

“How to Enjoy the Bible”

Week #2 Dec. 6, 2015 “The Bible: Its Meaning is Objective, Not Subjective, and That Makes All the Difference”

Review

- **2 Tim. 3:16-17:**
 - **“God-breathed” or “ex-spired” by Almighty God, the Holy Scripture breathed into the very marks on the original pages his TRUTH**
 - **THEREFORE, scripture is inherently clear and intelligible - Luther’s “perspicuity” or “clarity and transparency” teaching that is at the heart of the Reformation**
 - **It makes all the difference when we approach the Scriptures, the Bible, as the revealed and God-breathed Words of Almighty God. Doesn’t it? And our enjoyment as we approach this Word reverently as the Word of Truth is enhanced so much as we do this.**

- **“All scripture”: EVERY MARK ON THE PAGE**
 - **“is given by inspiration of God”: GOD BREATHED OUT**
 - **This is a statement about the revelation of God, not something about its effect on us when we read it**
 - **What difference does this make?**
 - **Your thoughts?**

New Key Scriptures:

2 Pet. 1:20-21

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

21 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 Spirit.

Mat 5:18

For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Psa 119:89

For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven.

Isa 40:8

The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.

I. The Scripture Has An Objective Meaning and It Is Available to Us Today!

A. No prophecy of the scripture is to be interpreted privately

- Our verses last time made this clear
 - These from 2 Peter do as well.
 - Quote and explain, “not of any personal or private unraveling or revealing”
 - No prophecy of the scripture is to be interpreted privately meaning that the meaning is objective and absolute.

B. The Scripture is therefore God’s written truth for mankind and must be understood for its full benefit to be gained

- The Scripture can never mean what God did not intend it to mean when it was given to the prophet or apostle who wrote it down as Scripture.

C. Applications to our lives practically speaking must therefore follow our teaching and our learning experience, never precede it.

- **Application is important. But it must always follow interpretation.**
- **This means that the question “what does this mean to me?” should not even be asked until the question “what does this mean?” has already been answered!!**

D. My Conclusions about this Restated:

- **The Bible is composed of the words God has given to us translated into our own language.**
- **The words God gave as originally written constitute the Scriptures. Those words were “in-spired” or even better, “ex-pired”, not the men through which they were given, but the words themselves.**
- **Based upon these Scriptures, faithful and competent translators have produced trustworthy Bibles for our use and learning**
- **Therefore, although it is very important that we apply what we have learned (or be hypocrites otherwise), it is not what a Bible verse or passage means to me or to you personally and subjectively that is ultimately the most important, but rather what Scripture objectively means, what God intended to communicate by revealing it through his servant.**
- **Therefore, application must always follow interpretation. This is so important.**

E. A Short Comment on Translations

Where are We Headed? Our overall subject is “How to Enjoy the Bible.”

And, now it is becoming crystal clear that enjoying the Bible, God’s completed revelation to man involves, even requires our grasping of what God has intended by his word. Otherwise, we will not be enjoying God’s truth at all. THIS IS THAT IMPORTANT!

So the issue is our understanding. The big question then is how can we come to know God’s truth? How can we come to understand God’s word and therefore to ENJOY THE BIBLE?

II. The Scripture, Literally Interpreted, with the Help of the Spirit, is the Key to Our Understanding -- and our Enjoyment

This answer to our question of ‘How?’ is one that has always been known by the faithful, of course, but now it is being lost due to modernism and other evil worldly and satanic teachings.

Nearly 500 years ago Miles Coverdale wrote this statement which has enabled a great many to begin enjoying the Bible. It reads:

“It shall greatly help you to understand Scriptures. If thou mark not only what is spoken or written, but of whom, and to whom, with what words, at what time. where, to what intent, with what circumstances, considering what goeth before and what followeth after.”

I believe this is well stated. Coverdale was right, more right than even he knew. If we do not take to heart what he wrote there, we will be mixing the teaching in the Garden of Eden with the teaching under Moses Law with the teaching of our Lord for the coming earthly

Kingdom with the teachings of the apostle Paul regarding God's grace and the Body of Christ with the writings of the apostle John for the Tribulation saints - it will all be mingled together and the true meaning of each will be lost.

This will be a real stew, as it were, and the power of the word will be surely lost to us. ***And we will be in a real stew as well, spiritually speaking, if you know what I mean.***

So to enjoy the Bible we need to take note of (as Coverdale wrote it) ***“not only what is spoken or written, but of whom, and to whom, with what words, at what time. where, to what intent, with what circumstances, considering what goeth before and what followeth after.”***

[ANY COMMENTS?]

I consider this principle of proper Biblical interpretation to be the direct corollary to the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture that we have already well considered here in this series of “How to Enjoy the Bible?”

- **Since God communicated to sinners by his verbal revelation, and ...**
- **God's intention was always to bless mankind**
- **Then this applies to the understanding of his word as well.**
- **It follows then that we must take him at his word always, believing not only IN him but also believing him, believing what he has revealed, taking what he has revealed to us to heart!**

Now, in order to bring this home to you in a rather forceful way, I have chosen just two key scriptures (and be sure, there are many more we could profitably consider) and then we will be able to draw some

conclusions: [and, as we do this we will be applying the “Coverdale Principle” with these verses in front of us]:

○ **Luke 18:29-30**

And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

30 Who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

○ **Eph. 2:8-10**

4 “But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

These scriptures are seemingly incompatible with each other, taken literally. However, when we apply the Coverdale Principle, we note the following:

- **Luke 18 record the words of our Lord Jesus Christ as he ministers during his early ministry**

- That he was ministering to the nation of Israel, his own people.
 - His subject is the coming kingdom what was being offered through the preaching of the good news concerning the coming establishing of the kingdom on this earth which had been promised for nearly two thousand years to his own people Israel.
 - He states clearly that works are required for salvation here. He does not directly say that faith is also required although that is surely implied.
- Eph. 2, on the other hand, is the Apostle Paul's clear presentation of the essence of our salvation under the grace dispensation. Here Paul says so powerfully that our salvation is based entirely on God's grace, not on works at all!
 - The works are EXCLUDED under the grace dispensation, you see. Praise the Lord.
 - Paul was writing to the church, the Body of Christ, NOT TO ISRAEL!
 - AND, faith is required and exalted, faith in the Lord Jesus and his completed work.
- And, when we see these differences applying properly the Coverdale Principle, we begin to clearly see the great blessing in this, don't we? We see it by noting the differences that are clearly revealed in God's word.

An illustration will bring this home:

Focus, focus, focus. What a difference it makes. In astronomy, in medicine, in life, and in our reading and understanding of God's word.

Taking out splinters!!

When we have the proper FOCUS, intending to take God's word literally, the differences spring forth and we proceed with our study as Coverdale exhorted when he wrote, "If thou mark not only what is spoken or written, but of whom, and to whom, with what words, at what time. where, to what intent, with what circumstances, considering what goeth before and what followeth after."

When we are focused properly on Grace and not on works of law, everything changes and we are set free to enjoy God's word and God himself according to the riches of his grace!

Oh, what a great difference between this Grace Gospel where salvation, rich and free, has been provided by the Lord God on the basis of the completed work of Christ, and, on the other hand, the gospel of the Kingdom, promised to those that endure to the end.

- ***Matt. 24:13 "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."***
- ***And, continue in "everything" that he has commanded, with no mention at all of the faith of the gospel that leads to the free gift of eternal life.***
- ***Eph. 2:-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.***

Amen and amen. What a difference. And, what a blessing in God's word, the Bible.