

## What is your attitude toward the Bible?

### What do you do when Scripture goes against your beliefs?

- ➔ *This is people's normal reaction:* Explaining it away, or living in denial about it.
- ➔ *This reaction is not normal:* Accepting what it says and changing your views.

?? Do you accept the Bible as *God's Word*, or do you view it as something people invented?

And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe. (1 Thessalonians 2:13, NIV)

?? When people make claims about the Bible, do you accept their claims? Or do you carefully evaluate what they say, comparing it to what the Bible says?

Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. (Acts 17:11, NIV; the Thessalonians mentioned here are *not* the ones that Paul wrote to, in his letters to the Thessalonians!)

### Scripture describes TWO attitudes toward the Bible:

- 1) A willing submission to its authority, willing to change where your thinking is different.  
(= Totally accepting it because it *is* God's Word.)
- 2) Standing in judgment against it, willing to "adjust" it or change it until it "agrees" with your opinions and preferences.  
(= Willing to modify, ignore or reject it, as though it were of human origin, filled with errors and opinions.)

## WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

What the Bible says about itself:

- It cannot be broken – John 10:35b.
- It is truth – John 17:17.
- It is "God-breathed" and should regulate our thoughts and actions – 2 Timothy 3:16-17.
- It came from God, not people – 2 Peter 1:20-21.
- It is living and active – Hebrews 4:12.
- It is living and enduring, the means by which people are born into new life (= the source of salvation) – 1 Peter 1:23.
- It is established, standing firm in the heavens forever – Psalm 119:89.
- God has exalted it above all things – Psalm 138:2.
- It is a lamp/light to show us the way – Psalm 119:105.
- It is flawless – Proverbs 30:5.
- People cannot stop it from accomplishing its purpose – 2 Tim. 2:9.
- It is the means by which the Spirit accomplishes his purposes; the means of defense against the devil – Ephesians 6:17.
- We cannot have genuine life without it – Matthew 4:4.
- It can make us "wise for salvation" – 2 Timothy 3:5.

What the Bible says about those who accept it:

- People who read/listen to it, and take it to heart (= obey it), are blessed – Revelation 1:3.
- People who meditate on it (= think about what it says and how to apply it), and delight in it, are blessed – Psalm 1:1-3.
- People who listen to it and put it to practice are members of God's (Jesus') family – Luke 8:21.
- Those who hear and obey it are blessed – Luke 11:28.
- Those who live according to it will be kept morally pure – Psalm 119:9.
- People who "hide" (treasure) it in their hearts will be *less* inclined to sin – Psalm 119:11.
- If God's Word "lives in you," you will have a greater ability to overcome the evil one – 1 John 2:14b.

What the Bible says about our obligation toward God's Word:

- Do not add to it or subtract from it! - Revelation 22:18-19; Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Proverbs 30:6.
- We are to grow in our knowledge of it – 2 Peter 3:18 (this is related to growing in God's grace).
- We are to read, listen, and think about it – (see verses in the previous section).
- If we don't let others know about it, they cannot be saved – Romans 10:14 (they need told, either by us, or by people "sent" by us – v. 15).
- We need to be "always ready" to say something about God and his word – 2 Timothy 4:2; 1 Peter 3:15-16.

What the Bible says about Bible-exposure in childhood:

- Children have an obligation to "remember" God (= have him in the forefront of their thinking) – Ecclesiastes 12:1.
- Parents have an obligation to train their children in how they should live – Proverbs 22:6. (This includes *the parents* living as a good example for them to follow.)
- Training children involves all aspects of life – Deuteronomy 6:6-7.
- Praiseworthy Example #1: A family commitment to following God – Joshua 24:15.
- Praiseworthy Example: #2: Teaching children the Scriptures from the time they are infants – 2 Timothy 3:15. (By the time they understand the words, Scripture will *already* be a part of their thinking!)

What attitude are we to have toward it?

- Making it an ongoing part of our thought life (which includes thinking about how to *apply* it to life) – Psalm 119:15-16.
- A desire to learn God's ways (i.e., the right way to live) – Psalm 25:4; 27:11.
- A willingness to obey it – Psalm 119:17.
- A delight in it – Psalm 119:174.
- Considering it to be the basis for our future hope – Psalm 119:81, 114, 147.

What about people who do NOT have this view about the Bible?

- There are many Scripture passages describing these people. Since that is not our primary focus here, only a few randomly-selected passages are listed. Many Scripture passages describe them as being wicked, evil, moral fools, etc.
- They have a tendency to distort Scripture – 2 Peter 3:16b.
- They willfully suppress God's truth, *even truth seen in nature* – Romans 1:18-20+.
- They willingly ignore or "forget" historical facts described in Scripture, and mock Scripture (instead of accepting it) – 2 Peter 3:3-7.
- They are eager to prevent other people from accepting the Bible – 2 Peter 1:8; Matthew 23:13; 2 Timothy 3:13.
- They perish because they refuse to love the truth – 2 Thessalonians 2:10.
- They teach what is false – 1 Tim 4:1-2; Acts 20:29-30.
- They often distort Scripture and use it to excuse their sins – Jude 1:4.