

Understanding Truth

Introduction. In Ephesians 3:1-6, Paul tells the Ephesians how we received our Bibles. The "mystery" that Paul spoke of was God's plan of salvation. That plan of salvation was at one time hidden, but now it is revealed. In vs. 4, Paul even says that we can have Paul's knowledge of the scriptures.

Pilate asked in John 18:36, "What is truth?" Truth is what agrees with fact or reality. Is there a way which we can understand truth? Can anyone who wishes pick up a copy of the Bible and be able to understand it? We need to consider today if we are capable of understanding truth.

I. ***One Must Have The Will To Understand The Truth***

- A. John 7:17 proves a very simple point: you have got to want the truth. Someone must have an open mind before they will receive the truth.
- B. If we want to go to heaven, then we are going to listen to the Lord because He will make us free (John 8:31-32). Sometimes people would rather follow the desires of the devil than to follow truth (John 8:43-45).
- C. God knows the difference between a truth seeker and lip service (cf. Galatians 6:7).
 1. For example, consider $2+2=4$. We know this because it is an eternal truth in this world. Would some claim to the death that $2+2=5$ because their father and grandfather all believed that way?
 2. Does this person love the truth? What do you do with people like this? They are going through life crippled. Do not be deceived brethren, God knows the hearts of men (cf. Jeremiah 12:3; John 2:25).

II. ***One Must Understand That Some Aspects Of Truth Are Difficult To Grasp***

- A. Peter made the statement in 2 Peter 3:14-18 that some of Paul's letter were hard to understand. It makes us feel good to hear Peter write this. There is a big difference between some parts and every part. Furthermore, Peter did not say it is impossible to understand, it is just hard to understand.
- B. In vss. 16-17, Peter makes it clear that it does matter what we believe! If it did not matter what we believe, then God has lied to us (2 Peter 1:20-2:3). We cannot tamper with God's word. The only solution is in vs. 18, but you have to do this for yourself! No one can force you to understand the word of God better.

III. **One Must Understand That We Will Not See Truth Alike**

- A. We must be very careful here. There needs to be a distinction made between the questions, "Can we all understand the Bible alike" and "Are we going to understand the Bible alike?"
- B. Christians must remember that we are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26), and this means we can understand His word (Matthew 4:4). God obviously wants us to understand His will from what is written in Ephesians 3:1-6.
- C. When two people disagree on God's word, someone has not understood the word, but rather has misunderstood it. The answer to the question, "Can we all understand the Bible alike" is yes, but the answer to the question, "Are we all going to understand the Bible alike" is no because someone will always misunderstand it (cf. Philippians 1:27).
 - 1. Some examples are easy to understand:
 - a) Exodus 14:21-22 -- Did God part the Red Sea?
 - b) Exodus 17:6 -- Did God tell Moses to strike the rock?
 - c) Matthew 14:25 -- Did Jesus walk on the water?
 - d) Mark 1:1 -- Is Jesus the Son of God?
 - 2. Some examples are harder to understand:
 - a) Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 1:22; 4:4 -- How many churches are there? If you do not see this, you do not want to see this.
 - b) 1 Corinthians 1:10-13 -- Are denominations acceptable and pleasing to God?
 - c) James 2:14-19 -- Does "faith only" save us?
 - d) Matthew 19:9 -- How many reasons exist for divorce and remarriage?
 - e) John 6:26-27; 1 Corinthians 11:22, 34 -- Is the church a social institution? Here they separated worship activities from social activities because the two did not belong together. Social activities do not build spiritual interest.
 - f) 1 Peter 3:20-21 -- Does baptism save us? What about Mark 16:16 (belief and baptism), Acts 2:38 (repentance and baptism), and Acts 22:16 (arising and baptism)? If you cannot see this, it is a willful blindness.

Conclusion. Remember $2+2=5$? You cannot argue with the Lord. You will not win. If someone tells you anything different, they are lying to you. All it takes to understand truth is your open mind and your willingness to know the truth.

As you look at some of these harder to understand topics, is this the Bible talking or is it "church of Christ" doctrine and tradition? You honestly look at it and tell me. We want you to know and obey the holy truth of God.

If you have an open mind, you can study the scriptures and know this truth.
We want to help you know this truth.