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SIX TESTS FOR DISCERNING TRUTH

HOW DOES JESUS RELATE TO THE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES?

Since the “Christian” claims to be a follower of Jesus, and has no higher source of authority than Jesus, it is helpful to understand how Jesus received, understood, and interpreted the Scriptures that came before him. This will give the Christian a better understanding of how we relate to the Scriptures for ourselves.

1. **It is clear that Jesus was a devout Jew who not only studied the Scriptures, but also practiced the Scriptures** believing them to be the final authority of God for humanity. In perhaps the most famous sermon of all time Jesus says these words:

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. 19Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:17-20 (NIV-2011)

2. **Jesus believed that the Scriptures were perfect in the truths they affirmed.** In John 10:34-35 for example, he says, “*the Scripture cannot be broken.*” Again in Matthew 5:18 he says, “*until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.*”
3. **Jesus regularly cites the Scriptures as the source of final authority** when he was asked to resolve legal, social, and religious issues in their day. In Matthew 19:1-9 for example, when other Jewish legal scholars test Jesus he resolves a conflict of legal interpretation over marriage by citing God’s legal intent as recorded in the book of Genesis.
4. **The teachings of Jesus are saturated with Biblical language and references.** For example, when he says something like, “*blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they will be filled*” he is making a clear allusion to Isaiah 55:1-2.
5. **Jesus believed himself to be the fulfillment of the Scriptures.** In John 5:39 he says, “*You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about me.*” Also, in Luke 24:44 Jesus says to them, “*This is what I told you*

while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

6. **Even his opponents believed Jesus to be a man studied in the Scriptural Law.** *"Teacher,"* they called him, *"we know that you are truthful and teach truthfully the way of God. You defer to no one, for You don't show partiality"* Matthew 22:15.

Summary:

If Jesus had a sacred view of the Scriptures, immersed himself in the study of Scriptures, and was meticulous to live his life according to the Scriptures then, as his followers, we should be in the habit of doing the same.