

Can We Understand the Bible Alike?

Introduction:

1. In the sermon last Lord's Day morning we discussed "Some Lessons to be Learned from One Day's Bible Reading Schedule."
 - a. We began by mentioning the daily Bible reading schedule published each year, which is so arranged that a person, by following it, can read the Bible through in a year.
 - b. The particular scriptures in the first day's reading schedule were: Genesis 1-2, Psalm 1-2, and Matthew 1-2.
2. In that lesson we endeavored to stress the Bible truths which can be learned from just one day's reading schedule, and we then observed that if we multiply that by 366 (this is "leap year"), we can gain a lot of Bible knowledge in just one year.
 - a. And if we repeat this process every year for the rest of our lives, we can gain an enormous amount of Bible knowledge.
3. However, as we all know, we are living in an age in which religious division abounds. A tremendous amount of controversy is often evidenced when we attempt to introduce important Bible topics. And oftentimes when we attempt to discuss some of those passages we are likely to hear people say:
 - a. "Well, that's just your interpretation," or:
 - b. "It is impossible for people to understand the Bible alike."
4. This brings us to the title of this lesson: "Can We Understand the Bible Alike?"

Discussion:

I. First, let us note some Consequences if We Cannot Understand the Bible Alike?"

- A. **If** We cannot understand the Bible alike, **Then** Religious Unity is Impossible to Achieve!
 1. Jesus prayed for the unity of believers, John 17:20-21.
 2. Jesus died to make unity possible for both Jews and Gentiles, Eph. 2:12-16.
 3. The Scriptures Forbid Religious Division, I Cor. 1:10.
 4. However, two cannot walk together unless they be agreed, Amos 3:3.
 - a. Hence, the two who do "*walk together*" are in agreement, and if they are in agreement, then they possess a common understanding of the issue at hand.
- B. **If** We Cannot Understand the Bible Alike, **Then** the wisdom of God is Impeached!
 1. Psalm 147:5; Isaiah 55:8-9; I Cor. 1:25.
 2. If God is infinitely wise, if the ways and thoughts of God are as much above our ways and thoughts as the heavens are above the earth, and if even "*the foolishness of God is wiser than men*," is not God therefore able to express Himself in ways whereby men can understand?
- C. **If** We cannot Understand the Bible Alike, **then** we cannot trust what the Bible says about man's ability to understand the Scriptures!
 1. John 8:32: "*Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*"
 - a. This verse clearly implies that we can "*know the truth*," therefore Jesus either lied or didn't know what He was talking about!
 2. Eph. 5:17: "*Whereby be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.*"
 - a. This verse necessarily infers that we can understand the will of the Lord. However, **if** we cannot understand "*the will of the Lord*," **then** Paul either lied or didn't know what he was talking about!
 3. Eph. 3:3-6: "*...whereby, when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ...*"
 - a. The "*mystery*" (God's scheme of redemption) was made known to Paul.
 - b. He wrote down in "*words*" that which was made known to him.
 - c. When we read what he wrote we can understand what he understood.
 - (1) However, **if** we cannot "*understand*" his "*knowledge in the mystery of Christ*," **then** Paul either lied in what he wrote, or he did not know what he was writing about!
- D. The statement that "we cannot understand the Bible alike" ignores the fact that first century Christians did understand the Bible alike!
 1. Consider the unity which characterized many first century Christians, Acts 2:46;4:32.
 2. "*The multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul*," Acts 4:32.
 - a. Obviously they walked together; yet "*two cannot walk together except they are agreed*," Amos 3:3.

II. In the Secular World People are Able to understand Many Things Alike.

- A. In Math.

1. Two plus two equals four.
2. Three feet equals one yard.
- B. In the Merchandising world, people understand many things alike!
 1. Think of the merchandise put "one sale" on "Black Friday!"
 - a. People often flock to the stores, looking for a particular item "on sale." They understand the advertising.
 - b. They also know what stores feature the merchandise they want, they know the store hours, and they know the address of the store. All of this they understand alike!
- C. Safety on the Highways would be impossible if people could not understand alike the rules of the road.
 1. A sane, sober, wide awake person does not dare get on a one way street heading in the wrong direction!
 2. A person traveling from Tampa to LA does not travel south to Miami and then take I 95 North, all the way up the Atlantic Coast, to Maine!

III. Passages which Illustrate our Ability to Understand alike the word of God.

- A. Matthew 1:18-25 (read).
 1. Whose "birth" is being considered? V. 18.
 2. Who was the "mother" of Jesus? V. 18.
 3. Who was the "husband" of Mary? V. 19.
 4. By Whom was Mary conceived? V. 20.
 5. By what name were they to call the Son of Mary? V. 21.
- B. Matthew 3:13-17 (read).
 1. Why did Jesus go from Galilee to the Jordan River? V. 13.
 2. To whom did Jesus Go? V. 13.
 3. Why did Jesus go to John? V. 13.
 4. Why did John initially hesitate to baptize Jesus? V. 14.
 5. What happened after Jesus was baptized? V. 16.
 6. What did the voice from heaven say? V. 17.
- C. Acts 2:36-38. (read).
 1. How were the people affected when they heard Peter's sermon? V. 37.
 2. What question did the people ask? v. 37.
 3. What answer did Peter give to their question? V. 38.
 4. Cite two things Peter told the people to do. V. 38.
 5. Why were the people commanded to repent and be baptized? V. 38.
- D. Acts 2:47 (read).
 1. Who were the people praising?
 2. Who added the saved to the church?
 3. To what were the saved added?
 4. Did the people join the church, or were they added to it?
- E. Acts 20:17,28; I Peter 5:1,2 (read).
 1. Over what had the elders been made overseers? V. 28.
 2. Cite two things to which elders are to "take heed."
 3. Which?
 - a. The Holy Spirit put elders over orphan homes.
 - b. The Holy Spirit put elders over many flocks, or local churches.
 - c. The Holy Spirit put elders over the flock of God which is "among" them?
- F. Ephesians 5:19 (read).
 1. What kind of songs are to be sung in worship?
 2. The local church should be sung to (a) by a choir, or (b) they are to teach and admonish one another?
 3. The saints were to make melody:
 - a. On a harp, a piano, an organ a trombone, trumpet, clarinet, or
 - b. In their hearts.

Conclusion:

1. Thanks be unto God! We can understand the Scriptures, and we can understand them alike!
- Bobby Witherington, January 10, 2016

