

# WAS JESUS A REGULAR BAPTIST?



## Lesson Two – Learning from Jesus

### Review

- Jesus and the Apostles used doctrinal labels – they aren't wrong and can be helpful.
- Jesus and the Apostles promoted the preservation of sound doctrines in the church.
- The label “Regular Baptist” means orthodox Baptist doctrine that affirms the rule (*regula*) of Scripture as the ultimate authority for faith and practice, rooted in the historical-grammatical interpretation of Scripture.
- The label “Dispensationalist” means applying the historical-grammatical method of interpretation of all Scripture, affirming a distinction between Israel and the Church, a future salvation and restoration of Israel and the glory of God as the purpose of all things.
- The doctrines of Dispensationalists and Regular Baptists are rooted in a specific way of interpreting the Bible.
- Jesus interpreted the Bible that way and taught His followers to do the same.

How did Jesus handle the Scripture? How did He teach His followers to handle the Scriptures?

### The Sufficient Authority

Jesus treated the Scriptures as the sufficient authority for life.

- He persistently turned to the Scriptures for answers (Matthew 4:1-11, esp. v. 4).
- He taught that mankind should live by the Scriptures (Matthew 4:4).
- He came to fulfill the Scriptures (Matthew 5:17-18).

- He taught that Scripture cannot be broken (John 10:34-35)
- He taught that the Scriptures are the Word of God (John 10:34-35).

## One Author, One Meaning

Jesus taught that the Scriptures are the Word of God, written down by humans, with one meaning.

- Jesus teaches that God the Spirit, through humans, authored Scripture (Matthew 22:41-45).
- Jesus' Apostles also believed that God the Spirit, through humans, authored Scripture (2 Peter 1:19-21; 2 Timothy 3:16).
- Jesus believed that the author defines the meaning of the text, not the reader (John 8:28-29; 14:10; John 14:26).
- Jesus believed in the unity of the Scriptures.

Jesus' teaching leads to several important implications:

- Scripture will never contradict itself.
- Scripture helps us understand Scripture. Clear passages interpret obscure passages.
- God wrote through human authors using human language, history, and an understandable meaning.

## God Meant What He Said

Jesus clearly believed that the text of Scripture was written in human language in a historical context, in a literary form, with an understandable meaning.

### *Historical-Grammatical Interpretation*

- Historical-grammatical interpretation seeks to understand the authorial intent of the Scripture by considering the historical, grammatical, and literary context.
- It is also known as a “literal” or “normal” interpretation of a text.
- “Context, Context, Context.”

Jesus used a “literal” or “normal” interpretation of Scripture:

- Jesus believed in the creation account (Matthew 19:4-6)
- Jesus believed in the Jonah account (Matthew 12:39-41).
- Jesus and the Apostles believed in the account of Noah (Matthew 24:37-39; 1 Peter 3:20).

Jesus understood Scripture within it’s historical, grammatical, and literary context.

- Jesus recognized the historical context of the text (Matthew 12:3).
- Jesus considered the grammatical context of the text (Mark 12:26-27).
- Jesus understood the literary context of the text.
  - He saw prophecy and prophecy (Matthew 24:15).
  - He saw commandments as commandments (Luke 18:20).

Jesus’ teaching leads to several important implications:

- The meaning of any Bible passage is found in that passage.
- There is no “spiritual” or “typological” interpretation or added meaning (Luke 24:25-27, 44).
- Knowing the historical, grammatical, and literary context helps us to interpret texts more accurately.
  - We consider prescriptive passages as weightier than descriptive passages.
  - We consider deliberate passages as weightier than incidental passages.

## God’s Revelation Progressed until Complete

Jesus believed that God had given new revelation progressively through time, without changing the meaning of previous revelation.

Jesus taught that the unified revelation of God would continue to be revealed until the Apostles had received all of it.

- Jesus taught that the Spirit would complete the information the Apostles needed (John 16:13-15).
- Jesus taught that He would build His church in the future using the revelation of God (Matthew 16:17-18).

Jesus' teaching leads to several important implications:

- The New Testament is the authority for the Church (Hebrews 1:1-2, 2:2-4).
- The “mystery” of the church does not change or annul the promises of the God. (Ephesians 3:1-7).

## Conclusion

Jesus believed that the Scriptures were the authoritative revelation of God, written down by humans, given in a progressive manner until their completion with the Apostles. He taught and demonstrated a literal, historical-grammatical interpretation of the Scriptures, reflecting the unified, singular meaning intended by the Divine Author.

It is this very method of Bible interpretation that leads to the doctrines held by Regular Baptists and Dispensationalists.

Next week: We'll use some case studies to practice Jesus' method of Bible interpretation.