

## UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

Text: Ephesians 5:17

INTRO: The Bible, for many years, has been the best selling book on the market. Whether it is the best read book is highly questionable. That it is **not** understood by many who read it is without question. In fact many Bible readers complain, "I just can't understand the Bible." In this lesson, we will consider some common-sense rules that will help those who read to understand.

### I. READING FOR THE PURPOSE OF UNDERSTANDING WILL BE A GREAT HELP. Acts 17:11.

- A. Not to "prove" a preconceived theory (Sadducees)
- B. Not to ensnare someone (Pharisees)
- C. Not to justify self like lawyer in Luke 10:29.
- D. Seek to develop a love & a yearning for the truth. Nothing hinders study more than an unwillingness to accept truth that is not pleasing to us.

2 Thess 2:11-12, And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

### II. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE OLD TESTAMENT & THE NEW TESTAMENT MUST BE RECOGNIZED.

Gal 3:24-25, Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

Col 2:14, Having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.

Eph 2:14-17, For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and

that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

III. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN ALIEN & A CITIZEN IN GOD'S KINGDOM MUST BE RECOGNIZED.

A. Plan of salvation for those who have not yet become disciples of Jesus: Acts 2:14, 36-41, 37

B. Conditions of forgiveness for disciples who sin: Acts 8:22; 1 John 1:9.

C. We have different responsibilities toward those who are fellow Christians and those who are not, Gal. 6:10.

1 Cor 5:9-11, I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. But now I have written to you not to keep company with anyone named a brother, who is sexually immoral, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or an extortioner--not even to eat with such a person.

IV. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE WORK OF AN INDIVIDUAL AND THAT OF A CONGREGATION MUST BE OBSERVED.

A. An individual can engage in any honest endeavor to earn money to pay his bills, support his family, give to the needy, etc. Eph. 4:28. The church is to be financed by the free-will offerings of its members, 1 Cor. 16:2.

B. Christians have a duty to try to settle differences that arise between them so that the church does not have to get involved. If they, as individuals are not able to do so, the church then must take responsibility.

Matt 18:15-17, "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he

hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

- C. Individuals have a responsibility in alms-giving for which the church as a unit must not be charged.

James 1:27, Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

Gal 6:7-10, Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

1 Tim 5:16, If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows.

NOTE: There are 9 passages which involve congregational benevolence and without exception, it was always directed toward those who were faithful Christians. [Acts 2; 4; 6; 11; 1 Cor. 16; 2 Cor. 8; 2 Cor. 9; Rom. 15; 1 Tim. 5.

- V. EVERY PASSAGE MUST BE READ & UNDERSTOOD IN THE LIGHT OF ITS CONTEXT, AND OTHER VERSES ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

This is the most important rule of understanding any communication, written or oral.

Highway 29, Liberty Hill, TX, April 10, 1963  
Cox Springs, TX, July 31, 1963  
Oatmeal, TX, November 17, 1963  
Jonestown, TX, February 17, 1963  
Springhill, LA, August 22, 1971  
La Porte, TX, October 2, 1977  
Susquehanna, Marietta, PA, April 7, 2002