

Is One Interpretation as Good as Another?

(Galatians 1:6-12)

Introduction: Confronted with the fact that religious people disagree and even teach things which contradict one another has brought folks to conclude: "One interpretation of the Bible is as good as another." The idea is that we can't understand it alike anyway so it is not a problem. As long as each is sincere in his faith God will be pleased. Is this acceptable to God?

I. What Does It Mean to "Interpret" the Bible?

- A) Definition: "to set forth the meaning of; explain; to translate what is said in a foreign language."
- B) Interpreting the Bible is proper.
 1. We can express an idea or truth with different combinations of words.
 2. To use different words, illustrations, examples is fine as long as the original meaning of the text remains unchanged and clear.

II. What Do People Mean When They Say "One Interpretation is as Good as...?"

- A) People have a "right" to hold and defend different explanations of Bible truths.
- B) Used to justify a host of beliefs contrary to one another & to Scripture.

III. Does the Bible Contradict Itself?

- A) God is the _____ (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21).
 1. If so, this would mean that God contradicts Himself ???
 2. John 17:17
- B) Christ is not _____ (Mark 3:24-25; 1 Cor. 14:33).
 1. God's word has a true and correct meaning.
 2. God's will for man's salvation is unified and harmonious.

IV. Is It Necessary to Understand the Bible?

- A) The _____ of knowing and understanding truth (Jn. 8:31-32; Eph. 5:17; Eph. 3:3-5; 1 Pet. 1:22-23)
- B) The _____ of not knowing and understanding truth (Gal. 1:6-9).
 1. If we cannot understand it we are all doomed (Rom. 2:5-10).
 2. Jesus commanded those who listened to Him to understand (Mk. 7:14).

V. Is Sincerity Enough?

- A) "There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death." (Prov. 14:12)
- B) Zeal without _____ is not enough (Rom. 10:1-3).
ILL. Saul was sincere but lost (Acts 23:1; 26:9).

VI. Is Division Acceptable?

- A) Jesus prayed for all believers to be _____ (John 17:20-21).
- B) There should be _____ divisions among us (1 Cor. 1:10-13).
- C) Let us strive for "the unity of the Spirit" (Eph. 4:3-6).

Conclusion: When two disagree over what the Bible says there is only one of three possibilities. "A" is right and "B" is wrong. "B" is right and "A" is wrong. Or, they are both wrong and need to study further for a correct understanding of God's will. You may not understand everything but you must understand the plan of salvation.

My Notes: