

Hindrances to Understanding the Bible

Introduction:

1. In the sermon this a.m. we dealt with the question, "Can We Understand the Bible Alike." Without taking the time to review that lesson, we simply state that it was pointed out that we **can** understand the Bible alike. We now cite just one example to prove that statement.
 - a. The three thousand people saved on the Day of Pentecost, Acts 2:41.
 - b. They all heard the same preacher, they all heard the same sermon, and they all did the same things in response to Peter's reply to their question, Acts 2:37-38.
2. If 3,000 people in one day, in one city, could understand alike what God required of them, **then** all accountable people today can also understand alike the word of God.
3. However, we are living in a very, very divided religious world. Multitudes give opposing answers to the same question. For example to the question, "what must I do to be saved," we hear such answers as:
 - a. "Come to the altar and pray through."
 - b. "Man is saved by faith only."
 - c. Man is saved by grace only."
 - d. "Pray the sinner's prayer."
 - e. "Just accept Jesus in your heart as your personal Savior."
 - f. "You don't have to do anything to be saved, for God saves everyone regardless."
 - g. Etc., etc.
4. It is evident that multitudes do not have a correct understanding of the Bible – even on such matters as what one must do to be saved, the church, worship, etc.
 - a. Amazingly, one can read his Bible all his life, and yet remain uninformed on the most crucial matters pertaining to salvation and eternal life.
5. Lesson Title: "Hindrances to Understanding the Bible."

Discussion:

I. The Wrong Attitudes Toward the Scriptures.

- A. Many Believe it is not Possible to Understand the Scriptures.
 1. This perception has already been discussed in a previous lesson.
 2. However, if one really "buys into" the idea that it is impossible to understand the Bible, then he will likely develop a "what's the use attitude toward Bible study," and thus spend little or no time reading the Scriptures. Note Eph 3:3-4.
- B. Some believe the Bible is out-dated and impractical for today's world.
 1. It will never be out-dated! Matt. 24:35; I Peter 1:24-25.
 - a. It is "*living and powerful*," Heb. 4:12! It is not a dead letter!
 2. The Bible will always be practical! Consider:
 - a. "The golden rule," Matt. 7:12.
 - b. Its instructions to husbands, Eph. 5:25,28,33; I Peter 3:7.
 - (1) "If you want your wife to be a thoroughbred don't treat her like an old nag."
 - c. Its instructions to wives, Eph. 5:22,33; Tit. 2:4,5; I Peter 3:1-4.
 - d. Parents to children, Eph. 6:4; Prov. 22:6,15.
 - e. Children's responsibilities to parents, Eph. 6:1; Luke 2:51-52.
 - f. Employers' obligations to employees, Col. 4:1.
 - g. Employees' obligations to employers, Col. 3:22-23.
 - h. Citizens' obligations to rulers, Rom. 13:1; Matt. 22:21.
 - i. The government's obligations to the citizens, Rom. 13:4.
- C. Some believe Bible study is too Boring and too time-consuming.
 1. It can be boring for one who doesn't love God! Matt. 22:37-38.
 - a. Illus. The lady who fell in love with the author of a book, and then couldn't put the book down!
 2. If we love God we will love His message to us.
 - a. Consider the attitude of David, Psalm 119:24,97,127.

II. Other Hindrances to Understanding the Bible.

- A. Preconceived Ideas.
 1. Consider the example of Naaman, 2 Kings 5:10-11.

- a. Before arriving at the door of the prophet, Naaman thought he already had it figured out as to how he would be healed of leprosy; when the instructions differed from his preconceptions Naaman initially *“went away in a rage.”*
2. Consider the example of many of the Jews, John 1:11.
 - a. The Jews had certain advantages, Rom. 3:1-2. Of all people, they should have been first to receive Jesus! But they had developed their own preconceptions regarding the Messiah; when He did not fit their preconceived ideas, they *“received Him not.”*
3. Because of Misconceptions formed because of having heard error preached, many find it difficult to understand the Bible. They often tend to *“read into”* a verse what was never in the verse to begin with!
- B. The Existence of false teachers.
 1. Matt. 7:15; Acts 15:1-2; 2 Peter 2:1-2; I John 4:1; Rev. 2:14,20.
 2. I Kings 22:10-12; Jer. 6:13-14.
 3. There are those who handle the word of God *“deceitfully,”* 2 Cor. 4:2.
 - a. Illus. The Homosexual community has come out with their own *per*-version of the King James Bible, which they have dubbed the Queen James Bible. The editors of this *per*-version say they did not remove the *“offending”* verses, but that *“we have edited the Bible to prevent homophobic interpretations.”*
 - b. Martin Luther added *“alone”* to Romans 3:28.
 - c. John 1:1 in the New World translation says, *“In the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was **a** god.”* The article *“a”* was added; it was not in the original manuscript.
 4. Because of false teachers we need to obey I John 4:1, and follow the example of the Bereans, Acts 17:11.
- C. Laziness.
 1. *“Much study is a weariness of the flesh,”* Eccl. 12:12. To really delve into the scriptures is hard work.
 2. And a lot of people seems to be allergic to work!
- D. Neglect.
 1. Many people plan to spend more time reading their Bible, but they are plagued by the sin of neglect.
 2. Neglect of spiritual things is sinful! Heb. 2:1-4; Matt. 7:26; James 4:17.
 3. A Bible unread is a Bible unlearned!
- E. Distraction
 1. Many are thorny ground hearers; They are *“choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection,”* Luke 8:14.
 2. Many are like Martha, Luke 10:38-42 who are *“troubled about many things,”* but neglect the most important.
- F. Worldliness.
 1. 1 John 2:15-17; John 3:19; James 4:4.
 2. Those who persist in doing things that are morally wrong find it very discomfoting to study the Bible, for it condemns their actions! Properly understood, the world will keep you from the Bible, and the Bible will keep you from the world.
- G. Discouragement.
 1. Many, upon discovering that they are not learning as much as they thought they would, say *“what’s the use,”* and discontinue their Bible reading, or at least cease to let it be a priority.
 2. We’ve got to learn not to become *“weary in well doing,”* Gal. 6:9.

III. Overcoming Hindrances to Bible Study.

- A. Learn to Prioritize!
 1. Put God first, Matt. 6:33.
- B. Keep our eyes on the goal, Heb. 12:1-2; Phil. 3:14.
- C. Spend Time in Prayer, I Thess. 5:17.
- D. Spend time in worship, Heb. 10:25.
- E. Think about heaven and what it will be like! Revelation 21,22.

Conclusion:

1. One should not neglect Bible study. One must not neglect obedience to the gospel! Tomorrow may be too late!
--Bobby Witherington, January 10, 2016