



THE SEVIERVILLE SOWER

Sowing the seed (Luke 8:11) into the hearts of mankind.

Sevierville Church of Christ | 208 Hicks Drive | Sevierville, TN 37862 | (865) 453-8009 | seviervillecoc.org

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Can We See the Bible Alike?

Rodney Nulph

When Paul wrote to the church at Philippi, he demanded, “Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Brethren be followers together of me and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample” (Philippians 3:15-17). The Holy Spirit, through Paul, expected the saints at Philippi to see the Bible alike! They were to walk “by the same rule,” denoting a standard or a pattern. That pattern or standard is God’s Word. Sadly, many today see the Bible in different ways. Some interpret it one way and others another way. However, the Bible does not mean different things to each reader. If it meant different things to different people, there would be no way we could “walk by the same rule,” for we would all have different rules – different standards. Nevertheless, that is exactly what is happening in our world and sadly, in some cases, even in the church. The question “Can we see the Bible alike?” begs an answer.

The Facts

The very Book we are discussing affirms that we **can** see the Bible alike. In fact, to say that the Bible means different things to different people is to completely misunderstand its contents. Moses affirmed that we can all see the Bible alike when he penned, “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: **but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law**” (Deuteronomy 29:29). David declared that the Bible can be seen by all alike when he wrote, “Through thy precepts I get understanding...” (Psalm 119:104). Notice carefully David did not say that God’s Precepts create confusion and dismay but rather understanding! The apostle of love was clear about our understanding the Bible alike as he scribed, “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: **But these are written, that ye might believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” (John 20:30-31). Paul was clear about the universal interpretation of Scripture when he wrote, “Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ” (Ephesians 3:4).

The Fog

The Bible is obviously quite clear in affirming that we can all see its contents alike, but many fail to see the Bible alike. Why is that? While I am certain there are other reasons than we will notice in this article, following are a few of the **fogs** that cause people to see

the Bible differently.

- **People** can cause us to see the Bible differently. Sometimes people in our **clan** or family will persuade us to not understand the Bible properly. Some insist on believing things religiously because of what their mothers or grandmothers believed. “If it was good enough for grandpa to believe, it is good enough for me to believe as well.” How sad (Matthew 10:34-37; 19:29)! Sometimes people in **crowds** cause a fog that prevents us from seeing the Bible alike. However, we must remember that the majority is often **not** right religiously (Matthew 7:13-21).
- **Pride** can cause us to not see the Bible alike. It takes humility to admit we do not know certain things. Sadly, some are so proud that they will never admit they do not know something or may have practiced something wrong religiously. Truth seekers, not self-seekers, find truth (Matthew 5:3; 6).
- **Phony doctrine** is another cause for not seeing the Bible alike (Matthew 13:14-15; 1 John 4:1; 2 Thessalonians 2:9-11). The **persuader**, Satan himself, is another fog that causes people to see the Bible differently. Paul confirmed that “the god of this world” can and will blind people’s eyes to the truth (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).

The Fortune

Truth can be known and understood (John 8:32). When we clear the fog from our eyes, the fact remains that the Bible is meant to be read, studied, understood and obeyed. When we see truth for what it really is, we have found a real fortune! We have the fortune of a **standard**. We can know what is right and what is wrong. We know how to conduct ourselves in **every** daily situation when we know truth. We have found the fortune of **sturdiness**. We are no longer carried about by every wind of doctrine (Ephesians 4:14). We have an anchor to hold us in times of distress (Hebrews 6:19-20). We have found the fortune of the **Savior**. To find and understand truth is to find Jesus the Lord! In fact, without God’s Word, we can never really know Jesus (John 5:39).

Can we all see the Bible alike? **Absolutely!** We can and must “walk by the same rule”! Religiously, may we only speak those things that are sound doctrine (Titus 2:1). Peter’s command is so fitting. “If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11). If we would just do that, we all could see the Bible alike!

Prayer Requests & Announcements

Shirley Yeager is traveling to North Carolina with her daughters Cindy Langston and Teresa Hutchcraft. Cindy continues to deal with various health issues and Teresa is suffering with abdominal pain and will be seeing her doctor in NC on Thursday.

Remember our sister Dawn Sutton in prayer as she has been diagnosed with breast cancer. She will soon be having an MRI and will meet with her doctor regarding results.

Andy Butts continues his recovery from double knee replacement surgery. He is receiving physical therapy three days per week and is coping with the pain and challenges of recovery.

Lyn Morris has been having problems with significant drops in her blood sugar. Also, her brother, Jim Cochran, fell recently and broke his hip and the socket.

Crissy Chambers recently met with her surgeon and is scheduled to have her gall bladder removed on March 30 at LeConte.

Remember in prayer our sister Chris Bender who has been having health issues lately. She had a biopsy recently and saw a surgeon to have tumors removed. She is still awaiting results.

Continue to pray for the Christians in Ukraine. There is no news of injury to any of the brethren. In Kiev, many of the church members have left the city to go to safer areas. One preacher's wife, kids, and grandkids have gone, some to Latvia, and others to Germany. At one point, over 50 Christians and their families had traveled to far southwest Ukraine to the city of Chernovtsi. Some of those families have gone on to Romania or Poland. New ones are still coming. The last time brother Roger Campbell had talked with the preacher there, there still were some 40 brethren from other areas who had come there. Most of them sleep on mattresses in the church building.

Continue to Remember...

Chris Bender, John and Helen Carr, Connie Duncan, Dennis and Marty Danilchuk, Lindsey Johnson, Shirley McKnight, Sue Moore, Lyn Morris, Paul and Ellen Ostrander, Joanne Roark, Shirley Yeager, Becky Duncan (Joe and Connie's daughter-in-law), Belinda Lang (Kevin's aunt), Adam Lane (son-in-law of Vickie Price), Harlie McClung (John and Helen Carr's 12 year-old great-granddaughter), Anita Ogle (Sherry Simms' friend), Casie Rains (friend of the Hansens), Paul Rolen (Mary Kate's brother), Frankie Simms (Scott Simms' father), Wayne Tart (Tammie Fish's brother).

Ladies' class Thursdays at 6:15 at the Hansen's house

Monthly afternoon song service: March 27

Fellowship lunch: April 3

Fellowship night: April 15, 6:30

Evangelism Materials

Extra supplies for our evangelism work are freely available in the supply room to our members. Instructional books, DVDs, and Bible study materials are available. We also have a variety of cards for our Compassion Card work.

Weekly Assemblies

Sunday: Bible Study 9 a.m.
Worship 10 a.m.
Worship 1 p.m.
Wednesday: Bible Class 7 p.m.

We Need to Imitate Jesus' Humility

Roger D. Campbell

The apostle Paul appealed to the saints of God in Philippi to reflect on the comfort of love, fellowship of the Spirit, and mercy. Such reflection could cause them to have lowliness of mind and be concerned about the interests/needs of others (Philippians 2:1-4).

Having laid that foundation, what was Paul's next statement? *"Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 2:5). Christians need to have the mindset/mentality/heart of our Lord. In order to know His heart, we need to investigate what the Bible reveals about how He thought and interacted with others. We will find the great majority of such information in the gospel accounts.

Staying in the context of Philippians 2, Paul reminded the brethren that Jesus *"made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men"* (2:7). Before the Word became flesh and dwelt among humans, He was in heaven, sharing in the Father's glory. He temporarily gave that up, becoming "poor" when He took on human form. What benefit is that to us? Through His lowering Himself, His "poverty" allows us to be rich (2 Corinthians 8:9). Jesus did not think He was "too good" to sacrifice or do things that benefit others.

Jesus invites all who labour and are heavy laden to come to Him, saying of Himself, *"... I am gentle and lowly in heart"* (Matthew 11:29). His lowly spirit was on full display throughout His life on earth. Do you recall the manner in which He entered Jerusalem during the last week of His life? The Bible says of that occasion, *"Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey"* (Matthew 21:5). A donkey was an animal used to carry burdens or provide transport for commoners, but not royalty. Jesus came into Jerusalem in humility.

The task of foot washing was assigned to the lowest servants. On the evening before His death, the Master washed the feet of His apostles, showing them humility in action. He appealed to them to take His example to heart and imitate His spirit (John 13:3-17).

There is another aspect of the Christ's humility which we must not overlook. It is noted in Philippians 2:8: *"And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross."* His humility led to obedience. To whom? To His Father, Who highly exalted Him (2:9). One may be kind to everyone, but in order to show real humility in a biblical sense, one also must submit to the God of heaven. How much do you and I act like the humble Son of God?

Elders

Randy Hansen, Robert Moore, Kevin Ruiz, and Jerry Sutton

Deacon

Lenwood Johnson (finance)

Preacher

Kevin Ruiz