

Trends

Americans systematically overestimate their knowledge and ability - on a massive scale. The 'overconfidence effect' measures the difference between what people really know and what they think they know. What's surprising is that 'experts' in a given field suffer even more from the overconfidence effect than laypeople do. For example, if asked to forecast oil prices in five years' time, an economics professor will be as wide of the mark as a zookeeper will. However, the professor will offer his forecast with certitude . . . In a survey, 93% of the U.S. students estimated themselves to be "above average" . . . and 68% of teachers rated themselves in the top 25% for teaching ability.

- via Psychology Today

Galatians 6:3: "For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself."

Sentence Sermons

"When a man who is honestly mistaken hears the truth, he will either cease being mistaken or cease being honest." —Unknown

Luke 8:15: "But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience."

News & Notes

Please pray for those mentioned in the announcements after services and others listed on the bulletin board in the foyer of the church building.

Pray for all the members at Westside! Please pray for Susan Ferrell and her family as she continues to recover from brain tumor surgery. Also, please pray for her husband Shawn and their three boys: Samuel, Micah, and Eli.

Continue prayers for Jennifer Shorter (Garner) a member at Knightsville who is recovering well from her brain tumor surgery. Also, please pray for Elias Dispennett (age 8), son of Rob Dispennett, Knightsville's preacher, who has Type 1 diabetes.

Please pray for my daughter Dawne. She was born with bilateral cleft lip and palate. She has had many surgeries over the years. On July 13th she is scheduled for a major jaw revision surgery at Riley Hospital in Indianapolis. Sherry and I would sincerely appreciate prayers on her behalf.

Pray for the college students as they are now on summer break. Jonathan will be attending IUPUI law school this fall and Rachel plans to return to IU.

Please keep sister Wilma in your prayers! She gives all of us so much encouragement! God bless her and Virginia! Remember both of them in your prayers.

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Please direct questions and comments to the editor.

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"Lord, to whom shall we go? You
have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



Are the Scriptures Sufficient?

Ryan Thomas

Was Jesus just a man? What must I do to be saved? Can I be a member of just any church and get to heaven? Do I really have to be baptized? These are just a few questions that are of monumental importance to each and every living soul on the earth today and must be answered. But who or what can provide the answers we so desperately need? We know "it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps" (Jer. 10:23) and as a result we must not and do err exceedingly when we look to ourselves for the answers. So where can we go and learn what God would have of us? The answer is simple; to his holy word, the Bible. The Bible tell us "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be **complete, thoroughly** equipped for every good work." (2 Tim. 3:16-17). How simple, how perfect, how complete! Everything we need to know to please God is found in one place, the Bible!

We could end this article right here, however, there are some who are not content with just going by the Bible. Many have sought to find something more. Some claim to receive special revelations directly from God Himself; some write creeds and catechisms; some impose the decisions of councils, synods, and conventions on their fellow man. The Bible says in 2 Peter 1:3, "According as his divine power hath given us **all** things that pertain to life and godliness." Where does that leave Vatican decrees, the various denominational creeds and confessions of faith, the book of Mormon, and the innumerable visions, councils and revelations of men? Well, if the Bible contains **all** things that pertain to **life and godliness** these other things must pertain to **death and ungodliness**! If the scriptures have the power to furnish us "unto **all** good works," then these others must furnish us unto **evil** works! We do not seek to be rude or unkind, but it would be impossible for an honest person to reach any other conclusion (1 Pet. 4:11). We know from Jude 3 that God's word has been delivered to us "once for all," that is one time for all time. His word is the only thing that can lead us to eternal salvation (Acts

20:32, Jas. 1:21) and the only thing to which we will be held accountable in the day of judgment (Jn. 12:48, Rom. 2:16). Let us be content to simply go by the Bible and have it be our only guide (Psa. 109:105, 130).

Is It Wrong To Argue Scripture?

Ryan & Craig Thomas

Many may be surprised that some of the topics appearing in our column will involve identifying and refuting religious error. Our words may not be pleasing nor palatable to all, especially in today's society bent on enforcing it's distorted standards of "political correctness." However, as we cover such topics we "beseech thee to hear us patiently" (Acts 26:3). God's word commands us to "expose" error (Eph. 5:11) and "believe not" every religious teacher. In fact, we must "test" every teacher "whether they are of God" for "many false prophets" wear "sheep's clothing" when "inwardly they are ravening wolves" (1 Jn. 4:1; Matt. 7:15). Too much is at stake (Matt. 16:26) not to speak out. With this in mind, it constrains us to address the question presented in our title, "Is It Wrong To Argue Scripture?"

1) **What Does It Mean To "Argue" Scripture?** When we speak of arguing scripture we are simply referring to a discussion in which all views of an issue are examined openly, fairly, and calmly in the light of what the Bible teaches (Acts 18:24-26; 28:14-24). We are not seeking a knock down, drag out fight where sides attempt to annihilate one another. The "weapons of our warfare are not carnal" (2 Cor. 10:4), but consist of "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17). Our strongest desire is that all, even those who would oppose the truth, be convinced of their error, repent, turn to the Lord, and be saved eternally in heaven (2 Tim. 2:24-26; Jas. 5:19-20). Given the import of these issues, we welcome any scriptural challenge to our teaching (Acts 17:11). For only the truth of God's word and our willingness to obey it can set us free from sin and lead us to heaven (Jn. 8:32; Acts 20:32; Matt. 7:21-23).

2) **Should It Be Done?** The Bible clearly teaches that error and false teaching will arise (2 Tim. 4:3-4; 2 Pet. 2:1-2) and we must be alert for such (Acts 20:28-32). Thus, we have a God-given responsibility to defend the truth (Phil. 1:17; Jude 3) and warn those preaching and practicing error (1 Tim. 1:3). If we fail this responsibility we will be held accountable (Ezek. 3:16-21). This is why the Old Testament prophets (Isa. 58:1; Jer. 1:10; Ezek. 6:11), the apostles (Acts 20:26-31; 2 Pet. 3:1ff), and the Lord Himself (Matt. 7:15; 16:6, 11-12) preached as they did. For example, Jesus and Paul often debated, disputed, and reasoned with those who were in error (Matt. 22:29; Acts 17:2-3, 17; 18:4, 19; 19:8). Those who shun such discussions give error an unfair advantage. For if error goes uncorrected it will "spread like cancer" (2 Tim. 2:17) not stopping until it has destroyed all that is pure and holy. Hopefully, all can see the need for these discussions and that they may be used to strengthen our faith and build us up in the way that is right and cannot be wrong (Col. 2:4-8; 2 Thess. 2:2-17).

Can We Understand The Scriptures?

Ryan & Craig Thomas

During the past weeks we have examined some basic and fundamental principles regarding the Scriptures. Today we would like to introduce another basic principle concerning the Scriptures that is critical to the faith of true believers in God and His holy word: The Scriptures can be understood. Many believe man cannot understand the Bible and those who claim to understand are denounced as arrogant, haughty and high-minded. Furthermore, many say it is impossible to expect everyone to understand the Scriptures alike. In order to put to rest these vain philosophies of man we need look no further than plain common sense and the Scriptures themselves.

In Matthew 7:21 Jesus said the kingdom of heaven is reserved for those who "do the will of the father which is in heaven." However, common sense tells us that before a person could ever do God's will he or she must first understand what that will is. This is why in Ephesians 5:17 Paul said, "Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is." (NKJV) If one fails to understand the will of God which is revealed to us in the Scriptures, and obey that will, one cannot be saved (Matt. 7:21-23; Heb. 5:8-9). The only way for a person to understand God's will is through the study of His word, the Scriptures (Prov. 2:1-5; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:15-17; Rev. 1:3). Amazingly, Paul even said that through reading the Scriptures we can gain the same level of knowledge he possessed (Eph. 3:3-4; 2 Tim. 2:7).

But not only can the Scriptures be understood, they can be understood alike. We learn in John 17:17, 1 Thessalonians 2:13, and Revelation 19:9 that the word of God is **truth**. Truth, by its very nature, is exclusive and unique. To know the truth of any matter automatically eliminates every other alternative. For example, when we learned in kindergarten that 1 plus 1 was 2 that automatically excluded 3, 4, and 5. When we learned in English that a noun was either a person, place, or thing that automatically excluded it being a verb, adjective, or preposition. Everyone understands this universal and simple concept when Math and English are considered, but sadly cast it aside when it comes to religion. Dear reader, if we understand and accept the Scriptures as truth, consistency demands us to accept what is intrinsic to all truth: Truth cannot have a multiplicity of "understandings." Thus, if we understand the truth our teaching must be able to withstand the examination and scrutiny of the Scriptures (Acts 17:11; 1 Pet. 4:11). It behooves us, therefore, to look

no further than the Bible for religious guidance (Psa. 119:105). This should be one of the most comforting and appealing aspects of Christianity!

"But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?"

1 John 3:17