

Where is the Difficulty?

The apostle Paul expressed his fear that the members of “*the church of God at Corinth,*” I Cor. 1:2, would allow their minds to “*be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ,*” 2 Cor. 11:3. Many today fail to understand what is required in obedience to the gospel; not because of the difficulty involved in knowing the Lord’s will, but because their minds have been “*corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*”

Suppose you had never heard anyone discuss any command in the Bible. Then suppose that you received through the mail one copy of the Holy Scriptures and you believed that through this Book, God had made known His plan and His will to the human family. With this in mind, what would you believe:

1. About the essentiality of baptism after reading: “*He that believeth **and** is baptized shall be saved?*” Mark 16:16
2. About the “mode” of baptism after reading: “***Buried** with Him in baptism wherein also ye are risen through the faith of the operation of God, Who hath raised Him from the dead?*” Col. 2:12.
3. About the number of churches Jesus built after reading: “*And He is the head of the body the church...*,” Col. 1:18, and then reading “*there is one body and one Spirit...*?” Eph. 4:4.
4. About the doctrine of salvation by “faith only” after reading: “*Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and **not** by faith only?*” Jas. 2:24.
5. About perverting the gospel of Christ after reading: “*...if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed?*” Gal. 1:9.

Kind reader, it doesn't take a genius to know the meaning the Lord intended to convey in the preceding controversial Scriptures. In fact, it takes expert **help** to misunderstand! The difficulty today in learning what God wants us to know and do in order to be saved is not because God intended or caused it to be that way. The difficulty exists because of what men say about what **God said** as they attempt to explain away the intended meaning, and thereby corrupt people’s minds “*from the simplicity that is in Christ.*” Let each of us have the attitude of the Bereans who “*received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so,*” Acts 17:11. Let each of us take to heart the instruction of the apostle John, as recorded in I John 4:1: “*Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*” In brief, let us believe and obey the doctrine of Christ, and reject the conflicting doctrines of men.

***** —B. Witherington