

## ***The Bible is Understandable***

The multitude of different church buildings in every city stands as a sad reminder of religious division and confusion. In man's loss of unity, he is tempted to blame God and His word, the Bible. Men conclude that, since we do not understand the Bible alike, then the Bible cannot be understood at all. This is a most serious and fundamental error. Furthermore, it is an attack on either God's goodness or His ability to communicate to men. However, the Bible declares plainly that it can be understood.

The Bible gives a man all the truth that he needs to please God: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Even though we do not have the complete record of what Jesus did on earth, we have what we need to understand, believe and be saved. "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30-31). It is the truth that will make us free as Jesus said, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31,32). Jesus has provided that truth for us today in the pages of the Holy Bible.

It is clear from the Bible itself that God intended for us to understand and obey it. Paul said, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17). He also made it clear that God's revelation of the Bible through Him could be understood upon reading: "... by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ" (Ephesians 3:4).

Some parts of the Bible are more difficult than others. Peter said, "...Even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction" (2 Pet. 3:15-16). Even though it takes more study to understand some of the scriptures, you will notice in this passage that God neither condoned or excused the error that was taught because of Bible misunderstanding. He rather pointed out that the mis-users of the Bible brought on their own destruction. People will be lost in hell because they misuse the scriptures to teach error.

In a time of flooding religious error and misunderstanding of the Bible let us not blame God and His word, but with great determination find the truth revealed within the pages of the Holy Bible and unite on that truth to salvation. May God richly bless our efforts to know and do His will.

**- by Dwight McGee**

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## ***Big "I"***

"... I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." Acts 26:29.

Perhaps many of us recognize these words as those spoken by Paul to Agrippa when he told Paul that he had almost been persuaded to become a Christian (KJV). Have we ever stopped to think of what it would require for us to be able to make the same statement that Paul made to Agrippa? It would mean much more than being just a member of the church. It would mean that I could examine the type of life that I am now living, and yet be able to say the world would be a much better place to live in, even if every other person in the world were living that same type of life! It would mean that the universal church of Christ would be more like what the Lord would have it to be, even if every other Christian lived and served the same way that I do! It would mean that the local congregation of the body where I worship would be more active and more zealous in doing that which is pleasing to the Lord, even if every other member of that congregation attended the services, gave of his money, and helped to do that which must be done just as I do. Remember, Paul said "... I would to God, that ... all that hear me this day, were ... altogether such as I am ... " What a sobering thought!

But now, let us apply the thought. Are you a member of the Lord's church? Then ask yourself this question: "If every other person in the local congregation where I am a member worshipped, labored for, and served the Lord as I do, what would this church be like?" We all think it is wonderful for the church to do very great things, but when the time comes to do, oftentimes "Big I" am not to be found.

- by Ray Ferris

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7<sup>th</sup> (final) in a series

## **Jesus' Law on Marriage**

We conclude our study of divorce and remarriage with this final false doctrine:

6) BASED UPON 1 COR. 7:15, IF A BELIEVER IS DESERTED BY AN UNBELIEVING MATE, THE BELIEVER IS FREE TO REMARRY. The verse reads, "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God hath called us to peace." It is argued that Paul is stating further revelation on the subject of divorce and remarriage, and here gives an additional exception to the one mentioned in Matt. 19:9

We agree that the apostles, through the Holy Spirit, revealed many things that Jesus had not previously made known (exactly as promised in John 16:12,13). But nothing revealed to the apostles by the Spirit could be at contradiction with what Jesus personally taught. Jesus taught there was only one exception for divorce and remarriage. If Paul's statement means that there are really two exceptions, then we have a contradiction.

Actually, the Greek word for "bondage" in 1 Cor. 7:15, though found 133 times in the New Testament, is never used with reference to the marriage bond. A different word is used of the marriage bond (see 1 Cor. 7:27,19) The "bondage" referred to in 7:15 has to do with the obligations of a Christian to his/her mate. If that unbelieving mate chooses to leave, the Christian is unable to perform those obligations, but in such cases he/she is "not under bondage" to do the impossible.

The Lord's teaching on divorce and remarriage is plain. Let us have the faith and determination to apply it fairly in every situation.

- by Greg Gwin