

Can People See the Bible Alike?

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It is obvious to the most casual observer that people do not understand the Bible alike. Besides the two major divisions of Christendom (Catholicism and Protestantism), which claim to follow the Bible, these are subdivided into countless other groups. This division is the result of a failure to unanimously understand the Bible. But this failure does not necessarily mean people **cannot** see it alike.

Can the Bible be understood by all alike? Moses, speaking by inspiration, taught that it could. He plainly warned Israel to "keep the commandments" without addition or subtraction, (Deu. 4:2), necessarily implying that they understand them. Jesus taught that men could understand His Words, warning that men who reject His Words will be judged by His Words (John 12:48). Jesus prayed that those who believe on Him might be one, not divided, just as He and the Father are One (in purpose, in will, and certainly, in doctrine) (17:20-21). This accomplishment requires that men understand God's Word in the same way.

Paul, an inspired apostle begged the people in Corinth, by the authority of Christ, to:

1. All speak the same thing
2. Let no divisions be among them
3. Be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment (1 Cor. 1:10)

This implies both the possibility and the necessity of a unanimous understanding of God's Word to be pleasing to Him. To the Ephesians, Paul wrote: "Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17). We must obey Christ in order to receive eternal salvation (Heb. 5:8-9). How can men know they are obeying Him if they "understand" Him in dozens of different and conflicting ways?

Did Moses demand an impossibility of Israel? Did Jesus require and pray for something impossible (all the while knowing it was so)? Did Paul beg Christians to do something they were incapable of doing? Are we held responsible for obeying commands we can't even understand, with the penalty of being lost if we don't? **No, a thousand times no!** The Word of God is consistently depicted as a **revelation** (that which makes plain what had formerly been hidden). Even a casual reading of the statements found in Romans 16:25-26, 1 Corinthians 2:10-13, Galatians 1:12, Ephesians 3:2-5, et al., shows this to be so.

God addressed the Bible to the human mind and intended for all to understand it alike. The idea that ten different people can get ten different and conflicting meanings from the same verse of Scripture and all of them be equally valid is ludicrous. Only in religion do men employ such twisted logic in an effort to rationalize their own pet doctrines and preconceptions and to justify their **God-dishonoring** religious division.

Either God so addressed the Bible to the minds of men that it can be understood, or He did not. If He did not, we have a serious dilemma. Either He was powerless to do so, or He did not want to do so. If He had not the power to make His will understandable, we cannot respect Him, for He claims omnipotence. If He did not want us to understand His will, but requires us to understand and obey it or be damned, then He is a sadistic fiend—equally unacceptable. However, if a loving, benevolent God does address man through the Bible as the revelation of Himself and His perfect will, which tells men how they can someday live with Him forever, then it necessarily follows that men not only **can** understand the Bible and understand it alike, but they **must**. Indeed, when men truly understand the Bible, they understand it alike!

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