

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

December 4

2022

Why Do So Many Misunderstand The Bible?

Have you ever wondered why there are so many today who fail to understand, and abide in the teachings of the Bible? You see, although there are some who contend that we all can not understand the Bible alike, the truth is, God's will has been revealed to us, and His will can be understood alike by all. Knowing that, let's direct our attention to a few of the reasons for why so many misunderstand the Bible.

There Are Many Who Claim That The Bible Is Too Hard To Understand.

Have you ever heard someone say, "the Bible is too hard to understand?" You see, there are some who believe that the Bible is too hard to understand. Therefore, they won't even give an honest effort to seek to understand it. Now, although there are some things recorded in the Bible that are hard to understand (2 Peter 3:16), the fact of the matter is, with the proper study, those things can be understood. Therefore, let's all recognize that there are going to be some things that are going to require more study than others, and instead of being unwise, let's all seek to diligently study God's word in order to be able to rightly divide the truth (2 Timothy 2:15), and let's all seek to understand what the will of the Lord is (Ephesians 5:17).

There Are Many Who Never Ask For Help or Accept An Offer To Study The Bible.

There are times in which one is going to need the help and guidance of a more mature and knowledgeable student of the Scriptures to help them understand the Scriptures. However, too many today are

filled with pride, and they lack the courage to ask someone to help them understand the Bible. However, if more today were like the Ethiopian eunuch that we read about in Acts 8:30-31, there would be more people today who would have an understanding of the Bible. You see, the Ethiopian eunuch acknowledged that he did not understand what he was reading from the Scriptures, and he sought the guidance of Philip, so that he could understand. Simply put, the eunuch asked for help, and he accepted an offer to study with one who knew the Scriptures. The result, the eunuch obeyed the gospel, and he then went on his way rejoicing (Acts 8:39). So, if more people are going to understand the Bible today, we are going to need more people like the eunuch who seek help, and more people like Philip who offer and oblige them in their need.

There Are Many Who Have A Preconceived or Perverted Mind About The Bible.

Unfortunately, many misunderstand the Bible because there are many who have already made up their mind about what they believe before they even open up the Bible, or they have had their mind perverted (i.e. corrupted or distorted) by the teachings of men. Therefore, many are ignorant of God's word due to believing that their way is right, or by believing that another man's way is right. However, may we all take heed to these inspired words of wisdom, "*There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death*" (Proverbs 14:12). Remember that, and do not forget that the way of man is not in himself, it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps (Jeremiah 10:23). What does all of this mean? Well, this means that man cannot determine what is right or wrong by himself, and that all matters of spiritual authority originate with God, and not man. Therefore, may each one put away their preconceived ideas about the Bible, and may we all beware lest we become cheated through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ (Colossians 2:8).

Yes, there are many who misunderstand the Bible. However, may it be known that the Bible is not above and beyond human comprehension, and if one truly desires to understand the Bible, it can be understood (Ephesians 3:1-7).

✍️ Brad Phillips

Why Be Surprised?

A story about a preacher being imprisoned for child molesting appeared in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch during the time I lived in the St. Louis area. I know that there are hypocrites to be found, even among those identifying themselves as members of the body of Christ, however there was a statement made by the judge in this case which caught my attention. He said, "I suppose the thing that troubles me most is somebody of the cloth, who knows the truth, has openly and flagrantly lied."

I raise the question which serves as the title of this article because the preacher under consideration makes many claims which are nothing but lies. Preachers from the group of which he is a member claim to be able to perform miracles just as did Jesus and His apostles. They claim to heal the sick, speak in tongues and have the Lord speak to them directly. These men know they are not performing miracles when they claim to be doing so. The judge may be surprised but I am not surprised to know that this man has been caught in a lie about something else. He has become accustomed to lying. He expects his followers to believe his lies about spiritual things, why not expect the judge to believe his lie about his moral conduct?

Along the same line, many expressed shock at the behavior of several of the "TV evangelists" during past years. Again, I say, "Why be surprised?" Teachers of truth have been exposing these men as false teachers for years. Their mercenary tactics have been evident to any honest student of God's word. For years they have been deceiving and taking advantage of thousands for their own selfish gain. So, when they are finally exposed for what they really are why should we be so shocked?

Please do not misunderstand me. I do not suggest for one minute that all preachers who are preaching false doctrine are also guilty of the kind of immorality that has been exposed in the lives of many of these men. However, when you find men who claim to be preachers of truth but deceive and make merchandise of those who hear them you should not be surprised to learn that they will also lie about something else.

I know there are many who have decided that they are simply going to turn away from anything or anyone that has anything to do with religion because of the scandals involving these preachers. Friends, this is

not the answer. Don't turn your back upon Christ because these men have played the hypocrite. Christ is as opposed (even more so) to such conduct as you are. This is why it is so important for us to put our faith in Christ and not in men. Men may fail us; men may deceive us; men may disappoint us, however, Christ will never fail us or give us cause to be ashamed of Him.

Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30). The person who responds to this invitation will never be disappointed in the one extending the invitation. How wonderful it is to know that even though we are surrounded by that which is corrupt and those who disappoint us we can say with the apostle Paul, "nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Timothy 1:12) and, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21). Only in Christ can we have such confidence and hope. (See Galatians 3:26, 27).

✍ James Hahn

Belleville church of Christ
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Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	4:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Elders

David Lockhart	(317) 714-6213
David Thomas	(317) 945-8539

Evangelist

Brad Phillips	(765) 720-2816
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