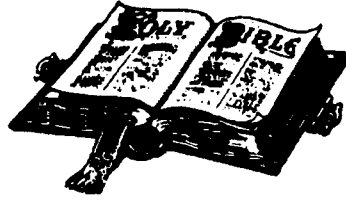


THE INSTRUCTOR



"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Timothy 3:16

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CAN WE SEE THE BIBLE ALIKE?

The idea that "we cannot understand the Bible alike" is shared by millions of people. However, as we consider the **Word of God** we can see that such an idea is NOT true. In fact, the opposite is true! It is certainly **possible** for us to understand the Scriptures alike! Not only is it **possible**, but God expects us to understand **His will** for us as revealed in the Scriptures!

A long time ago the Psalmist said: "Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way" and "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." (Psa. 119:104; 119:130). NOTE: The Psalmist **did** receive understanding! The entrance of **God's Words** **GIVES** understanding!

Centuries later the apostle Paul wrote down what he received by revelation from God so we could **read** and **understand** his knowledge in the mystery of Christ. (See Eph. 3:2-6). NOTE: We **can read** and **understand**! In writing to Christians Paul exhorted: "**Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.**" (Eph. 5:17). To Timothy Paul said: "**Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee**

understanding in all things." (2 Tim. 2:7). NOTE: Although there are some things that are "**hard to be understood**", if we "**give diligence**" we **CAN understand** what **God requires** of us in order for us to go to **heaven**!

If we **understand** God's Word at all, then we can **understand** it alike! If we **understand** that five plus three equals eight, we **understand it alike**! If not **alike**, then someone **misunderstands**!

If we cannot understand God's will alike, why did Paul say: "... **understanding** what the will of the Lord is?" (Eph. 5:17).

Yes, we can understand the Scriptures alike if we are NOT blinded by Satan, are NOT prejudiced and if we will approach a study of God's Word **humbly**, with the **intention** of understanding and **desiring** to understand it.

In Acts 2:36-41 we learn that about 3,000 people **understood** (and thus **alike**) what they were told by Peter to do "**for the remission of sins**" and they did it! REQUEST: Name **one** thing the Lord requires of us that we cannot understand. (CRS)

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PAST-PRESENT-FUTURE

As we begin our 32nd year publishing THE INSTRUCTOR and reflect on the **past, present and future**, some observations may be in order.

PAST

God has richly blessed us in the **past** both physically and spiritually. God has given us each day **"our daily bread."** (See Mt. 6:11). He has given us more than enough to eat, drink and to wear! (See Mt. 6:25-34). We have been blessed with **"rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."** (See Acts 14:17). It is **"in Him that we live, move, and have our being."** (See Acts 17:28). We should recognize the fact that **"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."** (Cf. James 1:17).

Through the revelation of God in the Scriptures we learned we, being without Christ, were lost in sin and without hope in the world. (Cf. Eph. 2:12). God's Word produced faith in our hearts! (Cf. Romans 10:8, 17). As penitent believers we confessed our faith in Christ and were baptized **into Christ!** (Cf. Acts 17:30-31; 3:19; 2:38; Rom. 10:9-10; 6:3-4 and Gal.

3:26-27). As Christians the Lord has been with us! His **grace** has been sufficient with us! We have increased in knowledge, wisdom and love! We have endeavored to teach others the gospel and to be examples of true believers. At times, we fell short. We missed the mark!

For any good accomplished by our efforts we thank God and praise Him! God must be credited with any increase that was given!

PRESENT

Presently, we are being greatly blessed by the Lord! As Christians we are striving to faithfully worship and serve Him! We are endeavoring to grow in knowledge and increase in faith! (Cf. 2 Peter 3:18). We are trusting God for our spiritual security by adding to our **"faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity."** We are striving to **"give diligence"** to make our **"calling and election sure."** (See 2 Peter 1:5-12). We are trying to teach others the gospel of Christ and be examples of true believers! For any good being accomplished by our efforts we thank God and give Him the praise!

From our viewpoint, it seems that a **lack of emphasis on the Scriptures** in many churches is having a detrimental effect upon many so-called "conservative congregations." There is a **famine** in the land! It is **not a famine** of bread, nor a thirst for water, **"but of hearing the words of the Lord!"** There is a **famine** of simple, distinct preaching of **"all the counsel of God!"** It is **"high time to awake out of sleep"** and demand that the **whole counsel of God** be preached
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PAST - PRESENT - FUTURE

in a plain, straightforward way. (Cf. Rom. 13:11; Acts 20:26-27). The less **"Book, chapter & verse"** preaching there is, the weaker many Christians and churches will become. Many have been "drifting" for a number of years. Some may be beyond the point of return. It is a sad situation!

FUTURE

Although we do not know what the future holds, **we have faith in Him Who holds the future!** As we face the future here are some things we should resolve to do - and then earnestly endeavor to do them.

1. **Give diligence to grow "in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ!"** (Cf. 2 Peter 3:18; 2 Tim. 2:15).

2. **Be holy!** (Cf. 1 Pet. 1:14-16; Eph. 1:4).

3. **Abide in Christ!** (See John 15:1-8; 1 John 2:28; 3:6).

4. **Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness!** (See Matthew 6:33).

5. **Abound in love!** (See 1 Thessalonians 3:12).

6. **Often ask God for wisdom!** (See James 1:5-6; 3:17)

7. **Walk after God's commandments!** (See 2 John 6).

8. **Teach others!** (Cf. 2 Tim. 2:2; John 6:45; Acts 8:4).

9. **"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good!"** (1 Thessalonians 5:21).

10. **Be kind and forgiving!** (See Eph. 4:32).

11. **"Stand fast in the faith!"** (See 1 Cor. 16:13).

12. **Let the peace of God rule in our hearts and be thankful!** (See Col. 3:15; 1 Thess. 5:18).

13. **Be strong!** (See Eph. 6:10).

14. **"Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good."** (Romans 12:9).

15. **Be patient in tribulation!** (See Romans 12:12).

16. **Be sober and vigilant!** (See 1 Peter 5:8-9).

17. **Treat others as we would have them to treat us!** (See Luke 6:31).

18. **Contend earnestly "for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints!"** (See Jude 3).

19. **"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."** (John 7:24).

20. **"Not to think of men above that which is written."** (See 1 Cor. 4:6).

21. **Resist the devil!** (James 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8-9).

22. **Watch!** (See Mt. 24:42; Mark 13:37; 1 Thess. 5:6).

23. **Not to be partakers of other men's sins!** (See 1 Tim. 5:22).

24. **Be examples of true believers!** (See 1 Tim. 4:12).

25. **Be bold and humble!** (See Prov. 28:1; 1 Thess. 2:2; Acts 4:13, 29, 31; Eph. 6:20; Heb. 13:6; James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:6).

26. **Be godly and contented!** (See 1 Timothy 6:6-8).

27. **Abound in the work of the Lord!** (See 1 Cor. 15:58).

28. **Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ!** (See 2 Timothy 2:3).

29. **Hold faith and a good conscience!** (See 1 Timothy 1:19).

30. **Rejoice in the Lord and live in hope of eternal life!** (See Phil. 4:4; 1 Thess. 5:16; Titus 1:2; Romans 12:12).

As we face the future we must NOT become discouraged and falter. We must NOT capitulate! We must NOT give place to the devil! (Cf. Eph. 4:27). We must NOT lay down the weapons of our warfare! We must NOT compromise truth and righteousness! We must NOT

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PAST - PRESENT - FUTURE

embrace error! We dare NOT put our trust in men!

We **must** put our confidence in the Lord! (Cf. Psalm 118:8-9; Prov. 3:5-7; Heb. 13:5-6). We **must** face the future with faith and courage! We **must** continue to rebuke sin and expose error! We **must** be militant in waging warfare! We (like David as he faced Goliath) **must** keep in mind that "**the battle is the Lord's!**" (Cf. 1 Sam. 17:27). Victory lies ahead! We **must** press on! **Faith** is the victory! (Cf. 1 John 5:4). "**We are more than conquerors through Him that lived us!**"



(CRS)

NOTE: If you haven't done so, please send us your "911" address!

MOST UNUSUAL!

On Dec. 22, 1992, **Paul Harvey** reported that a certain man had been **stabbed** with a **porcelain duck** by his "live-in lover." Although tragic and a little unusual, it is understandable. We can understand how a person might **be stabbed** with a **porcelain duck!**

When I heard **Paul Harvey** report the above incident, I was reminded of the unreliable account in **The Book of Mormon** (Heleman 9:6) of a judge who was **stabbed**. In fact, the account says "... the judge had been murdered - he being stabbed by his brother by a garb of secrecy ..." If in reality a judge was murdered that would be tragic. However, if he was murdered - being **stabbed BY "a garb of secrecy"**, that would not only be most unusual, but not even understandable!

- SENTENCE SERMONS -

If you tried to do something good and failed, you are vastly better off than if you had tried to do nothing and succeeded.

Happy is the man to whom God gives with a sparing hand what is sufficient for his wants. -**Horace**

Life is not so short but that there is always time for courtesy. -**Emerson**

Love is not immunity from difficulties, but peace in difficulties.

He lives long who lives well, and time misspent is not lived, but lost!

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