledge* ... – Proverbs 12:1a NIV

For these *commands* are a *lamp*, this *teaching* is a *light*, and the *corrections* of *discipline* are the way to *life*, – Proverbs 6:23 NIV

He who *heeds discipline* shows the way to *life*, but whoever *ignores correction* leads others *astray*. – Proverbs 10:17 NIV

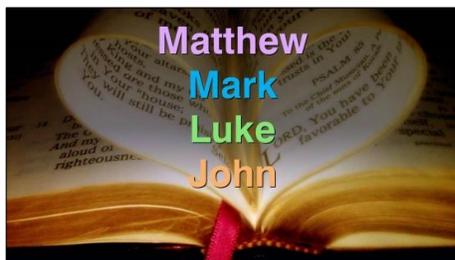
Blessed is the man whom God *corrects* ... – Job 5:17 NIV

Those whom I *love* I *rebuke* and *discipline*. – Revelation 3:19a NIV

Listen to my *instruction* and be *wise*; do not *ignore it*. – Proverbs 8:33 NIV

He who *hates correction* is *stupid*. – Proverbs 12:1b NIV

The Bible's defining feature is its God-breathed perfection.



Without perfection, the Bible ceases to be what it says it is.

Yet, 200+ published, unsuccessful-attempts to synchronize the stories in the four Gospels through educated *guesswork* have only succeeded in strengthening the claims *against* its credibility; because, **there's no place for guesswork in God's Masterwork.**

As we've seen, **the gospels do perfectly harmonize without any guesswork or breaking any story ties if we simply remove their 19 self-identified flashbacks and flash-forwards. Then we just match each of those to an identical story that's already anchored chronologically in one of the other Gospels.** That's it. No fancy footwork. We're simply weaving as instructed:

Line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little. For with stammering lips ... He will speak to this people, to whom He said, "This is the rest ..." and, "This is the refreshing"; yet they would not hear. – Isaiah 28:10-12 NKJ

Isaiah tells us **it's engineered as a test for those who truly seek rest, and a trap for the wisenheimers who seek to be right. So, who's ready to seek to be wrong?!**

Today, we're going to start looking at the *hidden* stories.

The critics cry contradiction with the robe that's put on Jesus just before His crucifixion. Luke says *Herod* and *his* soldiers put it on Him; Matthew and Mark say that *Pilate's* soldiers did.

In fact, they say the *entire company* (*hundreds*) of Roman soldiers mocked Him; but, why would these gentile soldiers even care, let alone show such personal contempt for a Jewish teacher?

The Scriptures weave into the best answer ever!

When [Pilate] learned that Jesus was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. When Herod saw Jesus, **he was greatly pleased**, because for a long time **he had been wanting to see him**. From what he had heard about him, **he hoped to see him perform some miracle**. **He plied him with many questions**, but Jesus gave him no answer. [And while Herod was *enjoying Jesus*] **The chief priests and the teachers of the law were standing there, vehemently accusing him**. [Of what? Claiming to be King of the Jews (Lk 23:2-3), which Herod Antipas was (Mk 6:14, 22)] **Then Herod and his soldiers ridiculed and mocked him**. [Maybe it's because Jesus won't answer; or perhaps to appease Jesus' powerful accusers; *or both*. But, notice that there's no physical abuse here. Instead, Herod does something remarkable] **Dressing him in an elegant robe, they sent him back to Pilate**. – Luke 23:7-11 NIV

The words used here (*lampros esthēs: magnificent ornate-garment*) describe the type of jewel encrusted, gold threaded, robe that King Herod wore when sitting on his throne for official business. (Acts 12:21) Why would he do this? *Guilty conscience? Peace offering?* **Whatever his reason for dressing Jesus in a kingly robe, the mere sight declares Herod's verdict of Jesus' innocence.**

That day Herod and Pilate became friends – before this they had been enemies. [But now they go through something they both agree on, but find themselves helpless to stop] Pilate called together the chief priests, the rulers and the people, and said to them, "... **I have examined him in your presence and have found no basis for your charges against him**. **Neither has Herod**, for he sent him back to us; **as you can see**, he has done nothing to deserve death. – Luke 23:13-15 NIV

Surprisingly, when the separate stories are woven together (which we sadly don't have time to do today), they reveal that **Pilate makes five separate appeals on Jesus' behalf!**¹

Then the governor's [Pilate's] soldiers took Jesus into the **Praetorium** [their command center] **and gathered the whole company of soldiers around him**. – Matthew 27:27 NIV

It would've been an astonishing spectacle to see this Jewish criminal wearing the robe of a king! Like a convict coming in wearing a four star General's uniform encrusted with diamonds and solid gold buttons. It's something they couldn't hope to afford or achieve to wear.

Now there's your reason they all come running!

They stripped him and put a [scroungy] scarlet robe on him, and then twisted together a crown of thorns and set it on his head. [Making sense now?] They put a staff in his right hand and knelt in front of him and mocked him. "Hail, king of the Jews!" they said. They spit on him, and took the staff and struck him on the head again and again. After they had mocked him, **they took off the [scroungy] robe** [This is also when they would've removed the crown of thorns] **and put his own clothes** [that Herod returned Him in] **on him**. [Why? They feared a riot among His multitude of supporters; and, they were planning on dividing it up between 'em at the cross] **Then they led him away to crucify him**. As they were going out, they met a man from Cyrene, [in North Africa] named Simon, **and they forced him to carry the cross**. – Matthew 27:28-32 NIV

¹ Pilate's five appeals in order: **1)** Luke 23:14-15, **2)** Luke 23:20, **3)** Luke 23:22, **4)** John 19:4-7, **5)** John 19:12

Why? There's no mention of Jesus struggling to carry the cross.

But, **it's certainly in their self-interest to protect their investment.**

When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, **dividing them into four shares, one for each of them**, [They couldn't wear Herod's robe; and it's too valuable to gamble on; and the material, jewels, and possible gold thread is worth a lot, even divided four ways] **with the undergarment remaining**. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. "Let's not tear *it*," they said to one another. "Let's decide by lot who will get it." This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled which said, **"They divided my garments among them [that's Psalm 22:18, which literally says, "They cut up my garment"] and cast lots for my clothing."** So this is what the soldiers did. – John 19:23-24 NIV

What a haunting, un-depicted, parade God orchestrated: **Christ led to the cross, brutally beaten and wearing a royal robe, followed by two thieves and a valet, and out front, a Roman soldier bearing a sign proclaiming Him to be the King of the Jews.** (Lk 23:32)

Whatever you do, **do not put words in God's mouth.** He can do just fine without our help.

Know this **first of all**, [this is the first rule of rightly handling Scripture – the first rule of **faith club!**] that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation ... – 2 Pet 1:20 NAS

Because, you know what all those prophecies actually are?

The **testimony of Jesus** is the spirit of **prophecy**. – Revelation 19:10 NIV

And you don't ever mess with Jesus' testimony.

You seek it, find it, submit to it, hold onto it, and share it!

Let us examine **our** ways and test **them** ... – Lamentations 3:40a NIV

Do not treat prophecies with contempt. [By putting your own interpretation on 'em; that's **Jesus' testimony**] Test **everything**. [With Scripture] – 1 Thessalonians 5:20-21a NIV

Allow the Lord to speak for himself. In fact, let's allow *everyone* to speak for themselves.

It's okay to speak up; but, it's crucial to listen up.

Because, **the more we talk the less we hear.** And, **the louder we speak the less we're heard.**

That's why God speaks with a still, small, voice. (1 Kings 19:11-13)

It forces us to get close and listen carefully.

When it comes to Jesus' testimony, **we only have four choices: ignore it, reject it, modify it, or trust and submit to it.** And, if we're gonna submit to it, we better be ready to be wrong.