

# ***“Why People Don’t Understand the Bible Alike!”***

*James 3:16 (1 Corinthians 14:33)*

**Intro.** – This message is the result of a promise I made to develop such a theme from God’s Word. It is also the result of having heard so often – “...but that’s just your interpretation.”

From the onset, please reason with me. The Creator of the Universe chose to reveal Himself through His written Word, the Bible. To even think God gave us a book that is not understandable or that people cannot understand alike is to suggest God is not *Almighty!*

At issue in this matter is not only the majesty of God, but also the authority of His Word. If you and I cannot understand the Bible alike, then God has given us a fallible point of reference and He cannot be trusted in anything else!

This brings me to my point: God can be trusted and His Word, the Bible is infallible and inerrant! God’s Word is SOLID!! Yet, on a daily basis, you and I experience the authority of God’s Word being questioned. Let me illustrate what I mean.

Illus. – conclusions are often pronounced on current social/moral issues with apparently little to no awareness or regard with what the Bible says concerning them. For example, I heard one person recently say, “I think homosexual activity is OK, since that’s the way God made those people.” Is that what the Bible says? Another example, I heard another person recently say, “I think if couples want to live together outside of marriage it’s no big deal...” Again, is that what the Bible says? Another example, I was in a Bible School class who was discussing whether women should teach men. 1Timothy 2:12-15 was read... One person spoke up and said, “I know that’s what the Bible says, but *I think* it’s all right anyway.”

Let me further illustrate the magnitude of this matter. Conclusions on doctrinal matters (i.e. “thus saith the Lord matters”) are often ignored...e.g. the Lord’s Supper... Salvation... Church Polity... etc. Note with me, those who dare to defend the authority of God’s Word in these matters are immediately branded bigots, divisive and uncaring (code word for not loving).

*Purpose: to reaffirm in each of our minds that God’s Word interprets itself!*

We will accomplish this by looking at three reasons why people don’t understand the Bible alike:

## **I IGNORANCE is a Cause**

- New Testament cases help us better understand what I mean by this:

### **A. The Nation of Israel**

1. Paul expressed his anxiety for “his people” – he said they had zeal but what? – Romans 10:2 *“For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge.”*
2. Paul then expressed the cause of troubles:
  - Romans 10:3 *“For being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.”*
3. Note: their failure was ascribed to ignorance – ignorance of God’s righteousness.
4. Christ identified this same problem shortly before His crucifixion:
  - a. upon entering Jerusalem Christ said, (Luke 19:42) *“If you had known in this day, even you, the things which made for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes.”*
  - b. even upon the Cross – Israel’s refusal is revealed (Luke 23:34) *“Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.”*
5. Later, Peter charged the people with denying and crucifying the Prince of Life (Acts 3:17) *“And now brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also.”*
6. Point is obvious – we too are quick to attribute behavior of those around us to jealousy, envy, hate, or some other form of wickedness... and these often are involved but the fact remains the root of much of this is acting out of ignorance.

### **B. The Apostle Paul**

1. Saul of Tarsus (held the garments at Stephen's stoning = leader in the effort... intent upon persecuting all Christians...!
2. To what would one attribute such behavior? Paul answers for us (1 Timothy 1:12-13) "...yet I was shown mercy, because I acted ignorantly in unbelief."

C. The Sadducees

1. Questioned Christ on the great day of questions concerning the case of a woman married to 7 husbands, "...in the resurrection, whose wife shall she be?..."
2. Christ responds (Matthew 22:29) "...You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures, or the power of God."
3. Pharisees, Scribes, Gentiles and others have similar cases...
4. Certainly many of our questions/actions similar to the Sadducees = ignorance of Scriptures and of the power of God...
  - a. one of Satan's greatest tools is ignorance
  - b. 1 Peter 2:15 "For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men."

Certainly, it is our business to learn/do the Word of God. We must banish ignorance of the Bible in order to establish the Truth! Let's be clear on this, ignorance is one reason why people don't understand the Bible alike!

## II DECEPTION is a Cause

- answers the question as to why there are so many ignorant of God's Word

### A. Warning Given Throughout Scripture

1. One of our greatest weaknesses is being deceived so easily.
  - a. this is one process employed by Satan to lead men away from the Truth...
  - b. 1 Timothy 2:14 "...the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression."
2. Almost every New Testament book has a warning(s) concerning:
  - a. our Lord is keenly aware of this failing in us and is why He gave numerous warnings...
  - b. Galatians 6:7 "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap."
  - c. 1 Corinthians 15:33 "Be not deceived, evil companionship corrupts good morals."
  - d. James 1:22 "Be doers of the Word, and not hearers only deceiving your own selves."
  - e. 1 John 1:8 "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

### B. The Uninformed Are Easily Deceived

1. Ever think about how you have come to possess some of your personal convictions
2. Do we not accept some convictions with little to any thought?...
  - Illus. - Ford vehicles... Dad had a real lemon - 1962 Country Squire wagon... from then on I've always given Fords a tough time... Now have two of them...
3. Point is this - who or what is our authority? Is it someone other than God and something other than His Word the Bible?
  - a. when the matter of one's relationship with God arises, to whom do we turn?...
  - b. remember there are no infallible people... and the only One is Jesus and the only thing at our disposal that is infallible is God's Word!

Are you willing to re-examine your convictions especially any you may have come to in ignorance? Deception is a cause as to why people don't understand the Bible alike.

## III CONCEIT is a Cause

- this answers the question why so many are willing to remain deceived:

### A. Paul's Teaching (Under God's Inspiration)

1. Galatians 6:3 "For if anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself."
2. Romans 12:16 "...set not your minds on high things, but, condescend to things that are lowly. Be not wise in your own conceits."
3. 1 Corinthians 10:12 "Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall."

4. 1 Timothy 3:6 “...and not a new convert, lest he become conceited and fall into condemnation.”

5. Romans 12:10 “Be devoted to one another in brotherly love, give preference to one another in honor.”

This being the case, no one is the exception – we must constantly guard against being conceited/puffed up.

#### B. Jesus’ Teaching

1. Matthew 23:12 “And whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.”

2. The disciples struggled with the sin of deceit as revealed when they asked (Matthew 18:1) “At that time the disciples came to Jesus saying, Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

3. Matthew 18:4 “Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

4. Jesus is telling the disciples and us the we must abandon all our own wisdom, power, superiority etc. and recognize never ending dependence upon God’s counsel!

**Conclusion:** Well, there you have it – three reasons why people do not understand the Bible alike: 1) Ignorance... 2) Deception... 3) Conceit...

Studying God’s Word is not only one way to show our love – it is one of the most natural ways to show our love. May we recognize God has given us a book that speaks for itself. May we study often and may it always be our sole source of authority in all matters!