

The Messenger

COLDWATER CHURCH OF CHRIST

August 4, 2013



Can We Understand the Bible?

Many individuals are of the conviction that the Bible cannot be properly understood. Perhaps they are discouraged by the wide range of contradictory doctrines that fly under the banner of so-called 'Christianity.' Perhaps their 'religious leader' has told them that understanding Scripture is a privilege reserved primarily for those who have been 'ordained' as 'clergy.' Or maybe it is the case that they believe that since the Bible is a book supposedly written by God that it is written in some sort of cryptic, mystical language.

It is true that some portions of God's word are more difficult to understand than others. The apostle Peter said that Paul, in his letters spoke "of these things, in which are some things hard to understand" (2 Peter 3:16).

However, on the whole, and especially in regard to what someone needs to understand and know to be saved, we can understand the Bible. The Bible says, "belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17 ASV). Belief (i.e. faith) is essential to salvation: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16). Therefore, biblical belief presupposes a 'hearing' or understanding of God's word. Paul wrote under the assumption that his readers could understand exactly what he was trying to communicate: "When you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ" (Eph. 3:4). "Mystery" in that verse does not mean something that is impossible to be understood with certainty. Rather, it refers a thing that was ...

This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you... (1 John 1:5).

**VISITORS,
WELCOME!**

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Bible Class

10:30 a.m. WORSHIP

1:00 p.m. WORSHIP

Wednesday:

7:00 p.m. Bible Class

We have Bible classes for
all ages & Pew Packers
each Sunday at 12:30

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ELDERS

Billy Bland

W. Timothy Wilkes, Sr.

Jim Jackson

DEACONS

Jason Bayless Jared Brown

Jerry Davis Jeffrey Ferrell

Ron Johnson Andy Ratliff

PREACHER

Clifton Angel

... previously unknown but now is known. Paul prayed for the recipients of his letter, "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (Eph. 1:17-18). Furthermore, Paul exhorted, "do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17). Notice from these verses how Paul emphasized that we can understand what God's will is.

From this small selection of passages, one who claims the Bible is God's book would be hard-pressed to hold the position that the biblical writers viewed their message as something that cannot be understood. On the contrary, the Bible teaches that one facet of saving faith is the understanding and assurance of the things recorded therein.

The assertion that the Bible cannot be understood on the basis of its divine authorship fails to understand the character of Scripture. In considering this idea of whether or not God can make Himself understood through His words, consider soberly this excerpt from an article entitled "Can We Understand the Bible Alike" by Wayne Jackson, writer at The Christian Courier:

We operate daily upon the presumption that we, frail mortals though we are, can make ourselves understood to our peers. A department store places an advertisement in the newspaper about an upcoming sale. Hundreds of people flock to the same establishment on the correct day at the right time expecting specific items at a certain price to be available for purchase. How is it that they understand the ad alike? If we can sensibly operate our lives on a routine basis, recognizing that we are able to communicate with one another in an intelligible fashion, why can't we acknowledge that God, who is infinitely wiser and abler than man, can clearly make his will known to humanity. If one suggests that Jehovah could not clearly make himself known to man, he reflects upon the power of the Lord. If one argues that God purposely did not reveal himself to mankind in a lucid fashion, he reflects upon the benevolence of his maker. If one contends that man has no responsibility to understand and obey the precepts of the Scriptures, it is he who evidences great ignorance of his obligation to Heaven.

J.I Packer rightly stated, "The fundamental mode whereby our rational Creator guides his ...

...rational creatures is by rational understanding and application of his written Word.”

The Bible is written on a reading level within the reach of most. Depending on which translation you use, the reading level ranges from grade three to grade twelve. While I do not recommend every translation, I do suggest that most everybody is capable of reading and understanding what the Bible has to say. Perhaps it is a lack of interest, initiative or diligence that is to blame for more people not knowing and understanding the Bible: “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15).

—*written by Torrey Clark*
<http://declarehim.blogspot.com>

A Donkey With Five Legs?

Have you ever seen such a thing? I have not, and, as far as I know, there has never existed such a creature. However, some extremely religious-minded people accidentally created one. Many years ago, someone claimed to have found a shin-bone of the donkey on which Jesus made his triumphant entry into Jerusalem. The discoverer immediately realized the value of this “holy relic” to the religious world. This donkey’s shin-bone was sold for a large sum of money. However, throughout the years, five of these shin-bones have been sold, purportedly belonging to the same donkey. Refresh my memory: how many legs does a donkey have again?

Over the years there have been pieces of wood sold that supposedly came from the cross on which Christ was crucified. Rusty spikes have been pawned off as the ones that were used in the crucifixion of Christ. There are the stories about Noah’s ark, David’s throne, the burial shroud of Jesus, and on and on. The truth of the matter is that none of these things have ever been discovered, nor will they ever be. God in His infinite wisdom has kept these things from man. Man has a tendency to worship such things, and God knows that. Just think of the brass serpent, and the golden ephod made by Gideon. Try as man might, he will never find the original Ten Commandments, the ark of the covenant, the original letters of Paul to the churches, etc., and we need to thank God for that. Some things are better left unknown (Dt. 29:29).

—*written by Patrick Morrison*

Sermon Review

Hope

(Ephesians 4:4)

- I. WHY HOPE?
- II. WHAT HOPE?
- III. WHEN HOPE?

God’s People: Privileged to Listen to God

(Malachi 2:1–9)

- I. GOD’S REQUIREMENT (1–2)
- II. GOD’S RETRIBUTION (2b–4)
- III. GOD’S RECOLLECTION (5–6)
- IV. GOD’S REMINDER (7–9)

NEWS & NOTES

Please Pray

Aubrey Ratliff, recovering from head injury from fall on Wednesday; **Geoffrey Dunn**, traveling with family; **Wiley & Betty Tuggle**; **Sue Cobern**; **Helen Bowman**; **Clifton Angel**, one-time radioactive iodine this week (Thursday) and will have to be absent from the assembly.

OpenDoor Ministry
Fishers of Men
Far East Missions

Family & Friends

Haley Coe, Geoffrey's niece, head injury; **LaJuan Collums**, Billy's sister, cancer has returned, she will be receiving treatments, and she battles other health problems also; **Kenneth Webb** family; **Steve Angel**, Clifton's uncle, in hospital again after strokes; **Joy Angel**, Clifton's older sister, battling various health problems; **John Simpson**, was able to go home; **Roy Cobern**, Sue's brother-in-law, fell from a ladder last week, breaking face bones, wrist, and 8 ribs, is being treated at the Med; **Raleigh Wooten**, had to have another stint, doing better; **JoAnn Prestage**, Sara Norris' sister, cancer; **Tasha Higginbotham**, in need of a kidney transplant, also has cataracts, and other health problems; **Curtis Cates**; **Linda Perkins**, Tim West's mother-in-law, leukemia; **Mac Owen**; **Bob Spurlin**; **Kam Spencer**; **Andy Jones**, esophagus cancer; **Ally Jo Kelly**, toddler with leukemia; **Brad & Sheri Daniel**; **Noah Judd**; **Carly Wright**, 3 yr. old with liver cancer; **Joe & Josephine Johnston**, and their sons, Charles and Chris; **Nicholas Franks**; **Frederick Bland**; **Barbara Denton**; **Brigman Family**; **Janice Jenkins**; **Carla Carlson**; **Wes**, brother of Deb Peeler, cancer; **Doris Easley**; **Eli Williams**; **Ray Maples**; **Wayne Collinsworth**; **Andrew Hagewood**; **Janie Brister**; **Chuck Tharp**; **Renee Loya**; **Aubree Harris**; **Virginia Mayfield**; **Peyton Harville**; **David Bragg**

Birthdays

8/10	Caleb Baker	8/19	Ron Johnson
8/15	Carolyn Davis	8/21	Sue Cobern
8/16	Clifton Angel	8/25	Addi Bayless
8/16	Alianna Davis	8/26	Jim Jackson
8/19	Helen Bowman	8/28	Jerry Davis

Anniversaries

8/2	--	Jared & Rebecca Brown
8/5	--	Tim II & Rachel Wilkes
8/18	--	Ron & Anna Johnson

Get Involved!

Sunday Afternoon for the Savior -- TODAY

Trade Days Booth -- August 10

See Andy for any questions; Youth to help again
Signup sheet on table in foyer
Some preparations today in conjunction with SAFTS

Providence Place Devo -- August 11 -- 2 PM

1st Annual Men's Fellowship -- August 17
at Looxahoma; BJ Clarke to speak; lunch provided

Privileged to Serve

Sunday, August 4

Morning

Prayer Before Class	Jeremy Moore
Announcements	Jim Jackson
Song Leader	Andy Ratliff
Lord's Supper:	
Preside	Joe Owen
	Ron Johnson
Assist	Daniel Owen
	Dalton Owen
Opening Prayer	Seth Daniel
Sermon	Clifton Angel
Closing Prayer	Jason Bayless

Afternoon

Song Leader	Andy Ratliff
Opening Prayer	Jared Brown
Sermon	Clifton Angel
Lord's Supper	Joe Owen
	Daniel Owen
Closing Prayer	Jeffrey Ferrell

Wednesday, August 7

Song Leader	Andy Ratliff
Prayer	Billy Bland
Invitation	Clifton Angel
Prayer	Timothy Wilkes, Sr.