

Critical that We Understand Scripture

Without the true light on the scriptures, you will fall into error and fall prey to false teachers and their false doctrines.

“Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God”
~ Matthew 22:29

We need to understand the scriptures: their importance, purpose, and how they are to be fulfilled in our own lives. Else: we will fall into error. And you need the power of God’s holiness working in your heart and life.

Jesus himself is the fulfillment of the purpose of all scripture, therefore in the gospel of John he is introduced as the “Word of God”:

“ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not... ..And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” ~ John 1:1-5 & 14

But there have been false teachers who have taken scripture and have twisted its meaning to introduce error. Some effectively teach by their actions that the Bible, is a “God” because they lift up the book almost as an object of worship, while deviating from actually living by the scriptural purpose found in the Bible. This always results in a particular interpretation of the scriptures that does not produce the life of Jesus Christ in the people. And so today we have many churches claiming to be “Christian” but the members do not live the holy life, display true sacrificial love, nor show the unity of the faith that Jesus taught us.

And then there are other false teachers who belittle the importance of carefully respecting and obeying the written words found in the Bible. They assert that because Jesus is the Word of God, we need to just seek him and be led by the Holy Spirit (without a carefulness to obey the scriptures). Sometimes they tear down confidence in the scriptures by questioning the integrity of scripture. But neglecting close attention to the scriptures is dangerous and problematic because we are warned that there would be a false Jesus that men would teach and other Christs that people would follow that would lead them into error.

“And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.” ~ Matthew 24:4-5

So how do we avoid making the Bible just an object of worship, and discern whether we are following the right Jesus Christ? It is by both obeying the scriptures, and by letting the Holy Spirit lead us, that keeps us from error. The true Holy Spirit will never lead you in a way of living that is contrary to what the scriptures teach us.

“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.” ~ Galatians 1:6-10

How will you know that you are receiving a different gospel than the original one that was given? You will not know, unless you highly respect the importance of learning and understanding the correct interpretation of the written Word of God (the scriptures) found in the Bible.

“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” ~ 2 Corinthians 11:13-16

It is no strange thing that a preacher or teacher should come across as very anointed and capable in righteous teaching, but yet introduce error by a lack of carefulness to the original scriptures and the Holy Ghost’s leading.

God, by his Holy Spirit’s influence, has insured the integrity of the writing of all scripture. He has done this so that the scriptures might accurately instruct us in the purpose of his Son on earth: to save the lost and to keep us from being deceived.

“But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

So we also see that it is important who we allow to teach us. Have their lives been proven to be obedient to the Word of God? Do we know their lives? Do they show their knowledge of scripture by the way they live the scripture? Anyone can say anything. But only those who have been saved and transformed in their living, can become qualified to teach the scriptures. Contrary to common thinking of today: a degree or certificate in doctrinal knowledge does not qualify someone. There are people who are “ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth” (2 Timothy 3:7) because what they know is only in their head, and not in their heart.

“And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you.” ~ 1 Thessalonians 5:12

“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” ~ Matthew 7:15-20

Finally a true gospel teacher will not teach what people want to hear. They will teach nothing but the truth, even when it is not the popular to teach the truth.

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will

not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears” ~ 2 Timothy 3:13 – 4:4

Peter recognized how people have a dangerous “itch” for something new, and when you combine that curiosity with human purposes and desires you can be easily led astray. Consequently he agreed with Paul about the need for a clear understanding of the scriptures to keep one from being led away with the error of the wicked.

“And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.” ~ 2 Peter 3:15-18

Peter exhorted that we need to grow in grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Grace is having the divine favor of God upon us. To grow means we must increase in grace by daily humbling our selves to seek his will and obediently walk with Jesus. To grow in knowledge requires us to regularly study to understand more about how the scriptures teach us of Christ.

Jesus, who is the Word that “was made flesh, and dwelt among us,” especially emphasized the importance of the scriptures. By teaching and personal example, he taught us to respect and to pay close attention to them.

“Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?” ~ John 10:34-37

This is one of those scriptures that is “hard to be understood” yet Jesus said it “cannot be broken” or diminished just because it may be difficult to comprehend. Even this particular scripture he is quoting, can only be appropriately understood through a careful study of Old Testament scriptures. In fact, all the hard to understand scriptures, including those in the book of Revelation, are understood by a careful study of the rest of scripture in the Bible and under the direction of the Holy Spirit. None of it is to be “broken” or considered uninspired simply because we may not understand it yet.

“For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.” ~ John 19:36-37

It has been said that there are over 300+ scriptures in the Old Testament that were all fulfilled in Jesus Christ. No other book of any other religion has even a couple prophecies that they can truly claim to have been fulfilled. The fulfillment, integrity, continuity, consistency and relevance to every prophecy in scripture is what makes the Bible like no other book. And even beyond the prophecies, every scripture in the Bible is important!

Jesus placed so much importance on scripture, that he chose to suffer and die to fulfill scripture rather than interject his own will into influencing what would happen.

- “Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?” ~ Matthew 26:53-54
- “For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me. For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” ~ Romans 15:3-4

After the resurrection Jesus went into great lengths and detail in teaching the disciples and Apostles about himself from the scriptures.

“Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.” ~ Luke 24:25-27

If it is not in your heart to obey, you can study the scriptures continually and never come to a knowledge of the truth. Instead you will take on a pride in your knowledge and create another doctrine and faith according to your earthly understanding.

- “Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” ~ 2 Timothy 3:7
- “And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” ~ John 5:38-40

The point Jesus is making is that the scriptures testify of him, and if you study them with a humble and repentant heart, they will lead you to a true and faithful relationship with Jesus. But these people were searching the scriptures insincerely, and consequently they could not see Jesus in those scriptures.

“And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures” ~ Acts 17:2

The Apostle Paul highly regarded the scriptures as being holy and consecrated by God, and consequently taught that they needed to be respected as such.

“Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,) Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead: By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ” ~ Romans 1:1-6

It is by the scriptures that the revelation of Jesus Christ is made known.

“Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.” Romans 16:25-27

Peter wanted us all to be able to continue in the truth after he was gone. He did not want us to be deceived later, consequently he emphasized the importance of studying and living by the scriptures.

“Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance. For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.” 2 Peter 1:14 – 2:3

May we all humbly learn to wait on God and listen carefully to the fullness of God’s Word and his Spirit to guide us! Every scripture in the Bible is critical to our success today. May we all highly respect this written record that God has left for us. There is no other written record on earth as important. And this written record will be there in the end at the final judgement bar of Almighty God.

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” ~ Revelation 20:11-12

No one who tries to change what the scriptures teach will end up innocent on that day. Leave them alone! They cannot be “broken.”

“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.” ~ Revelation 22:18-19