

The Old Paths

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“A Lack Of Information Or Application?”

Jarrod Jacobs

The Bible is a unique book. While not a science book, it is scientifically accurate. Though it is not a geography book, it is geographically accurate. It is mathematically, archaeologically, astronomically, and historically true. In addition to this, we know the main focus of the Bible is the redemption of man’s soul (Gen. 3:15; Lk. 19:10). Therefore, it is a spiritually focused book. Is there any wonder that the Bible is referred to as “The Book of Books”?

Within the pages of inspiration, we learn that God has given to us “*all things that pertain to life and godliness*” (II Pet. 1:3). The divinely-inspired Scriptures are “*profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works*” (II Tim. 3:16-17). In other words, God’s word completely equips us in this life. His word guides us by pointing out where we are wrong, by telling us what to do to be right, and what to do to stay right! Can we ask for more than this?

The word Christ spoke ought to take first place in our lives because it is this word that will judge us one day (Jn. 12:48). Knowing these things are true, is it any wonder that Peter would, by inspiration, write to Christians and say, “*If any man speak, let him*

speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen” (I Pet. 4:11).

I cite the passages above to make it clear that God has provided all the **information** necessary for us to get from earth to Heaven! The Bible has been “*once and for all delivered to the saints*” (Jude 3). The word is true (Jn. 17:17); and the gospel will save us (Rom. 1:16). The question before us now is whether or not we will apply the information God has given us to our lives! Jesus said the man who hears and does is a wise man (Matt. 7:24-27). James wrote that a man who hears and does is a “*blessed man*” (Jas. 1:25). He further wrote that “*faith without works is dead*” (Jas. 2:17, 20, 26). Jesus said the ones who will see Heaven are those who “*do the will of my father which is in Heaven*” (Matt. 7:21). In other words, when it comes to the will of God, we today do not lack the **information**. Sadly, what we lack is the **application!**

Throughout history, this fact is what has separated God’s children from the world! Many people have heard God’s word in various ways. In the book of Exodus, we see Pharaoh heard God’s word, but “*hardened his heart*” (Ex. 7:14, 22, 8:15, 19, 32, 9:7, etc.), and was punished as a result of his pride.

Others who knew the truth but refused to obey were many of the “*chief rulers*” in Christ’s day. They knew who Christ was, but refused to confess Him because they feared what the Pharisees would say (Jn. 12:42-43). Yet another who fits this description of one who knew the truth and failed to apply it was Agrippa. He knew the truth, but would not confess Christ, nor be baptized (Acts 26:27-28). This list could be extended, but the point is that these people were not ignorant of the truth! Yet, they were condemned because they did not act upon what they knew! In like manner, we see that II Thessalonians 1:6-9 reveals that one day the Lord will return and “*take vengeance*” on folks who “*know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” In other words, there are going to be some condemned for their willful ignorance, and then there will be some condemned for not applying what they knew!

What about us? We have the Bible at our fingertips. Yes, some know more than others, but is this *really* what is stopping us from being what God would have us to be? Is this really what is stopping us from obeying the Lord and living as He wants us to live? I suggest that it is not so much a matter of **information**, but it is a matter of **application!** A statement a dear brother used to make fits well here. He used to say, “It is not what you know, but how you feel about it.” Amen! Some just do not want to do the things Christ has said! Shame on us for being that way! Let us listen to the Lord, who tells us to be obedient to Him (Jn. 14:15; I Jn. 5:3). Let us prepare ourselves for Heaven by applying the information God has revealed! In so doing, we will be a blessed people! (Jas. 1:25)

Paul And Barnabas At Antioch In Pisidia

Aric Russell

Following their work on Cyprus, Paul and Barnabas arrived in Perga of Pamphylia. At which point John Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). From Perga, they journeyed to Antioch in Pisidia. This was a difficult trip over the Taurus mountain range. At some point, Paul may have become ill, either in Perga or on the way to Antioch (Gal. 4:13). However, neither illness nor physical dangers prevented him from carrying on his mission. Paul's custom was to first visit the local synagogue (Acts 17:1-3). At Antioch in Pisidia, Paul did just that and accepted an invitation to speak (Acts 13:14-16). Notice the sermon Paul offered.

Paul begins by looking back and talking about how God had dealt with Israel in the past (vs. 17-22). He proclaims that Jesus is the promised Savior (vs. 23-26). Paul tells of the death of Jesus and the evidence for His resurrection (vs. 27-37). He proclaims that forgiveness is now offered to them through Jesus (vs. 38-39). Paul concludes his sermon by warning them not to fulfill the prophecy by rejecting Christ (vs. 40-41). Paul's sermon echoes the same themes preached by Peter (Act 2:22-36; 3:12-26), and the defense given by Stephen (Ac 7:2-53). We saw how some responded to Peter and Stephen. Now let's consider the response to Paul's sermon.

Acts 13:42 says, "So when the Jews went out of the synagogue, the

Gentiles begged that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath." The Gentiles desired to hear more of the Word. On the next Sabbath, almost the whole city came to hear the word of God (vs. 44). This, however, upset the Jews. They were filled with envy and began to oppose the things that were spoken by Paul (vs. 45). Paul then addressed them and said in verses 46-47, He said, *"It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth."* The Gentiles were glad to hear this, the Jews were not. They stirred up the men and women of the city and began to persecute Paul and Barnabas (vs. 50).

There are some things we can learn from Paul's sermon and the things that came as a result. The first thing we learn is that we cannot pass up an opportunity to teach the message of Jesus Christ. The door of opportunity presented itself to Paul and he took it. We too must look for opportunities to spread the gospel message. Another lesson we learn is that not eve-

ryone will accept the truth. The Gentiles learned the truth and were glad. The Jews knew the truth and grew angry to the point of persecuting Paul and Barnabas. Let us all strive to seek for opportunities to preach the gospel and to speak the truth no matter the outcome.

You Finish The Story ...

Selected

There was once a congregation in which every member was just like you. Each one cooperated and supported every phase of the work just like you. Everyone worked as hard and attended the same services and gospel meetings that you did. The elders, deacons, and preacher were all as interested in the church as you are. They put the same emphasis on recreation, business, and other material affairs that you do. Each member contributed monetarily just like you do. Within a year or so, the congregation

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