

Christian Misconceptions

Hermeneutics – Methods of interpretation, especially of the Bible

Exegesis – critical explanation or interpretation of a text, especially of Scripture.

Eisegesis – Using experience to interpret Scripture.

Endogenesis – Reading meaning into a text or scripture

Semantics – the meaning of words and phrases

First Misconception

1. More of You and Less of Me

Where it comes from - A misinterpretation of John 3:30

- **John 3:30** He must increase, but I *must* decrease.
- This verse is John the Baptist talking very specifically about his ministry. He was known as the forerunner of Christ. People were coming to him for baptism. But Christ was starting His public ministry. Therefore John's ministry would be replaced by Jesus' ministry.
- John represented the Law – Jesus represents grace. It is a passing of the baton.

Why we pray it

- Problems with sin
- Desire to see God move more in our lives
- Desire to do right but don't trust ourselves
- Want victory over our flesh – so, God - just decrease it till it's gone!

Why it's wrong – 2 parts to this.

We have all of God.

- He is not holding back parts of Himself. We can't get more of God.
- He gave us Himself fully yet we ask for more as if He cannot satisfy us with all of Him.

- **Colossians 1:27** To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.
- **John 14:23** Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.
- **1 Corinthians 3:16** Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?
- **1 John 4:15** Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

2nd part - He doesn't need less of you, He needs all of you

- Praying for less of me de-emphasizes us. Not that we are all that but we are spiritual beings with the Spirit of God in us.
- God works in us, through us, and as us. - EXPLAIN

This is a problematic statement because it means we believe that we are our flesh – not our spirit. While the flesh has problems, our spirit is perfect.

- But God wants all of us. Not less of us.
- The solution to imperfect flesh is perfect surrender. Give Him more of us. Not less.
- **Romans 6:13** And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God.
- God wants all of us as surrendered to Him
- **Romans 12:1** I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service.
- When we surrender ourselves to God, we look more like Him and actually behave more like Him.
- Unsurrendered life - **Galatians 5:19-21** Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹ envy, murders,

drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

- This is what we think is “us” when we pray less of me.
- Surrendered Life - **Galatians 5:22-25** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ²⁴ And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.
 - This is “us” surrendered to God walking in the spirit.

God doesn't need less of us – He wants less of us walking in the flesh. He wants more of us surrendered to Him. But He wants all of us.

What it should be - I want to walk in the spirit and surrender all of the flesh.

Second Misconception

2. God will not give you more than you can handle.

Where this comes from –

- "God does not burden any human being with more than he is well able to bear" The Qur'an 2:286 (Asad)
- Also **1 Corinthians 10:13** No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*.

Why do we say this?

- We just really, really want it to be true.

Why it's wrong –

- Just ask Gideon. Or Joshua before walking around a wall.
- Or anyone who has been asked to pray for healing for someone.

- It limits what God wants to do through us. It says we will only accomplish that which we can do in our own strength.
- It says we have to fix our own problems, even if we did not cause them.
- It takes the super out of the natural.

There are 2 ways this statement could be interpreted – both wrong.

1. God will not give us more that we can bear

- **2 Corinthians 11:23-29** Are they ministers of Christ? —I speak as a fool—I *am* more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. ²⁴ From the Jews five times I received forty *stripes* minus one. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; ²⁶ *in* journeys often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils of *my own* countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; ²⁷ in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness— ²⁸ besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches. ²⁹ Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I do not burn with indignation?
- But then what is his conclusion?
- **2 Corinthians 11:30** If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity.
- **2 Corinthians 12:9-10** And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.
- Paul learned that He was able to endure more with Christ than he could bear without Christ. In fact, he even learned to boast in how much he could endure when in Christ.
- Did God give Paul, Job, Daniel, Shadrach et.al., and many others more than they could bear? Yes. Did God abandon them or give them strength to get through it? Yes.

- **Isaiah 43:1-2** But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called *you* by your name; You *are* Mine. ² When you pass through the waters, I *will be* with you; And through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, Nor shall the flame scorch you.
- God actually desires to break us. But promises that we will be better for it. And when we choose to allow that to happen willingly, it is even better.

2. It could also mean God will not call us to something beyond ourselves.

- We'll go back to Gideon and the 300 or Joshua and the plan to take down the wall.
- Paul had a lot of strengths
 - **Philippians 3:4-6** though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: ⁵ circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.
- Paul learned that he could do some pretty great things in his strength. But those things actually amounted to nothing compared to what could be accomplished through God's strength.
 - **Philippians 3:7-8** But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. ⁸ Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ
- Jesus said:
 - **John 14:12** Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater *works* than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

What it should be –

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

- Whatever God calls us to, He equip us for.
- It is His strength, not ours.
- And it is for what He calls us to, not what we choose to do.
- **Matthew 10:1** And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.
- **Exodus 15:2** The LORD *is* my strength and song, And He has become my salvation; He *is* my God, and I will praise Him; My father's God, and I will exalt Him.

PROBABLY STOP HERE

3. Satan is the master or ruler of hell

Where it comes from - Dante's Inferno and The Divine Comedy

Why it's wrong - It gives power to the enemy. It makes him more powerful than he is. Satan is homeless. He does not have a fortress or a place of retreat. It creates fear in Christians.

What it should be - Satan is a loser who will be tormented forever in hell. Hell was not created for people, though some may go there. It was created for the devil and his angels as an eternal punishment.

But what about the Keys to death hell and the grave?

What about Satan being called the Prince of the Power of the air, or the ruler of this world? This has to do with the sin nature of a fallen world. We are born into sin nature because of Adam. But it is a condition, not a kingdom.

Revelation 20:10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

What do the homeless lack? Resources. But they know deception. The only weapon the enemy has is lies and deception. The more we believe the lies the more power we give away.

Tie all 3 lies together

Christians should never judge