

The Bible: Our Daily “Bread”

The Bible is God’s message to humankind, a kind of “guide book” about the way to live one’s life to the glory of the Creator, and for his/her own benefit and the benefit of his/her beloved. The Bible itself is a miracle! It was written in segments over sixteen centuries in different social settings and in three different languages. Its writers were different in character, talents and education: from illiterate to educated, from slaves to freemen, from peasants to kings. The Bible is written in various literary forms: in poetry and prose, in prophecies, allegories, epistles, sermons and dialogues. Its writers were not in opposition to each other, as one might suppose, but in miraculous accord. The Bible is truly the book of all books, the Word of God!

But the Bible is not just a book of rules and regulations, rather it is the book of life. It contains reports of experiences of those who heard and obeyed God’s voice, as well as of those who heard it, neglected it and continued with doing their own will. This also represents the great life-giving power of the Word of God. Its applicability has no equal because it carries the strength to change the inner person, the part of a human’s being created according to the image of God. As there is only one sun shining on our material world, so is the Bible the source of spiritual light.

Therefore the Bible must not remain unreachable, unknown and hidden. Its power is not in the “sanctity of written words”, but in the miraculous and sanctifying work of the living Word in a person’s heart and mind. The Bible does not leave a person impassive.

“... So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it” (Isa 55:11). The Bible announces all that needs to be known in order for a person to be saved and to live out the Christian life. “His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness” (2 Pet 1:3). The Word is above all “living and active” (Heb 4:12); it is creative, and creation is truly the way God chooses to speak.

In both ancient and recent history, the Bible bothered some people. As the light bothers those who do evil in the darkness (Jn 3:19-20), so the light of God’s Word that uncompromisingly clears the way for the Truth has not always been desired and welcomed.

The history of the church actually represents a sequence of more or less successful attempts to evoke people in their need to return to the standards of the Word of God. The fact that there are a considerable number of Christian confessions and various movements can not be assigned solely to the rebellious human

nature, rather the reason should be sought in the very essence that each of those structures has interwoven into their call: "Let us find the Truth and return to it!"

The writers of the New Testament, inspired by the Holy Spirit, completed the Word of God, the canon. They repeatedly warn of the fact that the divine revelation is perfect. On the basis of these warnings, it is obvious that the Bible is the only source of truth, and it represents an authority for life. No other religious writings and regulations, no new prophets, changes or additions to the Scriptures are needed as a supplement to the complete and perfect Word of God.

Jesus clearly positioned himself regarding the relationship between tradition and the Word of God. No human tradition, regardless of how old or convincing, can replace what God has originally said in his Word. One can not come to know God any other way but through hearing, believing and the obediently accepting his Word in daily life.

Where, then, do the countless and various reactions to the Bible come from? Humankind is fallible, and its discerning power is imperfect. There is nothing written in such a way that each person at any time could understand it equally. This applies to the various forms of faith confessions formed by people throughout history. Misunderstandings, in this case, are no rarity. One person misunderstands another, often even him/herself, therefore it is also possible to misunderstand God. This is not God's fault, but the human's fault. Studying God's Word requires ultimate honesty and wisdom.

Although God inspired the Bible, he does not always inspire its interpretation. Sometimes the best and most godly people have had very different interpretations, often even misconceptions, although they prayerfully strove for a complete devotion to God. One of the main reasons that divisions are created among Christians is to be sought in arbitrary interpretations of the Bible.

The most important reason that should motivate us toward a correct and substantial study, teaching and life application of the Bible is the realization that a proper understanding is the prerequisite for the achievement of human salvation. The applicability of the Bible is unquestionable. Instead of asking, "Do we need the Bible?", it is better to ask ourselves, "What would we do if we did not have it?"

For, the Bible is a window of hope in the dungeon of the world through which we can see freedom.

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