EYEWITNESS BIBLE SERIES

Built on Truth
Episode 01
Problem Solved

Study Guide

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Episode: Built on Truth Series No. 01
Narrator: Paul
Primary Scriptures: 2 Peter 3:15-17
Story Summary: How to answer hard questions
Location: Jerusalem
Time: circa 50 AD
Suggested Memory Scriptures: 2 Peter 3:15-17

Wouldn't you love having a video of Peter when he wrote 2 Peter 3:15-17. Was he smiling because he was poking fun at his friend, Paul. Or, was he grimly thinking of all the Christians who had fallen for false teachers. He wrote. "Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction."

It is comforting to know the people of Paul's time considered some of his writings to be hard to understand. Paul often addressed questions or situations having no simple solution.

Some of the people Paul wrote to were Jews, many of whom had become Christians. They were very familiar with the Old Testament and God. The others were Gentiles, or non-Jews, many of whom had little knowledge of the Old Testament and God. Many modern people are in the same position of having little knowledge of the Bible or God.

When it comes to dealing with hard questions or situations, it is always helpful to establish the assumptions being used. If you want to come to a Bible-based answer, it is reasonable to state a base assumption similar to, "I will base my information and conclusions upon the Bible, and God's and Jesus's characters as described in the Bible." Even if the people you are talking to don't agree with that assumption, it will give them a chance to understand how you derived your position. It will also place them in a position of having to state their own foundational assumptions. This keeps arguments from degenerating into a battle of personal opinions, which can be combative instead of instructive. It also allows you to build a systematic process so you can approach problems which are not directly addressed in the Bible.

The famous teachers of Paul's time had their own ways of approaching hard questions. Jesus used the same techniques. They would establish a few foundational scriptures to base their positions upon, from which all their interpretations would flow. The famous rabbi Hillel and Jesus used the same two foundational scriptures, which Jesus named the two greatest of the commandments: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind," and "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Jesus said all the Law and Prophets are built on (depend on, hang on) these two commandments.