

You Surely Don't Believe the Whole Bible ?

by Anton Bosch

Believing the whole Bible is essential for salvation, and rejecting its teachings can lead to eternal consequences.

Scripture: 1 John 5:4

Topics: "Biblical Authority", "Faith And Doctrine"

Description

Anton Bosch preaches about the importance of believing in the whole Bible as the infallible Word of God, emphasizing the danger of subtracting or twisting Scriptures to fit personal preferences or intellectual arguments. He highlights the rise of unbelief among Christians who selectively choose which parts of the Bible to believe, warning against the consequences of undermining the authority and truth of God's Word. Bosch challenges believers to have genuine faith in the entirety of the Bible, as essential for salvation, rather than creating a God of their own understanding.

Transcript

After last week's article in which I called for a greater commitment to the Bible, I received a number of responses. A few were in agreement but the majority were in opposition. Which leads me to realize that less and less Christians truly believe that the whole Bible is indeed the Word of God.

All the responses can really be boiled down to one point: subtracting from the Bible those parts that are inconvenient. The respondents do this in one of two ways: The biggest group do not believe that we can take the Bible literally. The next group simply delete those parts of the Scriptures they do not like.

The first group say that you cannot take Scriptures like Matthew 12:36-37 ("for every idle word men may speak, they will give an account") literally. This argument is applied to the creation account, warnings about hell, prophecies about the Second Coming and every other Scripture that is either hard to believe or hard to obey. This practice used to be common amongst liberals and others who sought to undermine the authority and veracity of God's Word. But increasing numbers of those that are classified as fundamentalist, evangelical or Bible-believing are joining forces with the liberals in undermining and second-guessing the Scriptures. The fact that someone claims to be Bible-believing or evangelical is no longer a guarantee that they are not in the camp of the unbelievers.

This unbelief is often masked by a pseudo love or a pseudo intellectualism. One such person argues that God is love and so basically any Scripture that requires obedience cannot be taken literally. He then signs of his e-mail with "love" and his name. This is not love. It is not love of God, His Word or of people. John

said "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome." (1John 5:4). When we twist God's commandments in order to justify our disobedience and unbelief, it is a sure sign that we do not love Him. If we love one another, we will love God's Word and speak the truth with love. (Ephesians 4:15).

The other, more common, facade is that of a pseudo intellectualism (pseudo = false). People try to be clever in analyzing and rationalizing away the true meaning of the Scriptures. They try to make out as though those who believe the Bible word-for-word and who believe that the Bible is literal are stupid, simple-minded and foolish. But it is they who are foolish. Paul says of them: "Professing to be wise, they became fools" (Romans 1:22).

At the time of Jesus there was also a group of people who had many clever arguments as to why the Bible (Old Testament) could not be taken literally, and why they were not required to obey the Word. These pseudo intellectuals looked down on everyone who actually believed the Bible. They also deceived many into believing that they knew what they were talking about. But Jesus said of them: "You have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition. Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: `These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:6-9).

You can call me a fool for believing every word of God but "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, But fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs 1:5). And "let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their own craftiness"; and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile." (1Corinthinas 3:18-20).

Very little in the Bible is not to be taken literally. The few things that are not literal are obviously not literal but figurative or spiritual. If hell is not literal then neither is heaven. But everyone wants to see hell as figurative and heaven as literal. If God did not literally create the earth in six days, then Jesus did not literally rise on the third day. (And yes, most Christians agree with the Pope that he rose on the second day and many others no longer believe in a literal bodily resurrection.) If the judgment of believers is not literal, then neither are the rewards, streets of gold or the pearly gates. If the book of revelation is not a literal book, then neither is Genesis, the Old Testament Prophets or many other parts of the Bible.

I am shocked to discover that belief in the Bible as the infallible Word of God has become optional to the vast majority of Christians. And that those who profess that they believe the Bible, their belief only extends to a few select verses.

We all like to say that we are justified by faith (Romans 5:1) and there seems to be an increased emphasis on "only faith" (Sola fide). But faith in what and based on what? "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard" (Romans 10:14). How will they have heard? "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). This is part of a larger argument from Romans 10. The bottom line of Paul's reasoning is that in order to believe, you need to have heard the Word. So how can those who do not hear or believe the Bible believe in Christ? And if they do believe who or what do they believe in? It certainly is not the Christ nor the God of the Bible but rather a God of their own manufacture and a Jesus of their own imagination.

Belief in the Bible is as essential for salvation as belief in Jesus or God. Most of the time when the New Testament speaks about justification or salvation by faith, it does not specify what we need to believe in. This is because you cannot separate believing the Bible from faith in Jesus, the cross, the resurrection or any other of the great truths. Most pagans believe in god but that faith does not save them. Valid faith has to be in the one true God, the way He has revealed Himself in and through His Word.

We have a saying in Afrikaans which translates as "Thought planted a feather and thought a chicken would grow". You cannot afford to build your eternal destiny on what you "think" or "feel". It needs to be built on the one sure, infallible guide. Even a child will tell you that it has to be a fool who thinks he can navigate from Los Angeles to London by the seat of his pants. You need maps and they need to be accurate. If you won't trust a pilot who thinks he can find his way across the globe without maps, then how can you expect to make it to the New Jerusalem when you have rejected God's map?

"If anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." (Revelation 22:18)

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