Subject: Matthew 22:1-14
Posted by jisamazed on Sat, 03 Jan 2009 17:32:58 GMT
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I was reading this parable this morning and was struck by a couple of statements Jesus said in this version that he did not say in the Luke 14:15-24. Jesus no doubt told the story a number of times, and told it differently each time, just like we do when we tell a story. However, being holy scripture, the Lord had a purpose for giving us both parallel versions of the parable.

Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. The "son" here is Jesus. Wedding banquets in that culture were important events that lasted for days at a time. If a prominent person such as a king threw a wedding banquet, he fed hundreds of people for that time and sometimes provided accomodations. The whole town shut down for the celebration and business was suspended. For those who did not like the king, it would be a big hassle. Imagine being a merchant and not being able to make trades with your vendors because you had to stay in town for a week to go to a wedding. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. They rejected his first invitation. Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.' He patiently gave a second invitation, and he wanted to make it very appealing. He wanted to show them how it will be worth their while to attend. Our job as his servants is to give the invitation, not a threat or beat-down.
BUT THEY PAID NO ATTENTION and went off- one to his field, another to his business. It was inconvenient for them to alter their routine and spend time with Him. The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. All who live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. We are his servants telling the people about the banquet. Odd that such a glorious event would make people mad enough to kill the messengers. The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Yes, the almighty God gets mad. He has every right to be angry, and He will take revenge on those who do not repent for dissing Him and abusing His children. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. Commentators believe he is referring to the Jews of his day who rejected Him, the Messiah. Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.' "Anyone" is far-reaching. It could include a lot of people that seemingly would not be interested in the banquet-- terrorists, criminals, gays, movie stars. So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. Good and bad must refer to the way people live, as before God we are all bad in ourselves regarding righteousness. Some of the people they found were nice people who nevertheless were unsaved, others were mean and selfish and unsaved. The Lord calls a mixed bag of people to come to Him. But when the king come in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes. The robe of righteousness that only Christ can give. It shows that you have forsaken the garment of your own life and taken on that of the bridegroom.

'Friend,' he asked, 'how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' You can't get to heaven without Christ's righteousness clothing you. Neither Buddha or Mohammed or Joseph Smith nor any other person in history can give you that robe. Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' No second chances.

For many are invited, but few are chosen. If it is true that there are 500 million genuinely saved believers in the world, that is still only 8 or 9% of the world's population. Our job is to give the invitation to the lost, not worry about whether or not we are in the minority. We always will be in the minority on a worldwide scale. We should still want as many people as possible to come to the banquet, because we know what will happen to those who refuse or who don't have a wedding garment on.

Subject: Re: Matthew 22:1-14
Posted by james on Sat, 03 Jan 2009 18:04:58 GMT
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AMEN, to that Jae; that's a good breakdown and explanation of that parable.

Who came up with numbers as to how many people are saved in the whole world? Just wondered, not disagreeing or agreeing. (how could I?)

james

Subject: Re: Matthew 22:1-14
Posted by james on Sun, 04 Jan 2009 15:26:18 GMT
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I wasn't trying to raise a controversy as to the number that was used for how many people are saved, 500 million. I just am wondering where the figure comes from, and does it only apply to those now living, or is it to cover everyone past and present. Is it general knowledge in christian circles and I'm just not inside the circle, or is it a number thrown out there by a 'christian' magazine? We know that no one knows the number except Jesus, so who's doing 'the math'? (besides our resident mathematician, Hombre)

I'm not making light of your post Jae, not at all, I think it's good. You just stated that, "if it is true that there are 500 million genuinely saved believers in the world..." Key words being, IF IT IS TRUE. Where did the figures come from and who is making that determination?

I hope it's much higher, especially if it's covering everyone EVER saved, living and dead... But if someone's just looking down the roster of 'church' memberships in all the denominations and compiling numbers that total up to 500 million, then we all know it's WAY off...

james

Subject: Re: Matthew 22:1-14
Posted by james on Sun, 04 Jan 2009 19:45:07 GMT
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That was my original point in asking; I was asking from where came the numbers. Jae said, " If it is true that there are 500 million genuinely saved believers in the world "...So the obvious question is, "Sez who", that it's true?

Just to appease my curiosity I googled several sites only to get different numbers at each one. I think most was speaking of 'christian' in the context of the world's population being either christian, muslim, hindu; not even practicing christians. You know, like the answer someone in america would give on a census survey with multiple choice...are you a christian, muslim, or hindu, please check only one...

Then others had a breakdown of the different denominations worldwide and a list of their membership, from catholics all the way to baptist and everyone in between. They gave a number of over a billion.

This is an unanswerable question...by anyone other than God.

Subject: Re: Matthew 22:1-14
Posted by jisamazed on Mon, 05 Jan 2009 03:37:24 GMT
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Alanbook wrote on Sun, 04 January 2009 14:42james wrote on Sun, 04 January 2009 13:45That was my original point in asking; I was asking from where came the numbers. Jae said, " If it is true that there are 500 million genuinely saved believers in the world "...So the obvious question is, "Sez who", that it's true?

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You know whats really sad is the fact I know people in our little rural community, that are shacking up (or occasionaly staying together, is the political correct term), and they call themselves Christian.

I'm sure all these couples would fill out the survey and check yes I am a christian. I believe in christmas. Your right about one thing only the Lord knows who is a true born again believer.

Another thought about this number situation is what about underground churches in communist lands. It would be impossible to come up with a figure here also. I think no one could even make an educated guess on this group and say there is 500 million. I can believe though there is a billion religious people. But this figure would be hard to narrow down also.

It would mean an awful lot of surveys.

Hey guys, my referral to 500 million was simply a ball-park figure. A big ball park. Operation World (an excellent resource) in the 1992 version estimated the number of professing "Christians" at 1.7 billion. That would include all nominal Christians as well as fringe groups. It broke down that figure into smaller groups: the branches of Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox, plus the many different denominations. Of those, it estimated the number of evangelicals in the world at the time to be a little less than 500 million at the time. However, it acknowledges those to be estimates. There is no way to tell for sure how many born-again Christians there are in China, for example. Frankly, there is no way to tell how many are in any country, as only the Lord knows how many have genuine faith. It is most certainly more than 144,000. If you travel the world and meet some saints, there would be no doubt in your minds about it. The Lord is not concerned about people being superchristians as much as He is concerned that they are growing into Christlikeness. True believers around the world are at all levels in their growth.

A man of God with whom I am acquainted said that one day when he was in a field he noticed a grain of wheat that was far taller than the rest. He pondered why it was taller, and realized that it simply continued to grow when the others stopped growing. Applying that principle to himself, he realized that he did not have to stop growing even if others around him did. He did not have to be

content with the teaching he received, the experiences he had, the progress he had made. He could keep growing and maturing, becoming more like Jesus.

J. B. Phillips once wrote a book called, "Your God is Too Small." He was a staunch believer in the absolute sovereignty of God. He pointed out that small faith is often a result of small understanding of who God is. He encouraged people to look for God's activity far beyond their own little world. He is far beyond our little realm of experience and exposure. In applying that principle to His work around the world, He is doing far above what we know or act or think among the masses in the world. He is bringing many people to Him in places such as Iran, Afganistan, Saudi Arabia and India among people who would formerly never have been willing or able to hear the good news before. Their committment to the Lord visibly surpasses that of the majority of believers in the west, even without all the tapes and books that we have. They make most of the former "faith camp" people look like spiritual babies.

Our job in this parable is to give that invitation to as many people as possible. All who are thirsty may come, regardless of background. Let the Lord take care of the numbers thing. We shouldn't concern ourselves with it.

Subject: Re: Matthew 22:1-14
Posted by jisamazed on Mon, 05 Jan 2009 19:29:46 GMT
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Hombre wrote on Mon, 05 January 2009 09:39jisamazed wrote on Sun, 04 January 2009 21:371.)Hey guys, my referral to 500 million was simply a ball-park figure. .....There is no way to tell for sure how many born-again Christians there are in China, for example. Frankly, there is no way to tell how many are in any country, as only the Lord knows how many have genuine faith. 2.)It is most certainly more than 144,000. ..... 3.)The Lord is not concerned about people being superchristians as much as He is concerned that they are growing into Christlikeness. True believers around the world are at all levels in their growth.

4.)Our job in this parable is to give that invitation to as many people as possible. All who are thirsty may come, regardless of background. Let the Lord take care of the numbers thing. We shouldn't concern ourselves with it.

1. I am not, and I don't think anyone else is holding you on the line for an official census, we're just talking.

2. That would have to be true, since according to what we we're previously taught, and what many

believe, 144,000 represents only those who are of the 'manchild company'. The rest who are either caught up later, martyred or who somehow make it all the way through the tribulation alive, would be more than 144,000.

3. I'm not sure that we ought to define ANY Christian as a 'superchristian'. I understand what you are attempting to say, in that some perceive those who confess themselves to be 'overcomers' and/or those who actually are 'overcomers' may be categorized as such, whether it is true or not. Next, IMO, the term 'superchristian' is a derogatory term, since it infers that somehow these people are 'better than' the 'average christian'...whatever that is. I think that you are far safer in your last statement that ' True believers around the world are at all levels in their growth'. Finally, I don't think it is wrong to confess your faith in wanting to be an 'overcomer', and that is not something to be taken lightly or strewn in as a casual term.....and I think that IF someone truly IS an 'overcomer/superchristian', that person is going to be the last one to parade that idea around.

4. I can go with that.

1. Thanks for making that clear. Fuzzy math has a way of muddying the waters. That must be why so many politicians use it.

2. I think that we have agreed to disagree on the "manchild company". I believe in one rapture and a second coming of Christ, not a third or fourth coming. Maybe an exposition of Revelation 12 or Matthew 25 would be a good context for looking at those scriptures more closely.

3. I am talking to myself as much as anyone else when I refer to the "superchristian" mentality. I see it in other circles as well. The prophetic movement leans that way sometimes. When we see the compromise of what is called "Christianity" around us, it is easy to start categorizing Christians. I am simply trying to address our tendency to do so and use Biblical terminology as much as possible. Aints are Aints and Saints are Saints, no matter how immature or misled they might be sometimes.

4. It is good to know that we agree on the most important matters.

Subject: Re: Matthew 22:1-14
Posted by jisamazed on Mon, 05 Jan 2009 19:48:16 GMT
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Alanbook wrote on Mon, 05 January 2009 03:31jisamazed wrote on Sun, 04 January 2009 21:37
He is bringing many people to Him in places such as Iran, Afganistan, Saudi Arabia and India among people who would formerly never have been willing or able to hear the good news before. Their committment to the Lord visibly surpasses that of the majority of believers in the west, even

without all the tapes and books that we have. They make most of the former "faith camp" people look like spiritual babies.

Jae
Your assuming alot of things in this post. Have you been first hand to these places to see these results? Or are you going by some book that someone is selling to everyone with his lists of unproveable information.

Yes, Gary, I have seen some of these people first hand, and others I have read or heard about from those who have been there first hand. If you have not received VOM's newsletter, you should. You can go on their website at www.persecution.com and get weekly reports on how Christians around the world are faring. I also get a newsletter from a missionary to Nigeria, as well as a friend who travels extensively, plus various Christians all over the world. In some cases you won't hear much about the many people coming to Christ in certain countries because the church is underground and secretive.

I know first hand a lot of these groups are going over and teaching people the American version on Christianity. Valentines day, Easter, and of course the biggy, Xmas.
Gary, I agree that many holiday traditions derive from paganism, but that is a small matter compared to the whole of scripture. A person's level of maturity in Christ is not gauged by whether or not he or she celebrates holidays, especially in light of the fact that many third-world Christians don't have Christmas trees or Easter bunnies or anything like that.

Let's assume that they are teaching them "only" the Gospel of Jesus Christ. What are they supposedly doing that is making them such spiritual giants as you state here?

They are enduring loss of job, humiliation, rejection, jail time, torture or even death simply because they chose to follow Jesus. They go out evangelizing, knowing that radicals will probably kill them. They have their eyes on the prize and are not distracted by claiming Cadillacs or coveting other people's homes.

For one thing it is illegal to proselytize people in these countries you have mentioned. But lets say someone does convert to Christianity. A lot of them because of persecution end up walking in a realm of faith trusting the Lord for their survival. You know first hand how people put down the faith message in America.

They trust the Lord with purity, not with 5-step methods or a "claim it" mentality. They are generally not concerned about having a leg up on their brethren.

Here in America Christians are mocked and ridiculed by denominational Christians if they think trusting the Lord is the way to walk with Jesus. Any Chrisitian here that believes what the Bible

says is put down or held in derision for their belief in the Bible.
That has my experience sometimes as well, but it is not always the case. There are plenty of people who are hungry here in America, if only the Lord's servants would go to the highways and byways and invite them to the banquet. If we couch trusting the Lord as meaning, "we don't go to doctors or lawyers" then of course people are going to look at us weird.

Back to my original question what are these individuals doing that make them such spiritual giants? What are they doing that shows some greater commitment then these spiritual babies you are talking about?

Could you please explain what is going on here that is showing such an unbridled commitment?

See above. The commitment of some of these saints certainly puts me to shame, and encourages me to enter in with them in their fight against the darkness.

Subject: Re: Matthew 22:1-14
Posted by jisamazed on Mon, 12 Jan 2009 17:52:05 GMT
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Alanbook wrote on Mon, 05 January 2009 16:08Jae
You can do better then that I hope. Its called begging the question. Or, skirting the issue.

Alanbook, I'm not sure what quote I made to which you are referring. If I begged the question I want to identify where.

Subject: Re: Matthew 22:1-14
Posted by jisamazed on Mon, 12 Jan 2009 18:14:08 GMT
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Hombre wrote on Tue, 06 January 2009 09:57jisamazed wrote on Mon, 05 January 2009 13:48
They are enduring loss of job, humiliation, rejection, jail time, torture or even death simply because they chose to follow Jesus. They go out evangelizing, knowing that radicals will probably kill them. They have their eyes on the prize and are not distracted by claiming Cadillacs or

coveting other people's homes.

They trust the Lord with purity, not with 5-step methods or a "claim it" mentality. They are generally not concerned about having a leg up on their brethren.

OK, I can say that I have seen a Christian publication, that indeed bears witness to the sorts of persecution that you are describing. Some very horrific things ARE happening around the globe.

http://www.christianpersecution.info/

http://www.persecution.org/suffering/index.php

This IS a VERY real occurrence, that is ongoing.

I think that we can undoubtedly agree with that fact, however, what Alanbook is attempting to bring out, is the fact that regardless of WHAT those persecuted Christians around the globe believe know or understand, they are being persecuted for the NAME OF JESUS ALONE.

That is of course, nothing to be ashamed of, however, Alanbooks' point is that these same people are NOT receiving the best level of teaching that is available, but only the remedial level material....which is sufficient to get their heads cut off, but not sufficient to deliver them...if so be, that that is the Lords' will for them, as it was with Paul & Silas in Prison (the angels opened the gates ~ Acts 16) or even with Christ Himself, as He walked through the very midst of those enraged with Him, yet somehow didn't see HIm (~ Luke 4).

Faith IS the victory that overcometh the world, even OUR faith (1 Jn 5:4).

Now, you can spiritualize that, or you can believe it literally, I personally choose to do both....and I trust God to honor that, as He has so many times in the past for me, as well as the multitudes of other believers, living and dead.

This whole idea of yours that those from FA are the 'name it and claim it crowd' exposes your lack of knowledge towards many of the brethren that were a part of FA. That is not, nor has it ever been, my MO or mantra, neither has it been Alanbooks' (as I know him personally), nor anyone here that I can think of. That there may have been some who thought that way within the rank and file of FA, is probably true, as we are even now finding out that there were quite a few among us, who were never a part of us to begin with.

In addition, there IS nothing wrong with owning a Cadillac, if you want one. In fact my father drove one, and so does my brother, of whom I am believing God for salvation.....and lest you should think that I must be a silver spoon baby who has never faced harsh realities, I drive a chevy, and have found myself penniless on more than one occasion, with only God by my side. Nevertheless,

I do not think that I want a Cadillac, because I simply don't care for them, nor do I see a need for one in my life....if I did however, I wouldn't stop there. If I wanted something either luxurious or exotic, I would probably get something that spelled dignity a little better than the orgasmic hillbilly Cadillac.

...but don't confuse us with the 'name it and claim it crowd'.....I have never believed that God was a cosmic vending machine: I came to Christ for meaning, fulfillment and purpose to my life, and got salvation as an unexpected benefit....I didn't come to Him for what I thought I could get, like some shallow self-interested prophets of profit have done and continue to do.

I purposely did not call us "name it and claim it" because I don't think that we were at the level of presumption that the Haginite churches were back then. The teachers from FA taught "the message of trials", which helped to balance some of the faith teaching. However, when I first came on board it was very common to hear people saying, "I claim that Cadillac in Jesus' name" or "I claim that 5 bedroom house" or "I claim _____". Claiming things was so rampant a lot of people forgot that no one in scripture ever used that terminology.

No, I don't think that it wrong to have a Cadillac. They are well-made cars, usually. However, I do have issue with teachers stating, "If you claim an '83 Cadillac, and buy an '82, it's unbelief." That is the mentality I was talking about. It looks very shallow compared to some of our brothers and sisters around the world. We had a lot to learn, didn't we? If we were not overcomers then, hopefully we HAVE learned and we are closer to being overcomers now.

There seems to be some sort of evaluation of Christians or churches based on the teaching that they receive. The more accurate and extensive their teaching, the more pure they are or the more like the 1st century they are. But teaching is simply one piece of the puzzle, albeit an important one. In Revelation 2 and 3 the Lord tells the churches, "I know your works." He is not impressed with how much teaching a church has if they don't apply it. On the other hand, some churches that have very little teaching rise above their disadvantage and shine as lights, anyway. FA tried to do so, and it was a noble try.

But we digress. I was just trying to give an explanation of the passage. I did not mean to get into all this. I would rather discuss it in another thread.

Subject: Re: Matthew 22:1-14
Posted by jisamazed on Wed, 21 Jan 2009 05:04:01 GMT

Please explain about these churches that you keep lifting up to some high level of arrival. I do not know of any in this country. Could you at least name just one out of the millions and let us know what they are doing that gives them this credit you are giving them.
[/quote]

The first measuring stick that Jesus gave us was our love for one another. That is how people will know whether or not people are true followers of Christ. Of course, there is more to it than that, although that is the first thing. True Christians will also hold to basic Christian teaching about God, Christ, and what Christ has done for us. True Christians will bear good fruit, or produce. In other words, there will be evident, healthy results from our lives. Sometimes that's the only way to tell a good tree from a bad one.

Several years ago VOM described how the churches in Laos banded together after their resources from foreign churches dried up. As poor as they were, they found a way to develop a system for helping the poorest of the poor and needy in the country. They helped the minority tribes in the country that were being oppressed or neglected by the communist government. This in spite of the fact that they were themselves oppressed for not giving in to pressure from the atheists or Buddhists there. Their light shined. There are many other such stories. I visited Ecuador last year and saw the fruit of the labor of some godly men and women. I would hope that you would not despise the young, growing church that I visited. I know the Lord doesn't. They were hungry and soaking up the word like crazy. When I taught on the Holy Spirit they received Him readily.

You can either curse the darkness or light a candle in it.

Subject: Re: Matthew 22:1-14
Posted by jisamazed on Thu, 22 Jan 2009 02:37:48 GMT

[quote title=Hombre wrote on Sat, 03 January 2009 16:58][quote title=jisamazed wrote on Sat, 03 January 2009 11:32]
2 thoughts.

A. Since the gospels are all written by different men who listened to Jesus tell a story, I would be more inclined to believe that each man heard the same story with a different emphasis as it applied to himself personally, rather than Jesus telling it a different way several times. The fact that we have each one, to me, is a testament that each version, while generally containing the

same elements speaks not only of its' universal application to all men, but that it may also hold several levels of meaning, which do not contradict each other, but rather build upon each other.

I have to disagree with you here, Hombre. The doctrine of Biblical inerrancy forces us to hold that what the Bible said happened. If we are told that Jesus said the parable a certain way, then he said it that way. If in Luke we are told that he said it a different way, then he said it that way as well. We would therefore have to conclude that Jesus told the parable different times with slight variations. We do the same thing nowadays when we tell stories or give analogies. It is not exactly the same every time. This might seem like a minor matter, but it becomes very important when discussing with unbelievers and false Christians what is the right approach to scripture. Emergent teachers would have a field day with your comments. I know that you are far from being emergent, but the idea of two contradicting versions of one event (the telling of the story) is in keeping with their idea of scripture being "authoritative but not inerrant." Just a thought. I know that you don't mean it that way, but that is the logical conclusion of the idea you are advancing in the above quote.

Subject: Re: Matthew 22:1-14
Posted by jisamazed on Thu, 22 Jan 2009 03:49:35 GMT
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Alanbook wrote on Wed, 21 January 2009 04:34jisamazed wrote on Tue, 20 January 2009 23:04Please explain about these churches that you keep lifting up to some high level of arrival. I do not know of any in this country. Could you at least name just one out of the millions and let us know what they are doing that gives them this credit you are giving them.

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Jiz
Will write more later but this is a good response. I appreciate the information. I also saw the Holy Spirit moving like I never had in my entire life. We went to Russia and I literally saw people weeping and crying by the hundreds. They were very open to the gospel. Everywhere we went people were ripe and readily received the Lord. Talk about a real revival, we did not do anything, we were their as witnesses to see what the Lord was doing. I think their was a vision by Finney that this would one day take place in Russia. Don't quote me on this I have the information, but I would have to look it up to confirm the vision. Off to work.

In Him,
Gary

Really? Cool. I went to Russia, too, in 1993 with the group that was led by Steve H and Malcolm W under the auspices of Global Strategies Missions Association. I read recently in Christianity today that a group of Christians from Chuvashia, the small province in which we preached, was sending out missionaries all over the country. I wondered if some of them were the people who came to the Lord through our ministry. I prayed for years for the church there to grow and flourish. It helped me understand the words of Paul to the churches he planted (and even one he did not plant- Colossians), in which he said he would long for them to keep safe from deception, grow into maturity and become fruitful. He could only write them from a distance sometimes, and had to trust the Lord to finish what He began in them without Paul being there. Hence Phillipians 1:6.

In the end, the church, both local and global, belongs to Him, and we need to trust the Lord to preserve it just like Paul did.

Subject: Re: Matthew 22:1-14
Posted by jisamazed on Fri, 23 Jan 2009 01:26:05 GMT
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Hombre wrote on Thu, 22 January 2009 10:02Quote:
Hombre wrote on Sat, 03 January 2009 16:58
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A. Since the gospels are all written by different men who listened to Jesus tell a story, I would be more inclined to believe that each man heard the same story with a different emphasis as it applied to himself personally, rather than Jesus telling it a different way several times. The fact that we have each one, to me, is a testament that each version, while generally containing the same elements speaks not only of its' universal application to all men, but that it may also hold several levels of meaning, which do not contradict each other, but rather build upon each other.

jisamazed wrote on Sat, 03 January 2009 11:32I have to disagree with you here, Hombre. The doctrine of Biblical inerrancy forces us to hold that what the Bible said happened. If we are told that Jesus said the parable a certain way, then he said it that way. If in Luke we are told that he said it a different way, then he said it that way as well. We would therefore have to conclude that Jesus told the parable different times with slight variations. We do the same thing nowadays when we tell stories or give analogies. It is not exactly the same every time. This might seem like a minor matter, but it becomes very important when discussing with unbelievers and false Christians what is the right approach to scripture. Emergent teachers would have a field day with your comments. I know that you are far from being emergent, but the idea of two contradicting versions of one event (the telling of the story) is in keeping with their idea of scripture being "authoritative but not inerrant." Just a thought. I know that you don't mean it that way, but that is the logical conclusion of the idea you are advancing in the above quote.

1. Please re-read the emboldened statements. I NEVER said 2 CONTRADICTING versions, I said: 'the same story with a different emphasis' as heard by each individual, which I added, are NOT contradictory but rather build upon each other. I am NOT ruling out the idea that Jesus could have told the same parable, etc., several times. He was in the habit of repeating Himself to make Himself absolutely clear for those dull of mind anyway (compare Mark 11:24 with Matt 21:22).....however, I seriously doubt that the 12 disciples were following Jesus around with steno pads scrupulously writing down every jot and tittle that proceeded from the mouth of the Son of God with exactitude as He said it. Example. Who was it that was busily writing in the boat in the midst of Galilee when the storm threatened their lives, and Jesus came walking to them on the water? Who was it that wrote down at that moment Jesus said to Peter: 'O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt? ' ? I have to conclude that many of the things that Jesus said were written ex post facto, when the disciples had the opportunity. That DOES NOT deny their inerrancy, nor does it deny their inspiration. Scholars agree that the entire pre-Mosaic portion of the Bible was an oral tradition, as was the book of Job. There are some VERY important things going on there, notably, the creation of the universe, the trinity, the creation of man and his fall into sin, the nature of mans' relationship to God (Job) and the reality of satan and his role in Gods' providential plans. The idea that each person from Adam to Moses told these stories with the EXACT words, in exactly the same order, with exactly the same emphasis and timing for several thousand years, would indeed be a miracle. One cannot make a simple statement now a days without it being

irrevocably twisted beyond comprehension by the time it has passed through a dozen mouths. ...yet whether the pre-Mosaic Bible was passed verbally with that previously described sort of exactitude or not, we know the CONTENT of it to be the essence of what God wants us to know.

Next, let us look at a peculiar scripture.

'.... And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen....' ~ John 21:25

...apparently, none of the disciples considered all of the other things that Jesus did to be important enough to write down, or perhaps they ran out of steno pads, or their Bics ran dry.....nevertheless, I seriously doubt that Jesus did all of these 'things' in silence. I am reasonably certain that He had at least a bit of sage advice and/or instruction to give that we do not have contained in the Bible.

This tells me that the disciples were NOT busily compiling the exhaustive biography of Jesus as it unfolded, like the good little FA students that we were, hastily writing verbatim as every word proceeded out of the mouth of Hobart....but that they rather wrote from memory, each person writing it as they remembered it. The fact that they are very nearly identical, with very few differences that DO NOT contradict each other, but build upon each other, tells me that we have a document that contains the essence or accurate content of what transpired and was said.

I could go on and on,but let me end this point with this idea:

Did ANYONE besides Peter, comprehend with the degree of profundity that he did, when the cock crowed thrice?

I rest my case.

2. In conclusion I must hasten to add that we are BOTH drawing conclusions that ARE NOT specifically stated to be correct or incorrect within the text of the Bible.

You make assumptions that Jesus MUST HAVE told the same story different ways at different time.

I am suggesting that He may have told a story ONCE, and that each disciple understood it at a different level, and recorded it that way, although I am not leaving out the possibility that He DID or COULD have told the story more than once.

In any event, the fact is: we have different gospels, that do NOT contradict each other, but rather build upon each other.

If you want to believe that Jesus told the story several times, several different ways, or that holy men of God wrote these things down as the Spirit of God inspired them, each in his own manner, it really makes no difference: the end result is that we have different gospels, that ARE inspired and contain, in essence the same content, the 4 agreeing with one another and complimenting one another.

Point taken, Hombre. I understand your statement more clearly now. It is plausible. That's what I get for trying to rush a post during lunch. I engage in discussions from time to time with emergent/neo-orthodox types, and in the process I have found the "multiple times told" idea to be stronger, so I hold to it. But your suggestion will work.