

God Expects Man to Understand

In Matthew's account of the Great Commission, Jesus said, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations..." Why would Jesus, the Son of God, tell his apostles to go and teach people if what they were going to teach could not be understood? Did not Jesus, in the command, necessarily imply that the material to be taught was simple enough to be understood and that those to be taught were capable of understanding?

One of the answers to our present-day situation was given by Jesus a long time ago in **Matthew 13:15**:

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Jesus placed the blame for not understanding squarely at the feet of those who heard the teaching.

By Aude Mckee

They closed their own eyes, stopped their own ears, and hardened their own hearts so that they did not understand!

Incidentally, had you thought about the fact that if a thing is understood by two individuals, they necessarily will understand it alike? If two people disagree on something, one or the other (or both) did not understand!

If one person "understands" baptism to be sprinkling, and another "understands" it to be pouring, then neither of the two really understands what the New Testament teaches. Even the Greek word for baptism means "immersion."

In other words, it is impossible to "understand" baptism incorrectly. So if you and I disagree over something the Bible teaches, we both need to keep studying. When we both really understand we will agree.

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|--|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| Friday 6-8 PM 1st - 6th Grade Class | | | | Friday 6:30-8:30 PM 7th - 12th Grade Class | | | |
| Sick | | | | December Birthdays | | | |
| Joey Stephens (Anna Stalling's Uncle) | Owen Mauldin (Seth and Summer Mauldin's Son) | Frank Hand (Laura Humphrey's dad) | Sandlyn Fultz (Davis Fultz's Sister) | 2 - Brady Peek | News and Notes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> - Please remember Glenn Weeks, Caralise Hunt's father, in your prayers. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> - David Hartsell will have a spinal tap on Monday at UAB. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> - Bob Simpson will have additional hip surgery on Thursday. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> - Joel Black has one more IV treatment. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> - Congratulations to our graduates: Seth Buchanon Megan McMurray Hannah Morris Kerri Pender | | |
| Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters) | Don Lanier (Father of Greg Lanier) | David Hartsell (Holly and Brad's Father) | Jeffery Miller (Friend of Walker Davis) | 4 - Justin Padgett | | | |
| Emma Hettinger (William Herd's Mother) | Neal May (Manna Jones' Mother) | Roger Whatley (Daphene Whatley's son) | Andrew Hagewood (Friend of Sarah Norman) | 5 - Rusty Weldon | | | |
| Pat Webb (Friend of Jared Johnson) | Quinton Addison (April Jerkins Grandfather) | Diane Hudson (Josh Hudson's grandmother) | Arline Harkrider (Nichole Pender's Grandmother) | 10 - Kyle Gibson | | | |
| Gerald White (Christopher, Anna and Wesley's Father) | Don Meadows (Ashley Miller's step-father) | Emily Stallings (Anna's sister) | Madi Wise (Friend of the Robert's) | 11 - Will Holcomb | | | |
| Marty Meeks, Russell Dickerson (Toni Herd's Nephews) | Frances Fultz (Davis Fultz's grandmother) | Judy Nichols (Suzanne's Mother) | Ann Scalf (Hannah Morris' grandmother) | 13 - John Mark Henderson | | | |
| | | | | 18 - Tin-Yau Tam | | | |
| | | | | 20 - Chris Zeanah | | | |
| | | | | 21 - Manna Jones | | | |
| | | | | 21 - Holly Johnson | | | |
| | | | | 22 - William Herd | | | |
| | | | | 22 - Laura Abell | | | |
| | | | | 24 - Jessica Yates | | | |
| | | | | 25 - Dustin Marsh | | | |
| | | | | 28 - Turner Stephens | | | |
| | | | | 29 - Joel Dembowski | | | |
| | | | | 29 - Christian McGee | | | |
| | | | | 30 - Holly Law | | | |

The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. **(Matthew 5:16)**

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Thoughts to Ponder

It's up to me to use it.
I must suffer if I lose it.
Give account if I abuse it.
Just a tiny little minute,
But eternity is in it.

Elders
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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES
Sunday
Bible Class9:30 AM
Worship10:20 AM
Evening Worship 6:00 PM
Wednesday
Bible Classes.....7:00 PM
E-Mail:
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Larry Rouse
Evangelist and Editor

Is It Nothing to You?

By Bill Lambert

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the LORD hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger."
(Lamentations 1:12)

Many have referred to Jeremiah as the "weeping" prophet because of his plaintive pleading with the people of God to forsake their ungodliness and return to Jehovah. God sent him to his people to deliver unto them God's warnings, God's impending judgments, and God's appeal to them to return to the ways of righteousness. In the passage above, the words are used as if the people as a whole were speaking from their desolation. These words do not indicate any intention to change, but simply a bewailing of their condition.

God Was Not at Fault

Their wounds were self-inflicted. Their sorrow was a result of their own ungodliness. The real problem at this point was that they really did not see their true condition, and much less did they acknowledge any misbehavior. They were much like those so often depicted as

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drunks or addicts who do not think they have a problem. As these often shrug off any warnings or pleas from those who care about them, so did Israel reject the attempts of the Lord, through the prophets, to call them away from their sin. Insensible to their condition, they regarded the true prophets as nuisances, mere pests, who just wanted to cause trouble. In their self-delusion, they perceived the work of the prophets as that of catering to their whims. Feeding their self-deception, they steeped themselves in pretense. Moreover,

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they required of the prophets that they not speak of God's displeasure, but speak smooth things, prophesy deceits, so they could drift along on their placid sea without guilt. **(Isaiah 30:9-11)** If a prophet should refuse to cooperate, he met stiff resistance, and put his life in jeopardy. Jesus accused the Jews of his day of having the same attitude that their ancestors had. Their fathers killed the prophets and stoned those who brought the word of God to them. **(Matthew 23:29-37)**

The Jews were indeed in a lamentable state, but they were bemoaning the results of their ungodliness, not the ungodliness itself. Had they been able to see themselves as God saw them, they could have repented, changed their course, and God would have forgiven them.

Beware of Drifting

We have one of the same problems today that Israel had. We fail to see that "small" departures from the way of righteousness are, nevertheless, departures. Every move in that direction is a move away from God. We should just recognize that God knows all about us and he knows what is best for us.

Apostasy rarely occurs on a grand scale, so it is difficult to detect that it is even taking place. As a case in point, I once read of a statement from some elders to the flock among them concerning the appointment of deacons. They were about to appoint some deacons and they would be male and female. They said that the change in the Sunday morning worship service would be initiated "gradually." This is how Satan works in such situations...gradually. So slowly that it is almost imperceptible. That is why we are warned to give constant attention to the truth that we have learned, for inattention will bring about "drifting." **(Hebrews 2:1)** Minute adjustments in our course must be made as we monitor our relationship with God and his word. Such can make all the difference in our destiny.

Shades of Gnosticism

Those who fancy themselves the "enlightened ones" among us would have us think that we have just had it all wrong. We just thought that we understood the teaching of Jesus concerning marriage, divorce, and remarriage. Now, we are told, depending upon who is doing the talking, just about anybody who wants to divorce his mate may do so, for whatever reason, and then marry anybody he wants to, with God's approval. That will score points with a lot of people, particularly those who are in a questionable marriage, or who have close ties with someone who is. There seems to be a pattern among those who have felt the need to "re-think" these matters. They have a "vested interest" in the outcome of their investigation. We all like to think that those we love are doing what is right, and if we are not careful, we may try to stretch truth to "fit" the circumstances. This does not change the truth, but feelings are soothed. We must realize that eternity is at stake and no earthly relationship is worth missing heaven for. **(Matthew 16:26)**

Some would have preachers "soft-pedal" the truth and not be specific. After all, we are told, no one is perfect. One person, disturbed at the "kid gloves" approach, pointed out that some are trying to take the fire out of hell as the sectarians have sought to take the water out of baptism. There is no excuse for deliberately brow-beating someone, but no apology is needed for the plain presentation of truth. The Lord and the apostles spoke plain truth and directly to the situation at hand. How dare we to presume upon improving upon the manner of their preaching. The Bible teaching is straightforward. Let us be straightforward in our dealing with it.

Time to Wake Up!

It is time to awaken from our slumber and get back to the basics. We should see the symptoms of departure in doctrine and practice. As we said before, eternity is at stake...for us, for our children, and for those whom we seek to help.



Flee Fornication

By Bob West

In the first place, "love" never justifies a violation of God's law. Secondly, if one person really loved the other, as the Bible uses the term, he or she would not want that person to do that which alienates one from God.

Everyone can see that as the standards of morality decline in society, this has an impact among those who are children of God. That the practice of fornication has increased among young people in recent years, is a fact that few would deny. There are no "magical formulas" for parents and young folks with which to solve the problem. All we can do is remember that the Bible is God's word, and the practice of fornication is severely condemned therein. Read with care such passages as **1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21; Colossians 3:5-6**, etc. The fact that the words "fornication," "adultery," and related terms are used so frequently in the Bible should give us a clue as to the seriousness of the subject. These words are found no less than 92 times in the New Testament. By comparison, the words "murder," "killing," etc., are found only 32 times. That, in itself, should tell the sincere child of God why we should "flee fornication." (See also 1 Corinthians 6:18; 2 Timothy 2:22)

But, in spite of these plain statements regarding this sin, some claiming to be Christians continue their immorality. There are three subtle and widely-accepted arguments in defense of fornication which Satan has made familiar to all.

One of these runs something like this: "After all, a sin is a sin; fornication is no worse than any other sin. Since nobody is perfect, why be so concerned about this particular sin?" We reply by first observing that, of course, so far as God is concerned, 'sin is sin.' All sins condemn (Romans 6:23). But these facts should in no way lessen our abhorrence of fornication. It would be about like a Doctor who would suggest that we shouldn't be

concerned about preventing heart disease, since there are so many other diseases which will kill us just as dead! There is a subtle error here which appears to be overlooked: While all violations of God's law are equally serious, so far as God is concerned, that is not true with regard to man! For instance both murder and lying are sins. However, I would surely prefer for a

someone to lie against me rather than murder me! The point is, that the consequence of some sins, in this life, are more disastrous than others. Such is the case with fornication. Right out front, it involves two people. In fact, it could well involve more than two, if one or both of the fornicators are married. I can cite you more than one example where a single act of fornication has affected the lives of literally dozens of people in the wake of broken homes, broken hearts, bitterness, guilt-related neurosis, etc. The consequences of this sin cannot be minimized.

Another equally deceptive argument which tends to minimize fornication, offers "love" as an excuse. The entertainment media have so successfully sold the idea that fornication is acceptable as long as two people "really love each other," that even some Christians have swallowed it. In the first place, "love" never justifies a violation of God's law. Secondly, if one person really loved the other, as the Bible uses the term, he or she would not want that person to do that which alienates one from God. And, thirdly, the argument confuses love with lust. Love is selfless, in that it puts the interests of the other person before all other considerations. Lust is selfish, in that it uses the other person for personal gratification.

