

THE TIMELESS RELEVANCE OF THE BIBLE

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The faithful children of God rely on “the timeless relevance of the Bible” as a point of edification. The Bible gives confidence in God’s ability to foresee all future generations from the establishment of the church down through the ages until the return of Christ. While the concept of God’s omniscience is broader than the human mind fully can conceive, the Bible presents it in simple terms. Peter wrote, “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (II Pet. 1:2-4). Peter took the propagation of these truths in perpetuity into account, for he projected their benefit to those who would be following them after his demise. He wrote, “Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance” (II Pet. 1:15).

In like manner Paul spoke of developments that would occur out past his lifetime. For example, he wrote about the “man of sin” who would be “revealed in his time,” and the “mystery of iniquity” that surrounded him was already at work (II Thess. 2:6-7). He spoke of some “in the latter times” who would depart from the faith (I Tim. 4:1). The verses that follow present revealing details associated with the evil Roman Catholic Church. In addition, he gave characteristics of dangerous times that would come “in the last days” (II Tim. 3:1, 13).

The divinely given insight these men had was not limited to events on the time horizon of their lives limited to the first century. Peter said that in the last days scoffers would come denying events promised in the future because of the time element between the promise and the fulfillment. His statement declaring that God does not reckon time like man does shows why the Bible containing the statement possesses a timeless relevance. Peter wrote, “But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day” (II Pet. 3:8).

Today, those who deny the fact that all the saved are in the church of Christ reject “the timeless relevance of the Bible.” In order to connect with contemporary

culture, they deny the ability of the Bible written in the first century to speak to the twenty-first century. The “theological scholars” who would enlighten members of the church today say such things as “Since many of us no longer believe that only members of the Churches of Christ can be saved, exclusive loyalty to our own fellowship is in decline.”¹ They hold, “...We must be less rigid about our traditional stances to meet the needs of the current culture.”² Instead of first looking to the Bible to see what questions it answers today’s change-agents opine, “We are not the original audience of the biblical text, nor is it essentially a book of ordinances immediately portable into our setting. From this standpoint the problem of ‘silence’ touches all of Scripture, since no verse of it was originally composed to address the needs of a twenty-first-century church in America.”³

The Bible is to rule in the hearts and minds of all men. Paul said, “Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things)” (Phil. 3:16-19). People who truly want to go to heaven must “walk by the same rule” the apostles gave in the first century, and those who will not are “the enemies of the cross of Christ.”

A proof of “the timeless relevance of the Bible” is seen in Paul’s statement to Timothy. He said, “But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” (II Tim. 3:14-15). The scriptures had remained relevant throughout Timothy’s lifetime. Paul wrote this statement toward the close of his life’s labors concerning which Timothy had been intricately involved (Phil. 2:19-20). The scriptures had remained relevant as Timothy was exposed to different cities, colonies, cultures, and continents.

The scriptures to which Paul referred were the Old Testament scriptures written by Moses and the prophets going back from Timothy’s time more than 1500 years across an even broader range of different cities, colonies, cultures, and continents. Peter referred to the New Testament (specifically Paul’s writings) as scripture (II Pet. 3:16), so the Bible made up of Old and New Testaments may be referred to as scripture. The establishment of the scriptures bearing relevance unaffected by time by an apostle of Jesus Christ establishes “the timeless relevance of the Bible” in an authoritative manner.

A parting proof of “the timeless relevance of the Bible” may be observed in the statement of Jesus regarding his answer to the Pharisees’ question on divorce. The question was “Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?” “And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female?” (Matt. 19:3-4). Then Jesus quoted Genesis 2:24 which was written 1500 years earlier regarding Adam and Eve becoming the first husband and wife some 4000 years earlier. Oh, that faithless men would see that “the scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35).

ENDNOTES

¹Jeff W. Childers, Douglas A. Foster, and Jack R. Reese, *The Crux of the Matter* (Abilene, TX: ACU Press, 2001), p. 26.

²*Ibid.*, p. 141.

³*Ibid.*, pp. 162-163.