

Pastor's Blog No. 30 for Monday, July 22, 2024

Deconstructionism

Deconstructionism can be a difficult and controversial topic. It is also hard to get your head around because it asks you to think differently. It's intent is almost to get you out of a common vein of thinking so you can consider alternative ways of viewing things, especially texts that you read.

It is a relatively new way of examining things, removing us from many of the existing and embedded ideas of historical philosophers like Plato, Socrates, and Aristotle. It was purported by philosopher Jacques Derrida in the 1960's and basically disconnects thought from what some would call logic.

However, since the 1980's it has drifted into new meanings, including textual fluidity. That's a fancy expression for making a text say whatever you want it to say. It does not seek to derive a meaning from a text based on what the author intended, but looks at it as something that can be interpreted differently based on your own personal views. (Ah, you see where I am going with this.)

Self Deceived

Let me state it another way. When you are looking at a piece of art, you feel free to interpret it according to how you feel about it and how you see it. (We are living in the MEME generation.) Of course, this is based solely on the contrasts you draw from your own personal experiences. We don't enjoy looking at artwork then think, I wonder about the purpose behind this art. What was the artist trying to convey?

Well, take that same idea and apply it to written text. It's no longer about determining logically what the author was trying to say, but overlaying your own interpretation on the text. This is an interpretation based on your knowledge and understanding. It has nothing to do with pressing in to understand what the author was trying to get across.

Spiritually Discerned

Unfortunately, as many things do, this attitude has crept into the church when it comes to determining what the Scriptures are actually trying to convey to us. You can even believe that it is God's word to us, but then miss it totally by the way (and by how) you interpret it. No longer does historical textual criticism come into play. You are free to base what the text says for you and you alone. It's okay that someone else sees it differently. It's all about you anyway.

I'm not going to make this blog into a dissertation about deconstructionism, but let me propose (since everyone is doing that these days) that there is something unique about God's Word. The Bible, being given to us by God, can have no other meaning other than that for which God intended it. That being said, you can't read it even with ancient or modern philosophies. You must read it, if you intend to understand what God is saying, with his Spirit as the interpreter.

Anything you derive from it that seems suitable to your human understanding, your culture, or your upbringing, is probably not what God intended. Even though deconstructionism says you don't have to concern yourself with the author's intent, if you intend to benefit from its counsel, you must have the Spirit's guidance.

As a matter of fact, those who try to interpret the Scriptures without the illumination of the Holy Spirit, usually conclude it to be myths, legends, and foolishness.

"The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit."

1st Corinthians 2:14 NIV

Not All Change Is Good

To wrap up what could have been a lengthy blog, which only a few will read anyway, let me say this: The reason we see things changing so rapidly in many areas of life, like government, law, gender, sexuality, and so forth, is because this attitude of deconstructionism is taking hold in our colleges and all the way through to our elementary schools. They are telling our youth to read things anyway they want to. Define it however you feel is right for you. In other words, there are no standards of thought or interpretation and those who try to impose them are your enemies.

Let's be more "constructive." Let God speak as he intended. But if I were to adopt a little deconstructionism philosophy for myself it would be that deconstruction means simply tearing down everything and everyone until the world falls apart.

Until next Monday, may the Lord bless you! Pray for us!

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