

Prayer List

Gene
Judy
The Williams' Family
Ophelia

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 9:50 a.m.
Assembly 6:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Brad Behrens - bradbehrens@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Michael Odom - MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com
Ernie Sprinkel - preacher@pinolechurchofchrist.com

This Week's Question:

What Israelite sinned in the wilderness by taking a Midianite woman as his harlot companion?

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Nehemiah - Nehemiah 1:6

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What Is Written?

Ed Harrell

In Luke 10:25 a lawyer asked Jesus the question, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus replied: "What is written in the law? How readest thou?" In that brief exchange is established a principle of biblical exegesis sublime in its simplicity. The principle was immediately challenged by the lawyer in Luke 10, but in the parable of the Good Samaritan which follows Jesus insisted that the Scriptures answered the question and that the answer could be understood.

To be a Christian is to acknowledge that God's word is the depository of all truth, given "by inspiration of God" and able to "thoroughly furnish unto all good works" (2 Timothy 3:16-17). It is to believe that the faith has been "once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). Whatever other questions a believer may have, he can hardly honor the Scriptures as the revelation of God and not believe it adequate to do all that God intended.

The second assumption implicit in Jesus' exchange with the lawyer is a belief in the innate capacity of man to understand the scriptural revelation. Jesus promised, "Seek, and ye shall find" (Matthew 7:7). The highway that the Lord provides is so clearly marked that "the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein" (Isaiah 35:8). Indeed, Jesus observed that while the "wise and prudent" might overlook the wisdom of God's revelations, He had "revealed them unto babes" (Matthew 11:25).

But the question is how? How can we use this body of divine revelation which is given to guide us? How can we tell what is binding? Theologians, philosophers and debaters have constructed complicated exegetical systems to tell us how we must read the Bible. At worst, their systems are convoluted, pretentious and confusing. At best, they are interesting and useful attempts to describe the marvelous workings of the human mind. Men do not create truth; they discover it. If we could construct a perfect logical model (which we cannot) for interpreting Scripture, we would not have discovered the key to biblical interpretation, we would have succeeded in describing the common sense capacity of every man to seek and organize information.

It must be so. Else scriptural interpretation becomes the property of the "scholar," the "expert." The Bible teaches the opposite. To understand God's directions one needs only to be a human being—with a "pure heart" and a "poor spirit."

All human beings habitually use their common sense to find answers for questions—often to reconstruct the past.

There is no profound mystery about how we do it. We seek all the information we can find—instructions and examples from others' experiences—and we logically construct our answers. If I am writing a historical description of Arkansas in the 1890's, that is how I proceed.

So it is with restoring New Testament Christianity. First, we ask questions, understanding that we should "avoid" those which are "foolish and unlearned" (2 Timothy 2:23). We must use the Bible to determine whether or not our questions are relevant. We believe that the questions asked in this theme section are important; generally, each article makes clear why. It does not take a profound reading of the Scriptures, it seems to me, to determine that God cares about what men do when they worship; that the church was designed by the mind of God; that Christians are called to a life of personal holiness.

If the questions are good ones, we commend you to the corpus of divine wisdom to find the answers. When you find all that the Bible says, that is God's answer—all He says and all we need. There is no profound secret as to how to interpret the revelation; there is an eternal significance in whether we try.

It seems to me that if we spent as much time trying to find what's right about one another as we do trying to find what's wrong, we'd have so many friends we wouldn't have anybody else to fuss with. From "That's Life" by Dee Bowman