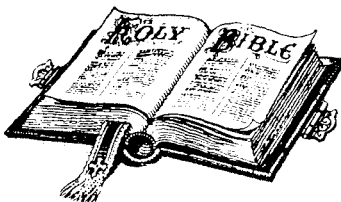


THE INSTRUCTOR



"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." 2 Timothy 3:16

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Number 9

CAN WE UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE?

You say, "Yes, we can understand it, but we cannot understand it alike." I beg to differ with you. I maintain that if we can understand it, we can understand it **alike**. The problem is not our understanding the Bible **alike**, but our **understanding** it.

When you say we cannot understand the Bible "alike" you are saying that God has given us a book that will mean most anything one wants it to and that causes confusion. In 1 Cor. 14:33, we read, "**For God is not the author of confusion . . .**" If God gave us a book to go by that we cannot understand "alike" then God would be the author of confusion.

Again, in John 17:20-21, Jesus prayed, "**Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word: That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.**" If we cannot understand the Bible "alike", then Christ sinned when he prayed this prayer because he prayed for something that he knew was impossible. Yet 1 Peter 2:22 says he did no sin.

In 1 Cor. 1:10, we read, "**Now I beseech you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the**

same judgment." If we cannot understand the Bible alike, then it would be impossible to speak the same thing, and to be of the same mind and judgment.

There are many passages that bear out this point, but I believe these few will suffice for you to see that the problem is our **understanding** the Bible and not our understanding it **alike**. If we understand it, we will be alike.

Now to the question: **CAN WE UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE?** The Bible will be a part of that by which we are judged. (See John 12:48; Rev. 22:12). I hardly think God gave us a Book to go by here that we cannot understand and then condemn us into hell because we didn't do what it says.

The Bible itself declares that it can be understood. "**The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple.**" Psalms 119:130. Also in Eph. 3:4, Paul says, "**Whereby when ye read, ye may understand . . .**"

You say, well there are some things in the Bible that I don't understand. The fact that you don't understand them does not mean that you cannot understand them. We must continue studying the Bible. Some passages are "hard to be understood," but not impossible. 2 Pet. 3:16.

One might also say, well there are some things in Revelation that I don't understand. That's right and you are

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THE INSTRUCTOR

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Editorial . . .

"PROOF REQUESTED, PROOF GIVEN (No. 18)

In our study in the last issue of THE INSTRUCTOR we examined in the light of the Scriptures the commonly accepted teaching that **"Alien sinners may pray through to salvation."** The fact that many people think they **"prayed through to salvation"** and are now saved is **no evidence** that such teaching is true. The fact that they "feel" like they are saved and are convinced that they are saved is **no proof** of their salvation.

We hereby challenge those who believe and teach that **"Alien sinners may pray through to salvation"** to enter a series of discussions with us on this proposition. Will they do it? Is there anyone out there who has enough courage to have such discussions? We will be waiting to see.

Number **fifteen** is the next item in the list of twenty-five things that appeared in THE INSTRUCTOR, October, 1983, under **"Specific Wickedness"** for which Scriptural proof for the opposite view (than that stated in # 15) has been requested. It reads as follows:

"15. A Christian cannot fall from grace and be eternally lost."

COMMENTS: Several large Protestant denominations advocate the doctrine under consideration. The **United Presbyterian Church** "teaches that the true believer can never totally and finally fall from grace, though he may fall temporarily; and that

the ground of this perseverance is not in the believer, but in the purpose, promise and grace of God." UNITED PRESBYTERIANISM by William J. Reed, p. 103. THE STANDARD MANUAL FOR BAPTIST CHURCHES by Edward T. Hiscox, p. 67, says: "We believe the Scriptures teach that such as are truly regenerate, being born of the Spirit, will not utterly fall away and perish, but will endure unto the end; . . ." Vernon L. Barr, a Baptist debater, stated that "The Bible does not say 'once in grace, always in grace.' The Bible does teach that when God saves a soul that he is saved with an eternal salvation. The Bible does not teach that God will damn His own children in Hell." BARR'S ANSWERS ON BIBLE SUBJECTS, p. 20. In a booklet entitled, "Can A Saved Person Ever Be Lost?", John R. Rice, a Baptist preacher, said: "I have shown that there is no teaching in the Bible that a saved person may become lost." (p.18). The CONFESSION OF FAITH AND GOVERNMENT OF THE CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, p. 39, expresses the doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy like this: ". . . The truly regenerated soul will not totally fall away from a state of grace, but will be preserved to everlasting life."

A candid examination of the following facts and principles should enlighten every honest person to the fact that a child of God can fall from grace and be eternally lost.

1. It is possible for a child of God to refuse him who speaks from heaven. Hebrews 12:25 says: "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." NOTE: There is no escape if we refuse him!

2. It is possible for a child of God to fail to keep himself in the love of God. Jude 21 says: "Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

3. It is possible for a Christian to

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forsake the right way. Peter said concerning some: "**Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray . . .**" (2 Peter 2:15). NOTE: Verse 14 calls these which have forsaken the right way "**cursed children.**"

4. It is **possible** for a Christian to **count the blood of Christ an unholy thing** and do **despite** unto the Spirit. Hebrews 10:28-29 says: "**He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace.**" NOTE: One who counts the blood of Christ **unholy** and does **contrary** to the Spirit of grace is **worthy of sorer** (or worse or more severe) **punishment** than physical death.

5. It is **possible** for a child of God to **deny the Lord**. Peter said: "**. . . Even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.**" (2 Peter 2:1). NOTE: "**Swift destruction**" is the result of denying the Lord!

6. It is **possible** for a Christian to **depart from the faith**. Paul said: "**Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.**" (1 Tim. 4:1-2).

7. It is **possible** for a child of God to **be led away** with the error of the wicked and **fall from his own steadfastness**. The apostle Peter warned: "**Ye, therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.**" (2 Peter 3:17).

8. It is **possible** for a Christian to **err from the truth**. James said: "**Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the**

error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." (James 5:19-20). NOTE: A brother who **errs from the truth** needs to be converted in order to save his soul from death!

9. It is **possible** for a child of God to **have an evil heart of unbelief and depart from the living God**. Hebrews 3:12 warns: "**Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.**"

10. It is **possible** for a Christian to become a **castaway**. Paul said: "**But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.**" (1 Cor. 9:27).

11. It is **possible** for a child of God to become **worse than an infidel**. The apostle Paul said: "**If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.**" (1 Timothy 5:8). QUESTION: Will one who is worse than an infidel receive eternal life?

12. It is **possible** for a Christian to **fail** (fall short) of the grace of God. Hebrews 12:15 says: "**Looking diligently lest any man fail (falleth short—ASV) of the grace of God; . . .**"

13. It is **possible** for a child of God to **turn aside after Satan**. In 1 Timothy 5:15 Paul said: "**For some are already turned aside after Satan.**" NOTE: If it is impossible for a child of God to so sin as to be eternally lost, then one may turn aside after Satan and still be eternally saved! Believe it? Who can?

14. It is **possible** for a Christian to **fall, to fall away, to fall from grace and to fall into condemnation (judgment)**. Please carefully read 1 Cor. 10:12; Hebrews 6:4-6; Galatians 5:1-4 and James 5:12.

ETERNAL LIFE IS CONDITIONAL

A child of God **shall reap life everlasting IF he sows to the Spirit and IF he does not faint**. (See Gal. 6:7-9).

A Christian **shall never fall IF he adds the things mentioned in 2 Pet. 1:5-12).**

A child of God **shall never see death IF he keeps the sayings of Jesus**. (John 8:51).

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According to a plain statement in Hebrews 5:9, Jesus Christ "**became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that OBEY HIM.**"

Friends, if the doctrine that a **Christian cannot fall from grace and be eternally lost** is true, then a Christian may lie, steal, cheat, curse, gamble, defraud, covet, commit sacrilege, rape, murder, practice idolatry and die in drunkenness and **still go to heaven!** Do you believe it? Does any sane person **really believe it?**

When a person **presumes** to speak the doctrine that "**a Christian cannot fall from grace and be eternally lost**" in the name of Christ, he is speaking **presumptuously** and is teaching **false** doctrine because such teaching is **not** found in God's Book! **The person who so speaks is guilty of wickedness!** Let each of us sincerely fear God and keep His commandments! Let us "**so speak**" and "**so do**" as they who will be judged by "**the law of liberty.**" (See James 1:25). (CRS)

(To be continued)

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CAN WE UNDESTAND THE BIBLE?

not by yourself. Some things have not been revealed. In Deut. 29:29, Moses said, "**The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and our children forever, that we may do the words of this law.**"

We can understand how to be saved, how to worship and how to live and all that God intends for us to understand. We can understand the Bible and those "**who hunger and thirst after righteousness**" will. Matthew 5:6.

— **Huston Gateley** in **LIGHT IN DARKNESS**, May, 1970.

THE APOSTLE PAUL SAID:

"**Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober.**" (1 Thess. 5:6).

— SENTENCE SERMONS —

Jealousy is to the soul what sickness is to the body.

* * * * *

Revenge is sorta like biting a dog because the dog bites you.

* * * * *

If you must kill time, be sure it is your own.

* * * * *

Express gratitude sincerely and generously; receive gratitude graciously and humbly; expect gratitude rarely if ever.

* * * * *

People look at preachers out of the pulpit to know what they mean when in it.

* * * * *

Experience should increase our wisdom and reduce our follies.

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