

THE BIBLE: GOD'S WORD TO ALL PEOPLE

MORE ABOUT THIS ARTICLE

The rationale for this "manifesto"

This tract is like a "manifesto" that describes the way we should approach Scriptures. We live in a day in which, at least in the United States, many people assume that it is impossible to understand Scripture unless "experts" tell us what to believe.

Yet if this were the case, then the Bible is actually a "closed" book - unable to be understood - not only by most of the world today, but also by most of the Christians throughout the history of Christianity. Rarely have people EVER had the opportunity to have all the "resources" that some people today think are absolutely necessary!

If the Bible cannot be understood "as is," then there is no reason for us to follow it. [For a look at the issue of accepting ALL the truth (accepting it "as is", without distorting parts of it), see the article, "The 'Boundaries' of Truth."]

I am not saying that there is NO value in "resources." Yet it seems that so many people have things backwards today. Scripture is to come FIRST, then the resources - not the resources first then Scripture.

From what I have said, one may think that this tract was written as a reaction to such abuses. No doubt that this matter had some influence, but the primary purpose was to encourage people who do not have access to such things: They too can understand the Word! There may be some specific details that they may not be able to understand, but ALL they need for life and godliness will be knowable - if they but read, study and accept what God has written.

This tract has been used in various countries (mostly in Africa) in which people have difficulty even obtaining the Bible itself, much less all the "resources" some people think are necessary. [Could there be any connection between the fact that they have to rely on the Bible itself (rather than on all these other writings) and the fact that the greatest spiritual awakenings in modern times have occurred in such places?]

For an article that speaks more directly to the abuses of relying upon "resources" when studying Scripture, see: "Three Characteristics of God's Word, the Bible."

Background and Other Notes

This article was "born" out of necessity and out of conflict:

...out of necessity, because of the need to explain how a person can accurately understand the Bible on his own. This is the primary reason for this article. In many parts of the world, people do not have all the "resources" we have in the United States, for understanding the Bible. They consider themselves fortunate if they have even a small portion of the Bible - much less books and study guides, multimedia, programs, etc. In addition, there are so-called "teachers" everywhere who purport to teach the Bible, but who promote their own interpretational schemes and agendas. When different "authorities" disagree, how can we know for sure, which (if any) is right? This is a serious issue: People's eternal destinies are at stake! For more about the need, read "The rationale for this 'manifesto'."

...out of conflict, because of the abuse and attacks I personally experienced, by people (including church leaders) who essentially went against everything written in this "tract." I must emphasize that "conflict" was not the primary reason for writing this "tract." Yet those experiences showed me the seriousness of the problem, and provided me with some insights as to what needed written. (In a sense, whatever they did, I wrote the opposite!) Anyway, this illustrates the fact that God uses all things to accomplish good in the lives of those who love him!

Originally, this "Bible tract" was used in conjunction with a mission-related ministry to people in English-speaking West Africa. It can be made into a small, 8-page booklet, when the font size is reduced to about 6 pt.