

The Bible and The Church

I. Popular Views of the Bible

Irrelevant

- **Age.** Ac.17²⁰ For you are bringing some strange things to our ears. Therefore we want to know what these things mean.
²¹ For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.
 - **New-Age movement: just concentrate and say the right things and you'll make things happen**

Irrelevant

- Age. Ac.17:20-21
- Content. Ac.7
 - Stephen: “a quite intolerable young speaker ... a tactless and conceited bore ... who delivered an oration to the council in which he inflicted on them a tedious sketch of the history of Israel, with which they were presumably as well acquainted as he”
– Geo. B. Shaw

Irrelevant

- Age. Ac.17:20-21
- Content. Ac.7
- Rivals. Is.8¹⁹ And when they say to you, “Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter,” should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living? ²⁰ To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them

Irrelevant
Irritating

- **Critical.** Jn.12⁴⁸ He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day
 - We must know bad news to embrace good
 - **“What about innocent natives...?”**
 - Innocent people need not fear.
 - Innocent people need no Savior.
 - Where are they? Ro.3:23

Irrelevant Irritating

- Critical. Jn.12:48
 - “What about innocent natives...?”
 - “But they never rejected Jesus.” Ro.1 –
 - 18, they suppress truth
 - 28, they reject Father
 - He handed them over to a debased mind: unqualified, worthless, base

Old, abandoned building,
home of bats and snakes...

Irrelevant Irritating

- Critical. Jn.12:48
 - “What about innocent natives...?”
 - “But they never rejected Jesus.”
 - “But what if they don’t know the Father?”
 - He revealed Himself to them . . .
 - External evidence: Ps.19; Ro.1 –
 - 19: truth about God *clearly revealed*
 - 20: without excuse (2:1)
 - 20: His eternal power/Godhead (divine nature). “We hold these truths...”

Irrelevant Irritating

- Critical. Jn.12:48
 - “What about innocent natives...?”
 - “But they never rejected Jesus.”
 - “But what if they don’t know the Father?”
 - He revealed Himself to them . . .
 - External evidence: Ps.19; Ro.1 –
 - Internal evidence: Ro.2:14-15
 - Gentiles without revelation sinned against light they had. Ro.3:23

Irrelevant, Irritating
Inaccurate

- Skeptics charge Bible with absurdities
 1. Jacob's branches, Gn.30:25-43 (31:7,9,12)
 - If God could overrule evil men to accomplish His plan (Ac.2:23), could He not overrule Jacob's superstition to bless him and fulfill His promises?
 - Rahab.

Irrelevant, Irritating
Inaccurate

- Skeptics charge Bible with absurdities
 1. Jacob's branches, Gn.30:25-43 (31:7,9,12)
 2. Flat earth.
 - False charge.
 3. Josephus doesn't say much about Jesus.
 - Silence proves nothing.
 - How much does he say about Buddha?
 - What He says about Jesus, they reject.

Irrelevant, Irritating, Inaccurate Influence

- “It caused inquisitions”
 - Totally contrary to Bible
 - Lk.22⁴⁹ And when those who were around him saw what would follow, they said, “Lord, shall we strike with the sword?”
⁵⁰ And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. ⁵¹ But Jesus said, “No more of this!” And he touched his ear and healed him.

Irrelevant, Irritating, Inaccurate Influence

- “It caused inquisitions”
 - Totally contrary to Bible
 - 2 Co.10³ For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.

Irrelevant, Irritating, Inaccurate Influence

- “It promotes legalism”
 - Bible condemns legalistic attitudes
 - Mt.23:4
 - Col.2:23
 - Loving obedience is not legalism
 - Is illegalism better than legalism?

Irrelevant, Irritating, Inaccurate Influence

- “Those who follow the Bible are Bibliolaters”
 - Indicts Jesus Himself, Mt.4:3
 - What passage criticizes one for trying too hard to obey word of God?
 - Mt.23²³ Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith...

Irrelevant, Irritating, Inaccurate, Influence
Ignorance

- “I follow Jesus, not the Bible”
 - What if: “I follow Moses, not the law”?
 - How to know Jesus without His word?

2 Co.11⁴ For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted – you may well put up with it!

Irrelevant, Irritating, Inaccurate, Influence, Ignorance

Inaccuracy

- Follow spirit, not letter of the law

2 Co.3⁶...who also made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

- Inconsistent: they refute own position by making conclusions on letters of this verse
- Paul does not elevate experience over the word. 2 Co.1:13

Irrelevant, Irritating, Inaccurate, Influence, Ignorance
Inaccuracy

- Follow spirit, not letter of the law
 - “Letter” – the law, written on stone
 - Governed from without
 - Killed because it exposed guilt
 - “Spirit” – the new covenant (Jer.31:31-34)
 - John 1¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ

Irrelevant, Irritating, Inaccurate, Influence, Ignorance

Inaccuracy

- “Spirit” – the new covenant
- “The Law finds a man gathering sticks on the sabbath and stones him. Grace finds thousands of robbers and murderers, illuminates them, and gives them life. The one turns a living man into a dead one; the other out of dead men makes living ones. Christ says, ‘Come unto Me all ye who are heavy laden,’ not ‘and I will punish you,’ but ‘and I will give you rest’” – Chrysostom

I. Popular Views of the Bible

II. There Is A Pattern

1 Co.4⁷ For who makes you differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

Three questions:

1. What makes you so special?
2. What do you have that others do not?
3. Where did you get it?
 - They have a gift, not a merit
 - Paul pops their bubble of pride
 - No self-made men

1 Co.14³⁶ For did the word of God come originally from you? Or was it you only that it reached?

Two questions:

1. Did you originate the gospel?
2. Are you its lone possessor?
 - If you didn't write Scripture, then obey it!

Paul's conversion – 1 Tim.1:16

- However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ **might show** all longsuffering, **as a pattern** to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.
- **Show**: point out...as index finger on object.
- **Model, prototype**: his salvation is example to those who would believe afterwards.
- If God could cure Paul, the sickest, no sick should doubt possibility of salvation.

Paul's words – 2 Tim.1:13

- Hold fast the **pattern** of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.
- Standard.
 - No one was left to invent his own religion according to his own desires.
 - Only God knows what pleases Himself.
 - Paul's concern: *hold fast*.
 - Opinions of men come and go; do not turn from pattern of sound words. Cf. 3:14