
Words of Truth

You Have To Approach The Scriptures Honestly

By: Brian A. Yeager

Many, if not most, of the people I talk to about the Scriptures already have their minds made up on what they believe. They all will say that they want to learn, but their actions say the opposite. On my website I have several things written before someone can email me. Notice some of what is written: "I get many emails from people who want to 'prove their point'. I am not interested in email debates (II Timothy 2:23). I get many emails from people who ask questions, but they've already settled on another answer. If you ask me a question I will provide a Bible answer (I Peter 3:15; 4:11). If you have already concluded what 'you believe', don't waste my time or yours by asking a question (Proverbs 21:2). If you are writing and asking questions, I will at some time offer to study with you over the phone or in person (depending on where you live). If all you are looking for is someone to write and waste time with, join Facebook or something" (<http://www.wordsoftruth.net/contact.php>).

Even with that statement, I get tons of questions where people want to argue their points rather than seek to find the truth. For example, a man wrote me and asked this question: "What is wrong with being a sponsoring church?" I responded with the following words: "Thank you for your question. If you are looking for the truth and not an argument of human logic, I trust we shall have a productive discussion. This matter, as well as all matters, comes down to the question of authority. We must have authority from the Lord for all that we say and do (Leviticus 10:1-2, Deuteronomy 4:2, Deuteronomy 12:32, Deuteronomy 29:29, II Samuel 6:6-7, II Samuel 7:1-7, Job 32:8, Proverbs 30:5-6, Isaiah 8:20, Jeremiah 7:30-31, Matthew 4:4, Matthew 12:46-50, Matthew 15:1-9, Matthew 17:5, Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 6:46, Luke 11:28, John 14:15, John 14:23-24, Galatians 1:6-12, Ephesians 5:10, Colossians 3:17, I Thessalonians 5:21, II Timothy 1:13, James 1:21-25, II John 9, and Revelation 22:18-19). When you examine the New Testament you find that churches sent support to Gospel preachers without any sponsoring church arrangement (Philippians 4:13-16). The sponsoring church arrangement is wrong because we have no authority for it. Please don't respond to this email with human reasoning" (Proverbs 14:12, Proverbs 16:25, Proverbs 21:2, and I Corinthians 4:6)".

So, how would you guess that this man responded? Here is what he wrote: "Dear Brian, I appreciate your response but I don't see how you proved anything. If one church can send money to a preacher, why can't one church send money to another church to send to that preacher? Since one church can send to another to help that preacher why can't a third, fourth, and fifth church send to that sponsoring church? If banks are used why can't churches be used as banks. It is a matter of semantics, not authority."

I did not respond to this man because it was clear that he did not have an honest approach to the Scriptures. He never once even attempted to consult the Scriptures for his false ideas. Since I did not respond, he has written me and called me a "coward". He has written me and said that I cannot

answer his arguments, which to him, proves he has the truth. This type of person wrote with a question, but already had his mind made up. The Bible teaches us not to engage in discussions with individuals such as this (Proverbs 9:8, Proverbs 29:9, Matthew 7:6, and Titus 3:9-11; cf. Proverbs 15:10). When you ask a question but have already decided not to hear the answer; you're not being honest. You have to have an honest heart to learn the truth.

An Honest Heart Is Necessary For The Word Of God To Take Effect

Notice what kind of heart it takes for the word of God to be effective: *"A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock are they, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, **which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience**" (Luke 8:5-15).*

It is with the heart that man believes the truth (Romans 10:10). We think by using our hearts (Matthew 9:4, Matthew 15:18-19, Mark 2:6, Mark 7:21, Luke 5:22, Acts 8:22, and Hebrews 4:12). In addition to these two things we do with our hearts (though many more could be listed), we have to understand that we obey God from our hearts (Deuteronomy 30:2 and Romans 6:17). That means our hearts must be pure for our faith to be sincere (I Timothy 1:5). When people have settled in their hearts to do their own will, they are not going to do the Lord's will (Acts 28:27). You find people like Ezra who had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it (Ezra 7:10).

On the other hand, and much more common, you find people who just want to do their own will. These people are not willing to scripturally consider anything. Rather, they reject God's word so that they can keep their own traditions (Mark 7:1-9). When you try to teach them, they are full of human wisdom and argumentation rather than a desire to learn the truth (Matthew 22:15-46). For the word of God to be effective man has to depart from his own way of thinking (Isaiah 55:6-9).

Conclusion

We all know how frustrating it is to try and teach someone who doesn't have an honest heart. Therefore, let's never be one of those people. We know that we must set aside everything and have a "God said it, I will do it mentality" (James 1:21-25). Be honest enough to fix your life if you are wrong rather than trying to justify your errors (Luke 10:25-37, Luke 18:9-14, and Romans 10:1-3).