

CAN WE ALL UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE ALIKE?

It is not at all unusual to hear someone say, "well we can't all understand the Bible alike". Some have asked the question that makes up our title, "Can we all understand the Bible alike?" To this question we usually answer, "if we all understand the Bible, it will be alike. If it is not alike, at least one of us does not understand it". The fact is, the words of the Bible have a meaning. The Bible is the revealed word of God. Just think what an accusation one is making toward God when they say that the word that God has revealed to man cannot be understood. It is accusing God of failing in His attempt to reveal His word to man.

Why do you suppose there are so many people who do not believe that we can all understand the Bible alike? In most cases, it is simply a matter of one believing what he has been taught without having ever studied the subject under consideration for themselves. But, there are many who spend much time reading the Bible, but having much difficulty in understanding that which they read, and the word "understand" is the key. Let us note just a few helpful hints in understanding what the Bible teaches.

1. Having a love for the truth is mandatory. A love for the truth is required in order to be saved (II Thess. 2:10), but it is also a key element in understanding the Bible. He who does not love the truth will not put forth the effort required to understand it.

2. One must rightly divide the word of truth (II Tim. 2:15). An understanding of the three distinct dispensations, the patriarchal, the Mosaic and the Christian is important, for that which was binding upon the Jews under the old law, may well not apply at all to us.

3. One must consider the context in which a verse is found. It has been said that a verse taken out of context is a pretext. Included in the context is knowing who is author or speaker is. For instance, in Genesis 3:4 we read where Eve was told, "Ye shall not surely die", but the speaker was Satan. It is also important to consider who is being addressed. It was only Noah that was commanded to "make thee an ark of gopher wood". Also, in context considers the whole discourse in which the particular verse is found. In other words, what was the author discussing when he made the statement.

4. And, obtain all there is in the Bible on the subject being studied. Other verses may answer what the verse means.

Robert

FOR WANT OF A NAIL...

For want of a nail, the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe, the horse was lost; for want of the horse, the rider was lost; for want of the rider, the battle was lost; for want of the battle, the war was lost...all because the farrier was careless when driving the nail.

Sometimes we forget the importance each and every member plays in the work of the church. Sometimes we forget that our influence stretches farther than we might ever know or see. We each have work to do in the Kingdom and when we fail to work, then the whole body suffers.

Yet, consider also that the missing nail illustration can apply to our personal spiritual lives as well. In the illustration, the war was ultimately lost because one farrier didn't pay attention to the details while shoeing the horse. Joshua sent some men from the armies of Israel to conquer Ai. It should have been an easy battle and they should have returned home victorious, but they did not. Thirty-six men from Israel died that day at the battle of Ai because of details. One man had taken of the spoils and kept them in disobedience to God and it caused Israel to lose the battle. The reality is...details matter. Every word that is in God's law is there for a reason and must be obeyed. When we make excuses for disobeying, we just fool ourselves because the details matter. Wouldn't it be a shame to stand before the judgment seat facing eternity and realize that we lost the war because we ignored a "detail" in His Word? John 12:48 says, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day".

It was one nail that kept Moses from entering the Promise Land (striking the rock; Numbers 20:10ff). It was one nail that cost Nadab and Abihu their lives (strange fire; Leviticus 10:1-2). It was one nail that cost David the life of his child (II Samuel 11). It was one nail that cost Esau his birthright (pottage; Genesis 25:30ff). It was one nail that cost Uzzah his life (touching the Ark; II Samuel 6:6).

The reality is, the Bible is full of examples that teach us that each and every nail...each and every detail matters when it comes to serving God. The work that we do in His kingdom matters...even the "little" things. The way we worship matters...even the "little" things. And remember that even the "little" sins will separate us from God and heaven.

(borrowed & adapted from article by David Dalton)