

NT 615 - 5-3-1 – *Kaiser & Silva, ch. 10*

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Questions:

1. Are the Gospels history or theology?
2. What is the source of authority – the historian’s reconstruction of what Jesus “really” said or the writings of the gospel writers?
3. Does Mark 4:11-12 describe the whole reason for Jesus’ use of parables? Mark 4:11-12, “The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside everything is said in parables so that ‘they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven!’”
4. What does it mean that Jesus used the parables as “weapons of warfare” against his opponents?
5. Who does Mark contrast Jesus’ teaching as one with authority with?

Answers:

1. That is a false question. The gospels’ writers are both historians and theologians.
2. The gospels’ accounts, whether the direct quotation, summary of discourse, or paraphrase of Jesus’ teaching, are divinely inspired, not the historian’s reconstruction of what Jesus “really” said.
3. No, the rest of the Scripture shows that Jesus is both a cornerstone and a rock of stumbling; he is both the fragrance of life to those who believe and the smell of death to those who reject him.
4. Parables can be seen as “weapons of warfare” because the primary aim of telling the parables was to rebuke them.
5. Mark contrasts the Lord’s teaching with “the teachers of the Law,” Jewish rabbis and scribes.

Terms:

1. historiography: the study of historical writing. Modern historiography stresses clear and strict chronological sequence, balanced selection of material, verbatim quotations, and so on.
2. Parable: a simile that is extended into a story
3. Legalism: a religious outlook that sees people as morally self-reliant and, thus, in some way contributing to their salvation.

Summary:

Silva addresses the historicity of the Gospels. To dismiss or minimize the historicity of the gospels would contradict their message. They, as historians and theologians, wrote to communicate who Jesus was. Jesus spoke in parables, serving a dual purpose to teach and rebuke. Parables often have cultural nuances and must be sensitive to the historical setting. Jesus taught as one with authority, which reflects his approach and the content of his message of grace and fulfillment, in contrast to the other teachers and rabbis.