

# A Different Analysis

For a concept that was taken from Scripture, the commonly understood and accepted definition bears little resemblance to what the Scripture defines as righteousness. On the surface, it would seem that the religious scholars and leaders of the past did indeed get it right, but that is only from a surface reading of the usage of the word. It is clear from the flawed logic and unverifiable posits resulting from such superficial analyses, that depending on the surface reading of how "righteousness" is used for our understanding of its meaning, these analyses are wholly inadequate for conveying an accurate concept and understanding.

Instead of examining solely on usage, words must be examined in their relationship to other words. ((This is commonly called "context" which is (or was) commonly taught in high school English grammar classes. However, in religious studies, the context in which words are used is frequently thrown out in favor of any other method which yields the result most in line with the established doctrine of the particular school, church, or denomination.)) Since we do not employ ancient Hebrew or Koine Greek as common languages in modern society, we must examine the context in which the translated word is used, and must further examine the origin of the English word and its meaning in its source language. Though this is a process that is often time-consuming, it yields a clearer understanding of the idea and concept being conveyed.

Though we must necessarily depend upon the translators of the Scripture with this method, there is recourse through checking contextual usage in one passage against contextual usage of the same word in another passage. With the aid of a solid unabridged dictionary and an unabridged thesaurus, insuring that context is correctly understood, it is possible to determine whether a particular translation of the Scripture is accurate and whether the translators were adequate to the task

at hand.

Though it may seem advantageous to learn ancient Hebrew or Koine Greek, there are dangers inherent in this route as well. We seem to forget that, by and large, we only know what we are taught. Without some independent verification, it is impossible to know whether you are being taught the correct meanings, implications and inferences of the words in another language. Moreover, simple omission of word meanings and cultural usage (dialect usage and colloquialisms) is easily done, and not always with the intent to deceive. In this case, inadequate source materials and ignorance of the instructor are sufficient to deny the student proper understanding.

In sum, correctly determining what a proper understanding of any doctrine or concept in Scripture is involves considerable time, intellectual honesty and legitimate work. However, since one's eternal destiny may well be determined by the understanding of a particular doctrine and the decisions made as a result of understanding that doctrine, it is well worth the effort to be sure and certain.

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