

# Music or Math

South Bend City Church is working through a series titled Bible Rehab. No, not to rehab the Bible, but to explore our understanding of purpose and pursuit, to open it up for many that struggle with it. To rehab our approach to the Word. This past weekend the message was titled Tension in the Text. For many the Bible has passages that appear to be in conflict. An example:

Proverbs 28:20 A faithful person will be richly blessed but one eager to get rich will not go unpunished.

Proverbs 30:5 Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.

Proverbs 1:33 but whoever listens to me will live in safety and be at ease without fear or harm.

Now contrast those (and many of similar substance) with Job. The first thing we read about Job: In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil. Exactly what Proverbs advises us to be over and over. Yet God permitted Satan to bring absolute calamity upon Job's family, his possessions and his health.

The Bible contains many warnings about consumption of alcohol. Yet the Bible also recommends wine for certain purposes and celebrations.

So why do these and other passages appear to conflict? Because we treat the Bible as a math equation:  $1+3+5 = 9$ . We treat it as a textbook. We flatten it out. What if we consider the Bible as music?  $1+3+5$  as a chord? Following this example, a friend of mine recorded his notes this way;

Songs have parts with dissonant chords that usually resolve. In good music the artist will lean into the tension chords, accentuating the dissonance, and then lay down the resolution lightly. Preachers and most of us Christians tend to do the opposite. We want the resolution now - the black and white answers from the text - and so we avoid the tension in the text to rush to the resolution. "If the Bible is a math problem, then the goal is looking for the right answer. If the Bible is music, then it's for dancing, for weeping, for movement of the soul"

Many years ago, one of Jason's teachers also said this;"Scripture is not a solo; it's a choir."

Only 2 questions today:

What is the primary purpose of the Bible?

How then should we consider it?