

RELEVANT

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE FOR TODAY'S ISSUES

SESSION 5 SLAVERY, SEXISM, AND GENOCIDE

The Objection

“The Bible can’t be _____ because it commands slavery, sexism, and genocide.”
(Eph 6:5; Eph 5:22; 1 Tim 2:12; Joshua 10)

- **Q1:** Does the Bible contain references to slavery, sexism, and genocide?
 - **A1:** Yes, Yes, and _____.
- **Q2:** Does God command us to participate in slavery, sexism, and genocide?
 - **A2:** _____.

Three Principles for Interpreting Scripture

1. Biblical events occurred thousands of years ago in the ancient Near East—a different _____ and time.
2. Scripture includes instructions for how God’s people were and are to live godly lives in their culture, which includes some structures and _____ that do not exist today in every culture.
3. Not everything we see in Scripture is a positive _____ for us to follow.

Slavery

- Slavery was part of the world into which Jesus was born and the early church formed. It was a normal part of their life and culture.
- The command in Ephesians 6 regulated the behavior of those who were already in the system.

Does the Bible contain references to slavery? _____.

Does God command us to participate in slavery? _____.

Sexism

- Ephesians 5:22 and 1 Tim 2:12 pair with Eph 5:21, 25-33; and Gen 1:26-27.
 - Husbands are to love their wives as _____.
 - Wives are submit to their husbands as _____.
- 1 Timothy 2:12 must be understood in light of 1 Cor 11:2-16, which assumes women are permitted to _____ in corporate worship services.

- Women were not valued as highly as men in ancient culture. But in the Bible, God elevates women and values them above practices in culture and society.
- Christians differ today on the roles of women in the church and home.
- **Complementarians** believe men and women have equal value but complementary _____ in the home and church, with husbands leading and wives submitting.
- **Egalitarians** believe men and women have _____ value in and access to teaching and leading roles in the home and church.
- Both views are Christian interpretations of Scripture and neither are sexist.

Does the Bible contain references to sexism? _____.

Does God command us to participate in sexism? _____.

Genocide

- Genocide has been defined as the purposeful attempt to exterminate a specific human group based on their identity.
- The problem: God is loving and just. Genocide is wrong. God seems to command genocide against the people who were occupying the Promised Land.
- One issue in ancient warfare was _____ (exaggerated speech).

Charlie Trimm's four statements about OT Genocide. (One of them can't be true.)

1. God is _____ and compassionate.
2. The Old Testament is a _____ record of God's dealings with humanity and favorably portrays Yahweh's actions.
3. The Old Testament describes events that are _____ to genocide.
4. Mass killings are _____ evil.

Does the Bible contain references to genocide? _____.

Does God command us to participate in genocide? _____.

Resources

On slavery: Rodney Stark, For the Glory of God: How Monotheism Led to Reformations, Science, Witch-Hunts, and the End of Slavery (Princeton University Press, 2004).

On male and female, complementarian and egalitarian views of Scripture: Adam Harwood, Christian Theology: Biblical, Historical, and Systematic (Lexham Press, 2022), Chapter 11.

On Old Testament genocide: Charlie Trimm, The Destruction of the Canaanites: God, Genocide, and Biblical Interpretation (Eerdmans, 2022).