

THE BIBLE IS "THE BOOK"

David Halbrook

Most baseball fans around here know who "the man" is. Stan "The Man" Musial, was given that nickname because he was a superior ball player. In the world of baseball, he was not just considered a man but "the man."

The word "Bible" is from a Latin word meaning "book." Being superior to all other books, it is not just a book but the book. Evidence proves that the Bible is the only book wherein God has spoken to man (2 Tim. 3:16-17; Micah 5:2; Daniel 2:44).

The Introduction to the Book of Mormon says that it is the "most correct of any book on earth." Thus, the Book of Mormon claims to be superior to the Bible but provides no evidence. God warned against books like this in Galatians 1:6-9.

Do you treat the Bible as "the book"? Do you read other books instead of learning what the Bible says on the subject of parenting, establishing or mending a marriage, baptism, or drinking alcohol? Books written by psychologists, doctors, "pastors," and church creeds fill American shelves and minds while the Bible is ignored. Without "the book" you cannot know "the God" OR what is true. (WWW.QVCOC.COM)

-- *Editor's Note:* While I was in the Philippines, two people contacted us after reading our articles in *Arkansas Weekly*, one requesting a correspondence course and the other objecting to the article. Providing the article is "our work," as a church. "Your work" is to help people learn what they need to know—whether by your conversation with them, handing them a bulletin or newspaper article, or some other means. Pray for and look for ways to make people aware of God, truth, and eternity!

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

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WHY PEOPLE MISUNDERSTAND THE BIBLE

David Pratte

In Mark 7:14 Jesus said, "Hear Me, everyone, and understand." Yet today people will dismiss plain Bible teaching about moral issues (such as homosexuality, divorce, or abortion) or about salvation from sin or the church because they say the teaching is too confusing or difficult to understand.

Why don't people understand? It is not because the Bible is so unclear. Jesus expected people to understand His teaching, and Paul said: "...do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:17; see also 2 Timothy 3:16,17).

But some don't understand because they do not study diligently. "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures..." (Matthew 22:29).

Others misunderstand because they accept teachings of men who disagree with the Scriptures. "And in vain they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9). Such teachings often come from false teachers dressed in sheep's clothing who are really ravenous wolves (Matthew 7:13,14).

But often people do not understand the Bible simply because they do not like what it says. "Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their heart and turn, so that I should heal them" (Matthew 13:15). When the Bible does not say what some folks want to hear, they just conclude it is all too confusing and you cannot really understand it anyway!

People who want to please God must "search the Scriptures daily" with an open mind, like the honest Bereans in Acts 17:11.

To please God, we must know the truth, and that truth is found in God's word.

(www.gospelway.com/topics/bible/bible-misunderstanding.php)

WOULD YOU GIVE UP...?

John Gibson

We sometimes sing “I Surrender All,” but are we really willing to do that? If we came to understand that Jesus expected us to give up something very dear to us, would we do it? What would we do if He told us we had to completely abstain from college football? Would we be willing to turn in all of our school spirit shirts, caps, and other accessories? Stay away from news stories about the Tide, Tigers, Longhorns, Vols, Gators, Buckeyes, Bulldogs, etc.? Never again sit down on a Saturday to enjoy watching your team play? What if it weren’t football, but shopping at the mall or trips to the mountains? Vacations at Disney World? What if the Lord commanded you to give up your favorite food?

Could we, would we make that sacrifice? I think most of us would say that while it would be difficult we would do it. We would probably say that in comparison to what Jesus has done for us, how could we not do that for Him? We might throw in a couple of quotes from 1 John. *“We love Him because He first loved us” (1 John 4:19). “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome” (1 John 5:3).* We would explain that while at first it might seem like a great sacrifice, in light of the cross and the great reward that is promised it is not too much to ask of us.

If truly convinced that it was the Lord’s will, would we surrender all those things mentioned in the first paragraph? Would we not only respond with the positive answer of the previous paragraph, but would we turn to Mark 9 and explain that hell is such a horrible thing that we would do anything to avoid it? *“If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed, rather than having two hands, to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched....And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame, rather than having two feet, to be cast into hell....And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire—where ‘Their worm does not die, And the fire is not quenched’” (Mark 9:43-48).*

Motivated by the Lord’s love for us and the fear of eternal torment we would give up anything, including our beloved football team, favorite food, favorite vacation destination, or any other interest. Or would we? You see, we are speaking here of hypothetical commandments, and when talking about something we know we will

never have to actually deal with it is easy to tell ourselves that we would never repeat the mistake of that rich, young ruler who walked away sorrowful when Jesus pointed out the one thing he lacked (Mark 10:17-22). Though the things previously mentioned must be kept their proper place (Matthew 6:33; Hebrews 10:24, 25; et al), there is no requirement that they be given up. But what about commandments the Lord has given? What about sacrifices He does require? Are we really willing to surrender all?

When the marriage relationship seems too confining or goes through some difficult times, do we acknowledge that He forbids divorce except for the cause of sexual immorality (Matthew 19:3-9), or seek some escape clause? Do we surrender to His will or do what we want to do?

Is the love of Christ and the fear of torment what it ought to be when the fear of what others might say or do causes us to dress immodestly or do other things we know we shouldn’t? See Matthew 10:28, 32, 33 and Revelation 21:8.

He hasn’t commanded us to give up football or Disney, but He has commanded us to put away all bitterness, anger, evil speaking and such (Ephesians 4:31). Could it be that our determination to hold onto grudges, resentments, etc. tells God that we are not as determined to surrender all as we might like to think?

Paul wrote of giving up his own preferences for the sake of the gospel and the maximizing of his influence upon others (1 Corinthians 9:19-23), but do others regularly hear our pride telling them how things should be done? If we won’t give up our determination to have things done our way, we have yet to fully grasp either the compelling love of the cross or the severity of God.

Will we truly surrender all? Will we be genuine disciples who deny self, take up our cross, and follow Jesus (Luke 9:23)? The story of the cross and the horrible threat of eternal punishment should be sufficient motivation for us, so let’s look honestly at our lives and make certain there is not that one thing we still lack (Mark 10:21). Let’s make certain we do not have some corner of our life holding out in the battle and refusing to surrender to His will. Let’s truly surrender all to the One who gave His all for us.

(www.pepperroadchurch.org/2011/09/30/would-you-give-up/)