

Word of the Kingdom Conference 2008

Part I

The Foundations

Introduction Notes:

Our faith should not rest on the wisdom of men:

Answers to questions concerning God's Word should not be based upon *any ideology of man*. John Calvin (Father of the ideology known as "Calvanism") may have been correct on some things, but he was wrong on others. James Arminius (the father of the ideology known as "Arminianism") might have been correct about some things, but was wrong about others.

The same can be said of any person, noted for studying and teaching the Bible.

I Corinthians 2:5 that your faith [your belief in what God has said] should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

James 1:5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

Answers to questions concerning God's Word should be based fully and completely on God's Word. Realistically, can we study the Bible and find TRUE answers to tough questions? You bet we can! But it takes diligent, hard work! And you must be prepared for it! It will not come to in spoonfuls at someone else's hand!

The process of having your questions answered (and more questions than we could possibly imagine CAN be answered) is just that—*it is a process!* And let it be that! It is a *good* process! A process for which you will be mightily blessed. And, frankly, a process that will bring benefit to you beyond your wildest imaginations.

Some questions asked of the Bible are simply not answered in the Bible. We must leave it at that. But more questions than what most people think, can be answered clearly from the Bible if a person is willing to take the time to search it out.

So, hopefully, the process that we will take here during these three talks will do a couple of things. Hopefully

- 1) it will answer--FROM SCRIPTURE--some of these seemingly universal questions, questions that keep coming up. And hopefully,
- 2) *along with the answers* it will be demonstrated how-to go about finding answers to further questions, which are not dealt with in this conference.

As we get started with some questions, let's first realize and settle once for all what is written by Paul to Timothy in his second letter:

II Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

This reveals that since all Scripture is God-breathed, we do not have to guess which parts are His Words, and which are not! And **all Scripture is PROFITABLE to us**. And the purpose of Scripture is that we **may be adequate and equipped for good works**, as bad as some people may think that word “works” is—that is what God tells us, right?

One thing that we will not do is question the integrity of the inspired Word of God. We will accept on faith that God’s Word is infallible and without contradiction. Anything that LOOKS contradictory is a problem that lies with us, not with the WORD.

Now...knowing from Whom we received this word (if it is God-breathed, could we see that these are the very words of God?), let’s consider this question:

To whom is the Bible written?

Specifically speaking, the Bible is written, through Divine inspiration *to God’s People*. The Old Testament is written to God’s people—the Nation of Israel, which began to be written down by the pen of Moses after the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob became a nation.

And specifically speaking, the New Testament is written to God’s people—the Church, with the four gospels and the Book of Acts transgressing both groups of God’s people.

Suffice it to say: God speaks to HIS OWN PEOPLE! And He knows who His people are.

Here are some examples of how we can see this from God’s Word. In the OT:

Psalms 81

8 "Hear, O My people, and I will admonish you; O Israel, if you would listen to Me! 9 Let there be no strange god among you; Nor shall you worship any foreign god. 10 I, the LORD, am your God, Who brought you up from the land of Egypt; Open your mouth wide and I will fill it.

11 "But My people did not listen to My voice; And Israel did not obey Me. 12 So I gave them over to the stubbornness of their heart, To walk in their own devices. 13 Oh that My people would listen to Me, That Israel would walk in My ways!

Isaiah 51:4 "Pay attention to Me, O My people; And give ear to Me, O My nation...

Isaiah 58:"Cry loudly, do not hold back; Raise your voice like a trumpet, And declare to My people their transgression...

We could give innumerable examples of God speaking *to His people* in the OT. Now check out the Epistles in the NT.

Romans 1

1 Paul, a bond-servant of Christ Jesus, called as an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God,

...7 to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God . 8 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, because your faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world.

...11 For I long to see you in order that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established; 12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

...15 Thus, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

Why is he preaching the gospel to people whom he so clearly states as brothers, whose faith is being proclaimed throughout the world? It is because he is preaching the good news to those who are saved in Rome, concerning the very purpose for their salvation.

Perhaps that is what being done right now...preaching the GOOD NEWS to you, who are my brothers, whose faith is proclaimed in different parts of the world...Really, you have gathered together here to hear the preaching of the GOSPEL to you.

Let's continue looking at the addressees of the epistles:

I Corinthians 1:1 Paul, called as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God... 2 to the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours...

And...

Galatians 1:1 Paul, an apostle (not sent from men, nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead), 2 and all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia...

May I say, that **God knows who the Church is**. He is not confused! He doesn't speak to the Church (the Body of Christ) in one sentence, and then addresses an unsaved person sitting next to you in some building on a Sunday morning. In other words, all the warm-fuzzy passages are not for the Church at the exclusion of the hard warning verses. All the epistles and every part of every epistle is addressed to the Church. And frankly we need to see it that way in order to understand what God is saying to His people...in these spiritual thoughts which have been put into spiritual words.

For example, to these Churches (churches throughout the regions of Galatia) Paul, under inspiration, goes on to say:

...6 I am amazed that you [saved people within the CHURCHES of Galatia] are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel...

Context surrounding the passage will shed light on what Paul was saying. But certainly he is admonishing saved people, not people who "come to church and sit in the pews every Sunday, who think they may be saved, but are really not"...

Ephesians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus, and who are faithful in Christ Jesus...

Colossians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, 2 to the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae...

I Thessalonians 1:1 Paul and Silvanus and Timothy to the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ...

Paul's second letter is to the same group of people.

I Timothy 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, who is our hope; 2 to Timothy, my true child in the faith...

Paul's second letter to Timothy is to Timothy, his true child in the faith.

Titus 1:1 Paul, a bond-servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ.....4 to Titus, my true child in a common faith...

Hebrews 31 Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling...

The Book of Hebrews is a book that addresses five major, very stern warnings that this inspired writer was giving to the “holy brethren’ who are “partakers of a heavenly calling”. Are these saved people who are addressed in the Book of Hebrews?

James 1:1 James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad, greetings. 2 Consider it all joy, my brethren...

Philemon 1:1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, to Philemon our beloved brother and fellow worker, 2 and to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house...

1 Peter 1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen 2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood...

Peter addresses the same group of people in his second letter...

1 John:2:1 My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin.

2:12 I am writing to you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake.

3:1 See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are.

Jude 1:1 Jude, a bond-servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to those who are the called, beloved in God the Father, and kept for Jesus Christ...

So to answer the question To Whom is the Bible written? It is easy to see that the Bible is obviously written to God’s people. Can it be more clear than that?

Now the question is:

What is this message that God would want to give to His people (that takes up all 2067 pages? Would it be “how to be saved” over and over again? If Benjamin is my child, would I need to tell him over and over again how to become my child? If Becky is already in our family, through a legal bond (marriage to our son, Benjamin), would I need to tell her how to come into the family, over and over again?

It would be silly, wouldn’t it?

Then why is it so commonly held today that God’s Word tells us (His own redeemed people, people who are already His children, already in the family of God), how to come into the family? Could these 2067 pages carry us beyond how-to-be-saved, and perhaps give us the reason that we have been saved? And perhaps make it clear to us (God’s children) what we are to do now that we have been saved? And how we are to live?

So now the question becomes:

To whom does God give understanding and how does He give it?

Remember what we have already see Paul say to the Church at Corinth:

...that your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

He goes on to say some things about that which we can know through the Spirit of God--

I Corinthians 2:10 For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

OK! So there are DEEP THINGS of God! Good to know what Scripture says about it.

Paul goes on to explain:

11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God,

These things, which should not rest on the wisdom of men...but on the power of God!

13 which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.

14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

With just this bit, can we see that God's Word is NOT AT ALL directed to the unsaved? Except to know that Jesus died on the cross for their sins (and this in itself is the work of the Holy Spirit "hovering" over a person), what else can an unsaved person understand? According to God's Word, it is foolishness to him.

Then we can know that:

15 But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no man. 16 For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.

Let's just keep on going, so that we can understand more about some things that we have already mentioned. We can see that it is backed up by the Word in more places than one:

1 Corinthians 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Christ. 2 I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it.

You see, there are levels of difficulty, if you will, when it comes to understanding God's Word. Paul distinguishes this in the way of using physical food which insures physical growth. The metaphor being used to depict that people can choose to partake of milk only OR they can choose to partake of solid food, insuring more growth. Not only does Paul use this in a metaphorical sense depicting spiritual growth, but so does Peter in I Peter 2, and the writer of Hebrews in Hebrews chapter 5. But setting that aside for the time, Paul goes on to say to the Church at Corinth:

2...Indeed, even now you are not yet able, 3 for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men? 4 For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not mere men? 5 What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? ...

So knowing this, that

- Our faith (belief in what God says) should not rest on the wisdom of men—neither Calvin, nor Armenius... nor MacArther, nor Piper, nor any other person...

- The Spirit Who is from God desires us know the things freely given to us by God. (It is the Spirit of God Who knows and searches the mind of God; it is the Spirit of God who reveals these things to us as we compare spiritual thoughts which have been put into spiritual words)
- Therefore, *a spiritually-minded man* can understand these things
- Natural man—a man void of the Spirit of God, cannot understand these things (therefore the Bible would not be addressing him)
- A carnal (fleshly) man, as a babe in Christ, also cannot understand these things because these things are spiritually appraised (though the Bible is addressing him, but he may not hear what the Spirit says.) **And until he desires to wean himself, enough to do it, he will remain a babe in Christ, only able to partake of milk, fed to him at the hand of another person, which the author of Hebrews says, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, cannot discern the Word of Righteousness.**

So knowing this, we can begin to delve into Scripture, and begin to see and understand the overall scope of Scripture, seeing the CONTEXT as it is laid out by God, and given to us to understand through His Spirit.

There is a passage in the Book of Isaiah that also deals with HOW GOD GIVES UNDERSTANDING AND TO WHOM...

Isa 28:9 "To whom would He teach knowledge? And to whom would He interpret the message? Those just weaned from milk? Those just taken from the breast? 10 For He says, 'Order on order, order on order, Line on line, line on line, A little here, a little there.'"

Do you see the whole metaphor of physical food being used again to depict a spiritual growth again? If a person wants be taught knowledge; if he wants to interpret THIS message from God; he must be weaned from milk; he must be taken from the breast, as it were. He can no longer be a nursing babe! Having food put into his mouth for him. He must take on the responsibility of feeding himself.

And the way he will do it it to study all the different parts and facets of the Word. Learning a little at a time...a little from here, a little from there...putting precept upon another precept, and a line from this Book in the Bible, upon a line from another Book in the Bible.

Isn't that what it says?

It takes time. It takes energy. It takes fortitude. It takes perseverance. It does not take a degree in higher learning institution. It will take the sweat of your brow, if you are to eat the bread of life.

And Peter also sees it this way. He explains the first steps in the process:

I Peter 2:1 Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, 2 like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation...

Peter is also the one who further says that interpretation is not left up to *any one man*...but men who have been carried along by the Holy Spirit. (Following any one man is being a babe in Christ, fleshly, with fleshly jealousies among believers.) Peter explains:

II Peter 1:20 But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, 21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

That's why the Bible is given a little from here, a little from there, precept upon precept, line upon line. Because God chose men, and moved them by His Spirit (the One Who searched the deep things of God) to pen His thoughts and put them into His Words!

And to see that the Bible as a whole, deals with prophecy is not difficult at all, for we know that Jesus is the WORD made flesh (John 1:14), and His name is THE WORD OF GOD (Rev. 19:13), and the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy (Rev. 19:10).

To study the Bible is costly in the way of time and energy. It takes dying to your flesh, choosing to do so out of obedience, rather than out of a “want to” some of the times. It is a choice you make. It is costly...but it is worth the cost! It is worth paying for the benefit! And in the fullest sense, a person GETS what they pay for!

With that said, in order to get answers *from* Scripture to questions *of* Scripture, you have to begin where God begins...at the beginning, laying a foundation upon which to build understanding. The importance of this cannot be overstated. For example, let’s deal with salvation...

What about the “most basic of all doctrines”—the doctrine of salvation? How can verses be reconciled that seem to be contradictory with regards to salvation, which has allowed large groups of saved people separate into various denominations, believing a variety of things concerning salvation, with each of these groups having verses that “back up” what they espouse?

We all know that a problem exists in basic understanding of these things...Yes? **To be sure, there is a correct way to look at salvation, and an incorrect way (actually several incorrect ways) to look at salvation. There is not more than ONE CORRECT way.**

When speaking to a Philippian jailer, Paul states most succinctly what it takes to be saved:

Acts 16:31 And they [Paul and Silas] said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved..."

(Deal with the free gift based on Acts 6:30-31. Give opportunity to believe.)

We can find the correct way to look at it. And you and I are neither naïve nor prideful to think that God Almighty not only has revealed these things to His people, but He also desires His people to know the truth about this! Wouldn’t you agree???

To begin to understand these things, it must be understood that there are some foundational truths that must be in place, based upon Scriptures and the way God gave Scripture, for correct understanding to ensue.

There are foundational things that must be taken into account in order to answer questions concerning salvation.

And these foundational things even answer other questions along the way. Questions like:

- **What brought about the need of salvation in the first place?**
- **What did man lose in sin, and what will he gain in salvation?**
- **What does faith have to do with salvation?**
- **How do works fit into the overall picture?**

The answer to the simple question concerning the “simple Gospel message” is not so simple, is it? Rather it is multi-faceted (and fascinating!) and will take some time to answer—*from God’s Word.*

This is where it is important to understand the concept of CONTEXT.

You know everything in life is “in CONTEXT”, isn’t it? Who you are...where you live...what you do...what you have become and will become... Everything has a context. Your family. Your work. Your interests. YOU! Nothing exists in a vacuum.

The same is true for ANSWERS concerning questions emanating out of the Bible. No matter what question you ask, it has a context! And the context must be based upon the WHOLE SCOPE OF SCRIPTURE. There is Context for every question that can be asked from Scripture. Honestly, no question *should be answered* apart from a basic understanding of the WHOLE SCOPE OF SCRIPTURE, which when you see it, is really quite simple. Although it is going to take a bit to lay it out...

Before we can even get to the answers to the seemingly simple questions, one of the first questions that must be asked and answered:

What are the foundations in Scripture, what is the whole overall scope of Scripture, and how does this affect the rest of Scripture?

Let's look briefly at the context...

This book has a beginning and has an ending. And this is by Divine design!

And everything in between these two points relate to the beginning and ending. Everything. And so, in interpreting any part of this Book, one must know where the Book begins and where it ends, and then compare everything in it to its parts. That is called "comparing Scripture with Scripture."

So for the remaining time tonight, I am going to lay the framework of the foundation of Scripture, revealing the CONTEXT wherein it all began, remembering that apart from CONTEXT, correct understanding cannot ensue, even with respect to the most basic of all Scriptural doctrine—salvation!

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning God created [bara] the heavens and the earth.

Simple enough! At some point in eternity past, God simply created the heavens and the earth.

This opening statement presents a very simple statement, doesn't it? And in order to come into a fuller understanding of this, we would need to compare Scripture with Scripture. In that, we could go to Paul's writings in his letter to the Colossians and gain a little more information about this original creation. We could see that while God *created the heavens and the earth*, some time subsequent to that, he created things *in the heavens and things on the earth*.

Colossians 1:16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities — all things have been created by Him and for Him.

First He created the heavens and the earth, then He created things IN the HEAVENS, and ON the EARTH

And Paul tells us WHAT: IN THE HEAVENS— He created invisible thrones, or dominions, or rulers, or authorities

and ON THE EARTH— He created visible thrones, or dominions, or rulers, or authorities

That's what it says, right? But look at what Paul goes on to say about these things a few verses down:

Colossians 1:20 and through Him [Jesus] to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

Given a little thought to this, we could easily understand that Jesus' death on the cross reconciled the visible things on earth--the visible thrones, or dominions, or rulers, or authorities.

It is easy to understand that things "on earth" *needed to be reconciled* to God, through Christ's blood—fallen man, and the corruption that took place as a result of his fall.

But what about *the need* to have the *invisible thrones, or dominions, or rulers, or authorities* in the heavens reconciled to God? What? What is that all about? What brought about that need of reconciliation? In other words, what happened in the heavenlies that brought about the need for this?

The answer to this is laid out in the foundation of Scripture, and this is almost universally missed in the teaching of the Bible throughout the land today. And again, apart from this foundation, CONTEXT is missing that is necessary to answer many of the questions that come up about the Bible today, allowing for erroneous teaching—even along the lines of the simple Gospel message—causing things to be viewed as conflicting or inconsistent—an impossibility in Scripture.

- It is easy to see that when God created man, He created him perfectly. It was subsequent to a perfect creation that man fell into sin and then needed to be reconciled. Right?
- It is also to see that the angels--all of them--were created perfectly, and subsequent to a perfect creation, some of them fell into sin. (We'll look at the details of this in just a minute.)

Can we then suppose that when God created the heavens and the earth, that He also created these perfectly as well? But are we given only to supposition when it comes to wondering about this opening statement in Scripture? Would God have initially created a chaotic earth, only to have to bring order out of it later? Or did He created it perfectly, in perfect order, and it fell into disorder at a subsequent point? What can we suppose about this?

The good news is—is that we do not have to suppose anything! God is abundantly clear. Let's look at it.

The second verse in the Bible states:

2 And the earth was formless [tohuw] and void [bohuw], and darkness was over the surface of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.

At first glimpse, it might seem that God **created the earth** in this “formless and void” state (which is a far cry from perfect). Would that be the case? Could that be the case? Can we know?

These two words used together (formless and void) depict *absolute, and utter chaos*. There was no order, no beauty, no perfection, no form, just vast emptiness and not just emptiness, but it was utterly chaotic.

The two Hebrew words used together here in this verse are used together only two other times in all of Scripture, and in both places (Isa. 34:11; and Jer. 4:23), the state depicted by these two words being used together, is seen as utterly chaotic and is a result of God's judgment having been passed.

So, here at the beginning, when God uses these two words together for the first time, are we to suppose that God originally created the earth in this absolute chaotic mess, and then brought order out of it, OR did he create it perfectly, and subsequently passed judgment for some reason, which brought about the mess, as in the case of the other two places in Scripture where these words describe chaos brought about through judgment.

Again we are not left with supposition. When *comparing Scripture with Scripture*, it is easy to see which it was. Look at what the Prophet Isaiah says of this moment in eternity past:

Isaiah 45:18 For thus says the LORD, who created [bara] the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it and did not create [bara] it a waste place [tohuw], But formed it to be inhabited)...

The Hebrew word for “waste place” used here is the exact same word used in Gen. 1:2 for formless. It is the Hebrew word *tohuw*.

(add Gen. 1:2 on slide)

And yet, the earth is described as such in the very second verse of all of Scripture. And since we can see through this passage that it is in fact true that God did not create (bara) the earth a waste place (tohuw), can we find out, through comparing Scripture with Scripture, exactly what happened. Let' look to see:

The Prophets Ezekiel and Isaiah give us the information we need.

Ezekiel 28:11 Again the word of the LORD came to me saying, 12 "Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre, and say to him, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,

"You had the seal of perfection, Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. 13 You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone was your covering, on the day that you were created They were prepared. 14 You were the anointed cherub who covers, And I placed you there. You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked in the midst of the stones of fire. 15 You were blameless in your ways From the day you were created, Until unrighteousness was found in you. 16 By the abundance of your trade You were internally filled with violence, And you sinned;

With this address being made to the king of Tyre, how can we know that Ezekiel was speaking to Satan? Look at what it says: "...you were the anointed cherub...."

And in comparing Scripture with Scripture, we can find out what the sin was that was so great! Isaiah tells us:

Isaiah 14:12 "How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! ... 13 But you said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly In the recesses of the north. 14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'

So from these passages we can see several things about Lucifer. We can see that:

- He was the anointed cherub, perfect in his original creation
- He sought to raise his throne (so he has a throne) above the other stars of God
- He wanted to be as God...
- He had a domain, over which he ruled...

And Ezekiel gives us enough information to explain what happened in his fall that would affect his domain...

Ezekiel 28:18 By the multitude of your iniquities, In the unrighteousness of your trade, You profaned your sanctuaries.

So his sanctuaries (places rulership, his domain over which he rules) became profaned or desecrated...

Remember the NT passage we wondered about earlier:

Colossians 1:20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

Now we can know that the invisible (to earthly eyes) thrones and place of rulership became desecrated and that was the reason for the need of reconciliation.

And to realize that Lucifer—Satan—is still ruling over the earth, we only need to turn to what Paul wrote to the Church at Ephesus, in his letter dealing with Spiritual warfare:

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. 11 Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and

blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Not to mention the fact that Jesus called Satan the god of this world; and Paul refers to him as the “prince of the power of the air.”

So why is all this important to know? Why the work necessary to see these things and to determine if that is indeed what God breathed?

Now we can know why Satan appears in a fallen state in the Garden with a specific intent. And he had success in his intention, which we will get to in a moment!

Do you see that these are things that God breathed through the pens of various writers? **Moses, Paul, Ezekiel, Isaiah, all have had part in explaining the picture. Line upon line, precept upon precept, a little from here, a little from there...Men carried along by the Holy Spirit (the One Who searches and knows the deep things of God, Who gives wisdom to us liberally if we ask in faith, not doubting...what the Word says!**

But why do we need to know these things in order to help us understand even the simple gospel message?

- It is because of Biblical CONTEXT.
- It is because of something else that we need to see here at beginning of the Scriptures.
- It is because of the Scripturally-given, specifically-stated reason for God creating man. We don't have to GUESS why God created man. We do not have to be told by another person why God created man, and if we *think we know the reason*, because of something that we have always been taught, or because of something that we've always believed, but we find out that what we have always been taught, or different from what we've always believed is different, based upon what Scripture says...well...we had better be willing to change our mind about it, because God's Word is correct...not otherwise...

Why is that important? It is because redemption came into place because man fell, having been created for a specifically stated reason.

- Man was created because Satan fell.
- Man was redeemed because man fell.

The purpose for man being created is to take Satan's place as ruler over the earth. And this is born out in Scripture. Let's look to see what God said about His creating man both before and after he created him.

Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. 28 And God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

And because this is at the beginning of God's Word, by Divine design, this lays out the foundation for the purpose of man's creation. Man was created to rule. Can it be stated more clearly than it has been stated?

And even here at the beginning, we can know why he was created to rule, because the earth had fallen into a state of chaos, and God took steps within a six-day period to bring the earth out of that chaos, and on the 6th day, He created man for a very important and specific purpose. And if we miss the stated purpose for this, then we will also miss a whole lot along the way, bringing about error in the most basic of all doctrines, the doctrine of salvation.

If we miss why man was created, then:

- We miss why Satan desired to bring about the fall of man!
- We miss why God promised a Redeemer!
- We miss why there is present conflict within the world today!
- What did man lose in sin, and what might he gain in salvation?

Even beyond that, we would miss:

- How do works fit into the overall picture?

There is more having to do with this foundation. More we can know. More we can understand, concerning time, and prophecy being fulfilled, having many of our questions answered. But we have covered enough for now.

The main thing to remember from tonight is that the FOUNDATION of Scripture must be in place in the overall context of Scripture, and apart from these two things: FOUNDATION and CONTEXT, much will be misunderstood, even with respect to salvation. I leave you with this:

Psalms 11:3 If the foundations are destroyed, What can the righteous do?"