

Shortly after I graduated from college I attended a camp for college students put on by the YMCA in California. There I had a roommate who was a student in a modernist theological seminary. As I talked with him he told me he just could not believe in the virgin birth. He said, That's the way I'm built I just can't believe it! He said, I can't believe certain other doctrines. I said, What are you going into the ministry for? He said, When I was a young fellow, a minister stood up and said, If God calls you to the ministry, don't you turn your back on His call." He said, I know now it was only psychology, but it made such an impression on me I can't get away from it. So he was going into the ministry and I fear was going to tear down the faith of many rather than built it up. But in the course of our discussion I said, Do you believe in the bodily resurrection of Christ? He turned to me and said, If you can believe that a real man was really dead and was really raised from the dead, well what's the point of these other miracles? In other words, he was putting his attention on things that seem to him to be lesser, rather than drawing attack upon himself by denying the central thing in Christianity he did not believe.

So we find people trying to attack Christianity by alleging errors in Scripture. Most "errors" are very simple to deal with. In most cases where we read in 2 Sam. 24:1 that God's anger was stirred against Israel and He led David to make a census. Then in 1 Chron. 21:1 we read that Satan tempted David to make a census. Did God do it, or Satan? The fact is Satan did it, but it is equally true that Satan could not have done it if God did not permit it, and God uses (you said Satan uses) the acts of wicked men for his own purposes and God had a purpose in it. So both statements are absolutely true through at first sight there is an apparent contradiction. Just as when Paul says we are saved by faith alone, and James said we are not saved by faith, we are saved by works! Yet if you take Paul's view of faith you find it is a real living faith in a real Christ. If you take it in the way James uses the word faith, you find all he means there is an intellectual assent. Using it in Paul's sense there will be works but we won't be saved by works; but as James says, If it is merely faith in the sense of intellectual assent, that will not save anyone. So the two statements seem to contradict each other but actually do not.

Another alleged contradiction in Scripture is that very often things are given in different units. Like you ask me how far away Chicago is. I say 1000 miles. That would be a true statement, 1000 miles. But someone else comes along and says, No it isn't; it's 900 miles, well, he's no truer, but he's probably more accurate. Then someone else says, No it isn't 900, it's 940. I don't know the figure, I'm just giving an example. Well, he would not be truer than the 900 but he would be using a more precise definition. So we find where it says in 1 Kings 7:23 that Solomon's laver in the temple was 10 cubits across and 30 cubits around. People have alleged a mistake in the Bible, because they say that pi -- the relation of the diameter of the circle to the circle, is not 3, but 3.1416. So you take that the Bible is inaccurate! Because it says 10 and 30, and that would be making pi 3! Of course the thing is, it is giving it in 10's