Can We Understand The Bible Alike?

Intro: It is a grievous fact that so little Bible study is being done today. Not too many people read and study God's Word. This is due to several reasons.

1. Indifference
2. There are those who are slightly concerned about religious subjects but who do not study the Bible because they do not realize its importance.
   a. They have never developed a taste for that kind of food.
   b. Heb. 5:12 “12 For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.”
   c. 2 Tim. 2:15 “15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”
3. There are those who do not wish to look into the mirror of God’s truth because it reveals their true condition.
   a. They do not like what they see there.
   b. Jam. 1:23-25 “23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. 25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”
4. Then, others are under the impression that the Bible cannot be understood. This is what we wish to study at this time.

I. CAN IT BE UNDERSTOOD?

A. That it cannot is an invention of the devil and his workers.
   1. There are those in the religious world who tell us that the Bible is not for the common man.
   2. They teach that people should come to the church for an official interpretation since they cannot understand the Bible.
   3. This theory has been invented to deprive people of their God-given liberties. Also it makes their members helpless slaves.

B. But, the Scriptures make it evident that they were intended for all people and not just for a few presumptuous officials.
   1. Christians are commanded to let the word of Christ dwell in them richly: Col. 3:16 “16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”
   2. They are admonished to desire the sincere milk of the word: 1 Pet. 2:2 “2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”
   3. Rom. 15:4 “4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”

   a. Paul says the scriptures are for:
      (1) Our learning.
      (2) Our admonition.

   b. 1 Cor. 10:11 “11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”
4. Paul charged that his epistle should be read to all the holy brethren: 1 The. 5:27 “27 I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren.”
5. Why all these statements if the scriptures are not intended for the people in general. Not only that but:
   a. Christ told the people to “search the scriptures”: John 5:39 “39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”
   b. Acts 17:11 “11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”
   c. 2 Tim. 2:15 “15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

C. If we cannot understand the Bible then one of two things is true.
1. God could not give it in such a way that we can understand it.
2. Or, God would not give it in such a way that we can understand it.
3. Implications:
   a. To say that He could not would impeach His power.
   b. To say that He would not would impeach His goodness.

D. Surely, we cannot believe God would have given a revelation and command it to be read by all people, all the while knowing that they could not understand it.

II. Someone is ready to grant that we can understand the Bible, but insist that we cannot all understand it alike.
A. This is the former idea in a modified form and again the former statements are apropos.
1. If God did not give a revelation that we can understand alike, He either could not or would not.
2. Surely, God can give a message that all can understand and if all can understand then they can understand alike.
3. It may be that some misunderstand, but it cannot be that we understand it differently.
4. Thus, we are forced to this conclusion: If God did not give a revelation that we can understand alike, it was because He did not want us to understand alike.

B. God does want us to understand alike.
1. New Testament stresses the plea for unity.
   a. John 17:20-21 “20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; 21 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.”
   b. 1 Cor. 1:10 “10 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.”
   c. But there can be no unity without unity of understanding.
   d. Amos 3:3 “3 Can two walk together, except they be agreed?”
   e. Therefore, the Bible plea for unity insist that God expects us to read the Bible and understand it and understand it alike.
2. Would God approve a preacher standing in the pulpit day after day preaching a different plan of salvation each day?
3. How, then, could He approve of ten different men preaching ten different plans of salvation?
III. SOMEONE INSIST THAT OUR DIFFERENCES ARE PROOF THAT WE CANNOT SEE THE BIBLE ALIKE.

A. But, are they? What are some of our differences?
   1. We are divided over creeds.
      a. What creeds?
      b. The Bible? No.
      c. The creeds men write.
   2. We are divided over names.
      a. What names?
      b. The name Christian? No.
      c. The division is over names not found in the Bible.
   3. We are divided over what constitutes baptism.
      a. Some teach immersion, others sprinkling, others pouring.
      b. But, over which of these are we divided? Are we divided over immersion? No.

B. Do you not see that all our divisions come about by those things not mentioned in the Bible?

C. Our differences of understanding are not over those things found in the Bible.

Conclusion: May I make a plea for you to read and study your Bible? You will find it, “a lamp to unto your feet, and a light unto your path.” You will find your understanding of it growing the more you read. Be satisfied with the Bible. Do not digress from it into practices not mentioned therein—these other practices are the causes of division. Be satisfied with the Bible and the Bible alone.