

SHEDDING LIGHT ON BIBLICAL CONTRASTS

#7 – Isn't the Holy Spirit all I need to understand the Bible?

During the sharing time at a church prayer meeting, an enthusiastic new Christian related that he was getting a lot out of a group Bible Study in his home. He said, "I've found that the Holy Spirit helps us to understand the Bible even though we don't know anything about the original languages or other so-called rules for Bible study."

Others in the meeting were uncomfortable with the implication that serious Bible study is not necessary. Is this new Christian right? Or must certain rules for Bible study be followed to have a clear understanding of what has been written?

We Must Depend on Careful Study

1. Because the Bible is given to us in the form of language, any right interpretation will conform to the normal rules of that language... take for example the text:

"Do not be deceived, God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows." (Galatians 6:7)

Without regard for the language & context of the words used, someone might suggest the real meaning of the text to be: "Farming is the right occupation for a Christian because a godly person will always be able to get a good harvest."

2. The Apostle Paul made it clear that we should show **great care and diligence** in the way we handle the Scriptures (**2 Timothy 2:15**).

3. In the book of Acts, Luke praised the diligent citizens of Berea who searched **the Scriptures carefully** to make sure that what the Apostle Paul was teaching them **conformed** to what the Old Testament actually said (**Acts 17:11**).

We Must Depend on the Holy Spirit

1. The Word of the Holy Spirit is **essential for insight** into the Word of God (**John 15:26-27; 16:13; 2 Timothy 2:7**).

2. The truths of God are not understood merely in words, but by **the wisdom** that comes from the Holy Spirit Himself (**1 Corinthians 2:11-13**).

(cont... P.2)

3. Those who attempt to study the Scriptures without a right relationship with the Spirit of God often fail to see how the Word of God relates to life (**John 5:39-40**).

Resolution

If we want to understand the Bible and experience its power, we need to combine **careful reading and study** with a **conscious dependence** upon the help of its Author, the Holy Spirit.

Reflection

- We can be sure that a correct interpretation of Scripture will **be consistent** with its own words and contexts. Therefore, careful study of the details and facts of the Bible is an essential check on claimed meanings. At the same time, we must remember that those who walk in the Spirit of God as a way of life, those who are intimates of the Christ who sent us His Spirit, and those who want to do the Will of God... will have the help of the Author Himself.
- The psalmist, then, could say that he was made wiser than all his teachers as a result of loving the Law of God (**Psalm 119:99**).

~~~~~

