

Please welcome...

Preaching for us today is **Mike McKnight** from the Coalinga church. Be sure to welcome him and his family (Morgie, Noah and Daniel)!

Quotations about the Bible

George Washington Carver: *"The secret of my success? It is simple. It is found in the BIBLE, 'In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths'"*

Abraham Lincoln: *"Without Divine assistance I cannot succeed; with it I cannot fail!"*

Ronald Reagan: *"Of the many influences that have shaped the United States into a distinctive nation and people, none may be said to be more fundamental and enduring than the BIBLE"*

Theodore Roosevelt: *"It is necessary for the welfare of the nation that men's lives be based on the principles of the BIBLE. No man, educated or uneducated, can afford to be ignorant of the BIBLE"*

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
Sunday.....6:00 p.m.
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Preacher:
(Vacant)

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What Should be My Attitude Toward the Bible?

By Todd Clippard

Members of the churches of Christ have long been known as a people who believe not only in the inspiration of the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16), but in their all-sufficiency (2 Timothy 3:17; 2 Peter 1:3). This means we believe the Bible came from God and meets man's every spiritual need. Therefore, we reject any man-made doctrine, creed, confession, or articles of faith. Our respect for the Bible has caused us to be derided as "Bible-thumpers" and "Bibliolators" (worshippers of the Bible, though we do NOT worship the Bible). If this is the price to be paid for respecting God's Holy Word, then so be it.

Benjamin Franklin (a 19th century preacher, not the Revolution-era statesman/inventor) said it this way: 'Any creed containing more than the Bible is objectionable, because it does contain more than the Bible. Any creed containing less than the Bible is objectionable, because it does contain less than the Bible. Any creed differing from the Bible is objectionable, but it does differ from the Bible. Any creed precisely like the Bible is useless, because we have the Bible. This covers the whole ground.'

As a people, we have long strived to "speak where the Bible speaks, and be silent where the Bible is silent." Anything else is cowardly or presumptuous. Additionally, we have considered the Bible as an unchanging document, perfectly suited for all men at all times. But some will say, "This is exactly what we believe! We only go by the Bible." However, it is one thing to make a claim, but another altogether to prove it.

Consider for a moment, how many religious bodies have a church manual, book of discipline, article of faith, or catechism? Most all of them. What purpose do these books serve? They serve only as additions to scripture and as a means to divide men religiously. In truth, men often revere their creed books more than the Bible, for when it comes time to enumerate or defend some doctrine or practice, they turn to their creed books. These creed books are subject to review and change as men see fit. Therefore, they are

not comprised of objective truth. And even if they were not subject to review or change, the Bible reserves for itself the designation of objective truth in matters of spirituality (Psalm 119:160; John 17:17).

Of the other religious bodies that do not have a creed book, most do not view the Bible as the sole authority in matters of faith and practice. Instead, they rely on their feelings, "leadings," or claims of direct revelation. Phrases such as "the Lord appeared to me" or "the Lord spoke to me" speak volumes about one's attitude toward the Bible. I am not suggesting for a moment that everyone who says such is dishonest (though many are), but consider the ramifications of such. Jesus promised His apostles that they would be guided *"into all truth"* (John 16:13). Any claim to receive a new or different teaching from that which appears in Scripture is an indictment against Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Either the Holy Spirit guided the apostles into all truth or He didn't. If He didn't, then Jesus lied to them. If He did, then modern-day revelations are to be rejected out of hand. Also, first-century revelation was proven Divine with miracles and accompanying signs (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4). Modern-day revelators lack the power to prove their claims.

Finally, some "Bible believers" are heard to say, "I wouldn't trade this feeling in my heart for all the Bibles in the world. 1 John 5:13 teaches we can know we are saved because of the things that are written, not anything we "feel." *"There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death"* (Proverbs 14:12; 16:25). Jeremiah wrote, *"the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"* (17:9).

Friends, we must show the Bible its due reverence in every facet of our daily living and religious practice, lest we find ourselves rejected under the same condemnation. The only way to guard against this is to be diligent in our daily study and practice (Acts 17:11; 2 Timothy 2:15).

A Tribute to the Bible

By Franklin Camp

This Bible is no ordinary book. It may affect us in one of two ways: properly studied and applied, it will affect us for good in time and eternity; improperly handled, it will cause one to lose one's soul. The Bible is every man's book. It is not intended for a special group (clergy or scholars). It is written for the average person. Scholars may study it and marvel at its depth, but common folks may study and joy in its simplicity.

No one ever outgrows the Scriptures. The more one studies them, the wider and deeper they become. The Bible is the one book which enables one to look into eternity. The best evidence for the Bible's inspiration is found between its covers. No one will ever be a useful Christian unless he knows the Bible. Matthew Henry said, "The Scriptures were not written to make us astronomers, but to make us saints. "It is no wonder that Paul urged Timothy to study the Scripture, *"rightly dividing,"* or handling aright, the word of truth, that he might be an approved workman before God (2 Timothy 2:15). There is no higher ambition on earth. The Bible acknowledges man's faults; it is patient with man's weaknesses; it is severe with man's sins; and it is honest with his virtues and his hopes.

To own a Bible is to be rich. To study, to know, and to trust the Bible is to find life. To study the Bible is to be wise; to obey it, to be strong. To know the Bible and to handle it aright is the greatest accomplishment within the reach of any person. One may know English, astronomy, literature, music, sociology, and philosophy; but if one does not know the Bible, one has failed in the only subject that brings all things into their proper relationship and that enables one to know life at its best. One seeking to know the Bible will endeavor to study its contents book by book, meet its characters as they unfold through its pages, study its types, its doctrine, its topics, paragraphs, sentences, and words. This is the work of a lifetime.

The Bible can save many a heartache. The following was found on the fly-leaf of a Bible placed by the Gideons in a motel in Birmingham, Alabama: "May God bless the man who placed this book here. I am a young lady twenty-one years old, fatherless and motherless. Tonight this book saved me from taking a wrong step. May the next reader find it the comfort that I did."

There is no greater accomplishment in life than to be able to rightly divide the word of truth. It is worth all the sacrifice necessary. One can never be truly great who does not know the word, love it, live it, delight in it, and teach it without perversion and without misrepresentation. The one who knows how to handle it is in a position to render the greatest service to the world.

The Bible is a mirror that enables us to see ourselves as we really are. It is food which supplies the strength we need, a lamp to guide our way, a hammer to break and to build, a sword to fight and to defend, a seed to plant and grow, and a goal to own and to attain. There are no experiences in life for which the Bible does not furnish a passage. May these thoughts lend encouragement to all of us to become diligent students that we may know the way of life and find the life that is life indeed.