

STAY ON THE LINE

Conviction: Staying on the line is a commitment to “tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.” We are committed to not say more or less than what Scripture says.

Principle: We must “stay on the line” of Scripture. Scripture is written to communicate God’s truth, and we must not change it by adding to it or subtracting from it.

Deut 4:1-2

Now, Israel, hear the decrees and laws I am about to teach you. Follow them so that you may live and may go in and take possession of the land the Lord, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the Lord your God that I give you.

2 Tim 2:15

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.

Other Scriptures for reference: 1 Cor 4:1-2, 1 Cor 4:6, 2 Tim 1:13-14, Rev 22:18-19



What does it look like?

Why do we do it?



ABOVE (add to)

-----THE LINE OF SCRIPTURE-----

BELOW (take away from)



What happens if we don't stay on the line?

Mark 7:1-13

- *Do the religious leaders tend to go above or below the line? How do you know?*
 - Verses 1-5: The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus ² and saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. ³ (The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. ⁴ When they come from the marketplace they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.) ⁵ So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, “Why don’t your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with defiled hands?”

- *How does Jesus feel about it?*
 - Verses 6-8: He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: “ ‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. ⁷ They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.’ ⁸ You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.”

- *What is the impact on the line?*
 - Verses 9-12: And he continued, “You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! ¹⁰ For Moses said, ‘Honour your father and mother,’ and, ‘Anyone who curses their father or mother is to be put to death.’ ¹¹ But you say that if anyone declares that what might have been used to help their father or mother is Corban (that is, devoted to God)—¹² then you no longer let them do anything for their father or mother. ¹³ Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.”



Practical ideas to “Stay on the Line” in Sermon Discussions and Bible Study:

- Discuss God’s word
 - Read the passage

 - Redirect discussion back to passage

 - Refer to specific verses

- Have confidence in God’s word
 - God’s word is relevant

 - You don’t need to be an expert on that passage

 - Allow your group to wrestle with God’s word

- Use your resources
 - Pray

 - Study Bible notes

 - Good commentaries (not Google!)

 - Pastoral team



Pathway for Preparation:



Text → Original Audience:

Original Audience → Gospel:

Gospel → Today:



Notes:

Practically Applying the Pathway:

- Ask questions of the text to better understand it:
 - Step #1 - Text to Original Audience (Observation & Interpretation)
 - What did this text mean to the people it was written to?
 - What is happening in the verses and/or chapters surrounding this text?
 - What was happening in the culture around them (historically)?
 - Step#2 - Original Audience through the Gospel (Interpretation)
 - Was this text written before Jesus (Old Testament), during Jesus' ministry (Gospels), or after Jesus (Acts > Revelation)?
 - How does it show us our need for a Savior?
 - What do we need saving from? How does God save people?
 - Step #3 - Gospel to Today (Application)
 - In light of the meaning of the text (Step #1) and how the text points to our need for a Savior (Step #2), how should this text change the way I THINK or the way I ACT.
- If you have a study Bible, read the introductory notes for the book and/or the footnotes.
- Never read a single verse without considering the broader context in which it is placed.



¹ The prophecy that Habakkuk the prophet received.

Habakkuk's Complaint

² How long, Lord, must I call for help,
but you do not listen?
Or cry out to you, "Violence!"
but you do not save?

³ Why do you make me look at injustice?
Why do you tolerate wrongdoing?
Destruction and violence are before me;
there is strife, and conflict abounds.

⁴ Therefore the law is paralyzed,
and justice never prevails.
The wicked hem in the righteous,
so that justice is perverted.

The Lord's Answer

⁵ "Look at the nations and watch—
and be utterly amazed.
For I am going to do something in your days
that you would not believe,
even if you were told.

⁶ I am raising up the Babylonians, ⁿ
that ruthless and impetuous people,
who sweep across the whole earth
to seize dwellings not their own.

⁷ They are a feared and dreaded people;
they are a law to themselves
and promote their own honor.

⁸ Their horses are swifter than leopards,
fiercer than wolves at dusk.
Their cavalry gallops headlong;
their horsemen come from afar.
They fly like an eagle swooping to devour;
⁹ they all come intent on violence.
Their hordes advance like a desert wind
and gather prisoners like sand.

¹⁰ They mock kings
and scoff at rulers.
They laugh at all fortified cities;
by building earthen ramps they capture them.

¹¹ Then they sweep past like the wind and go on—
guilty people, whose own strength is their god."

Habakkuk 1:1-11

