

THE LEXIA EDIFIER

ROMANS 14:19Let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.

MAY 5, 2013

WHY CAN'T WE UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE?

Jim Stauffer

When someone says they cannot understand the Bible, they should recognize that calls into question the competence of either God Who spoke it or themselves who are unable to understand it.

Now, the people I have heard use this expression are not suggesting they are dim. They are clearly suggesting it is written in a complicated and even contradictory way that prohibits clarity in the message it sends. This obviously reflects on God whether intentional or not.

Paul clearly states the revelation he received from God and made known to men was understandable. **Eph. 3:1** *For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles 2 assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, 3 how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. 4 When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and*

prophets by the Spirit.

Now, I bring this up because during an on line discussion of the recent revelation by Jason Collins (NBA Basketball Player) that he was gay, some expressed the idea the Bible contradicted itself. It was even suggested as most of us have heard at one time or another, "you can prove anything by the Bible."

The difficulty came about when some compared homosexuality and the "rights" of those who are gay to the Civil Rights Movement of the 60's that led to the Civil Rights Act. As it was pointed out, one has to believe being gay is the way he was created rather than a choice he made to equate it with race or ethnicity. If indeed one believes God made him that way, he would have great difficulty with passages of Scripture that condemn homosexuality such as **Romans 1:26,27** and **1 Corinthians 6:9-11**. It is illogical in any way of thinking for God to create people as homosexuals and then condemn them for practicing something they were created for.

Of course since some in the discussion

believe just that, that God created some as homosexuals, they naturally refuse to believe they will be condemned for practicing homosexuality. This is a very strange conclusion since God has spoken on both sides of the issue. If you notice in the passage in **1 Cor. 6:9-11**, Paul states some of them were homosexuals but had since changed that behavior. This clearly debunks the theory they were created as such. They repented and changed their conduct just as the drunkards did. Others in the group believe the Bible implicitly and as a result conclude God did not create anyone to be homosexual and therefore it must be a choice and that God has condemned that choice.

Kind of forces us to choose what we believe, doesn't it? We can't have our cake and eat it too! This is the problem with mankind in our day and time. We are used to having our way. We want our way on this subject too. Therefore, many claim to believe the Bible and still insist that homosexuals are born that way. They claim it is not a choice. They are simply refusing to acknowledge the contradiction in their own reasoning.

Now this answers the pseudo problem of being unable to understand Scripture. As Paul has spoken, we can understand the mystery of the gospel as revealed by the Holy Spirit. It further places a responsibility on each person to put forth the effort to understand if he wishes to enjoy the blessings of God.

Matt. 28:18 *And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."* God said, **(Matt.17:5)** *"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him."*

We can try to avoid making choices all we want but we have chosen when we agree with mankind and disagree with God and Christ. If we want to follow Jesus, we will find His teaching in the New Testament as He walked on the earth and in the writings of the Apostles who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. **(1 Cor. 2:10-13)**

If we do not follow Jesus, we should not be expecting the redemption from sin and eternal salvation He promised to His disciples.

Now the question is, do we want to listen to the Son of God, who has all authority in

heaven and earth or do we want to be politically correct and get along with those in society who have chosen not to listen to Christ?

Who will you choose?

Conflicts in Calvinism *by Jim Stauffer*

The Westminster Confession of Faith accurately represents the position of Calvinism on the subject of **Total Hereditary Depravity**. It says, *"Man, by his fall into a state of sin hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation: so as, a natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto."* page 19,20 **Five Points of Calvinism; Steele, Thomas, Quinn**

They further state regarding Spiritual Deadness, *"As a result of Adam's transgression, men are born in sin and by nature are spiritually dead..."* (ibid page20) Concerning Darkened Minds and Corrupt Hearts, *'As a result of the Fall men are blind and deaf to spiritual truth.* (ibid page 21)

This position regarding Original Sin and Total Hereditary Depravity has permeated the religious world. If it is according to Scripture they have done a good work, but if it is not they have propagated one of the most pernicious errors of all time.

I would like to notice just a few examples where this doctrine is in conflict with biblical teaching. The concept of Original Sin has no passage of Scripture attached as any proof text other than **Psalms 51:5**, *"Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity; And in sin did my mother conceive me."* This is used to argue David was born with the sin of Adam staining his soul. How does the sin of David's mother affect his soul? If you heard a woman say, 'In drunkenness my husband beat me.' Or, "In anger my father whipped me", would you attribute the drunkenness or anger to the wife or child? Certainly not.

For anyone to consider an infant to be totally depraved flies in the face of Jesus' statement that His kingdom is comprised of those who become like little children. **Luke 18:15** *Now they were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them. And when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them. 16 But*

Jesus called them to him, saying, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. 17 Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it."

Furthermore, all passages that refer to men being lost in sin describe such men lost in their own sin. **Eph. 2:1-3; Rom. 5:12; Col. 2:13** and many others. John describes sin as a transgression of the law. (**1 John 3:4**) No mention is made of anyone inheriting the sin of Adam or any other. Just the opposite is taught as a principle of the relationship between man and God, **Ezek. 18:20** *The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.*

Consider the thoughts of Jesus concerning the depravity of a man's heart. Does this sound like a man has *"lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation."*? **Matt. 5:8** *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* Remember what Jesus said when explaining the parable of the sower? **Luke 8:15** *As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience.* Jesus clearly believed there were some whose hearts were willing and able to consider and accept the spiritual message of salvation. Peter says, **1Pet. 1:22** *Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart,*

It is clear again that another tenet of Calvinism finds itself at odds with the clear and simple teaching of the gospel of Christ. Let us be sure to confront this error at every opportunity we have.

Is There "Grass on Your Path"?

James Wallace Adams

Preachers returning from evangelizing the natives of Africa tell of the unusual devotion of their converts. Each convert had a separate place in the bush where he went to pray. The well worn paths to these places testified to the degree of their fervor. Any who neglected his

devotions was betrayed by the grass which grew on his path.

This comports well with the beautiful sentiments expressed by the Sweet Singer of Israel: (**Psa. 84:1,2,10**) *"How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God...For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."* How wonderful it would be if all professed followers of the Son of Heaven today were motivated by such lofty sentiments relative to *"the house of God, which is the church of the living God"* (**1 Tim. 3:15**) Be honest, now; **Does grass grow on your path to the house of God?"**

Because of the following:

Attitudes among all religious folks have shifted in recent decades. The cities and towns of America were once alive with religious debate and members of the churches of Christ were always able to find sectarian preachers and members ready to defend their practices as scriptural. Today, the question is whether anyone will confront error aggressively and if they do will those challenged stand and defend what they believe. There seems to be a pablum offered in denominations anymore that causes most of them to beg not to be judged and discount the need for Bible authority.

We offer the following:

AN APPROPRIATE PRAYER BEFORE EVERY BIBLE STUDY

Dear Lord, As we try to learn about You and Your commandments, may we seek the truth in all things. May we look upon the word of the Bible as our authority that comes from you. May our hearts be receptive to Your truth, and may we have the courage to change our lives when we are shown the truth. May we be honest and sincere in this study. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

Carey Scott

John 14:15 *"If you love me, you will keep my commandments.*

Eph. 2:19 So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, **20** being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; **21** in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

1 Pet. 2:9 But ye are an elect race, royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Psalms 1: 1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scoffers; **2** But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. **3** And he shall be like a tree planted by streams of water, that bringeth forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also doth not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. **4** The wicked are not so, but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. **5** Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. **6** For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; but the way of the wicked shall perish.

News and Notes: Let us remember the instruction of our Lord by visiting in whatever way we can, **Mary Czirr, Terry Czirr, Candiss Cason, Wendy Taylor and Jan Patrick. Grant Clothier's** surgery was successful. Remember him as he recovers.

Matt. 25:40 *And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me.*

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We recommend to you the following websites:

***facebook.comlenexachurchofchrist/
thelenexaedifier.com
lenexachurchofchrist.org***

Our Meeting times are:

Sunday Bible Classes: 9:30 AM
Worship Services 10:20 AM&5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Classes 7:00 PM

The Church at Lenexa is a congregation of brethren who have been "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." **(Romans 3:24)**

As a result of this justification we have been "delivered out of darkness and translated into the kingdom of the Son of his love, in whom we have our redemption, the forgiveness of sins." **(Colossians 1:13,14)**

We therefore respect the inspired word of God that will completely furnish us unto every good work by speaking only as the oracles of God. **(2 Timothy 3:16,17; 1 Peter 4:11)**

What must one do to be saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Christ - Heb. 11:6

Repent of sin - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be baptized for the remission of sins - Acts 2:38