

The Scriptures have a powerful way of performing on all of its readers and hearers a spiritual diagnostic that reveals the state of men's hearts and souls. Thus the reactions and approaches of men to Scripture are driven by the state of their soul. Below are some quotations of great Christian men of the past whose astute observations about this truth are quite insightful and to-the-point on this matter. It may also help us to see that when men have occasional issues with accepting the words of the Scriptures (the Bible) that it cannot be something that is solely intellectually borne but is also something spiritually wrought. So we must realize that no one can come to a deeper, or even a 'sagacious' (scholarly), understanding of God's word unless they first plainly listen to Scripture and stop trying to out-manuever the forcefulness of its message and its working upon the spirit and soul.

“The only real argument against the Bible is an unholy life. When a man argues against the Word of God, follow him home, and see if you cannot discover the reason of his enmity to the Word of the Lord. It lies in some form of sin. He, whom God sends, cares nothing at all about human wisdom, so as to fawn upon it and flatter it; for he knows that ‘the world by wisdom knew not God,’ and that human wisdom is only another name for human folly .”

– **Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892), Pastor of Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, England**

“I believe one main cause of objections to the Bible lies in its power over man’s conscience. The Book will speak for God, whether men will hear or whether they will forbear. But all critics are not so open as the poor East-end lecturer, who, when asked by one of his hearers, ‘Why is all your criticism turned against the Bible instead of against Shakespeare or Homer? Why don’t you let the Bible alone?’ replied with English outspokenness, ‘Why don’t I let the Bible alone? Because the Bible will not let me alone.’ It ever has been a witness for God, and still will be, while men need a light in a dark place .”

– **Andrew J. Jukes (1815-1901), Pastor of St. John’s Church, Hull, England** (*The Names of God*, pgs. 225-226)□

“Defend the Bible? I would as soon defend a lion! Unchain it and it will defend itself!”

– **Charles H. Spurgeon**

"Many read the Bible the way a mouse tries to remove the cheese from a trap without getting caught ."

– **Søren Kierkegaard**

"Either the Bible will keep you away from sin, or sin will keep you away from the Bible."

– **C. S. Lewis**

"St. John Chrysostom says that it is a great blessing from God that some parts of the Scriptures are clear while others are not. By means of the first we acquire faith and ardour and do not fall into disbelief and laziness because of our utter inability to grasp what is said. By means of the second we are roused to enquiry and effort, thus both strengthening our understanding and learning humility from the fact that everything is not intelligible to us ."

- **Peter of Damascus (The Philoklia, Volume 3)**

To the observations of Andrew Jukes and Charles Spurgeon (both contemporary English preachers) as well as C.S. Lewis above I would add my own quotation:

"Those who do not believe the Bible claim that those who do are ignorant of the supposed 'facts' of science and history, to which I reply in turn that those who do not believe the Bible are ignorant of the state of their soul ." - Me

The latter reply, granted, is not exactly a direct answer to the former claim, but it is rather a counteraction of its accusation of 'ignorance' and the impetus from which such claims arise. Jesus in the Gospels on several occasions would answer someone according to what they needed to hear, not exactly according to what they had asked. So first we would be wise, overall, to examine ourselves and see if anything is keeping us from God and from hearing His Word rightly. We should not be trying to snatch only the pleasing parts from God's Word without applying the necessary self-judgment and repentance (snatching the cheese from the mousetrap). Because - God forbid! - conviction of the truth might be a deadly trap to our fleshly ways.

It is repulsive to the worldly-minded that to be a follower of Jesus is to be - blessed paradox that it is - a living martyr (a witness/testimony - Greek *marturia*). Such a one is someone who signs their death warrant the day they believe in Christ, dying daily to themselves and living through Christ. The Gospel then, as the Word of God which tells us how we should follow Jesus, is a stumbling block for our flesh. Now the analogy of the mouse and the cheese in the mousetrap is not perfect, as to portraying the method in which the Gospel calls to us, but it serves its purpose as pertains to those who approach the Gospel carnally.

Next then, if once we have examined ourselves and still yet find that we have questions about the Scriptures. we would do well to realize that "*some parts of the Scriptures are clear while others are not*" and some things require additional "*enquiry and effort*".

That additional enquiry to gain understanding cannot be apart however from the illumination of the Holy Spirit, prayer, and especially "

humility

", because of, indeed it is true, "

the fact that everything is not intelligible to us

." The one who instead comes to the Bible, apart from God and saving belief, and pontificates theories and hypotheses about the Word of God, balks at the idea that not all things are intelligible about God's truths to their carnal mind, and that such truths are in fact hidden from those who profess to be wise

(Romans 1:22)

. They remain

confident within their academically clever frameworks of their position, apart from any examination of self or their own receptiveness to what Scriptures say.

About such people the words of Spurgeon ring true: "*that human wisdom is only another name for human folly*". Nevertheless, to those

who are humble enough to approach the Scripture with no pretense, it is yet still also true that a great portion of Scripture is abundantly clear to all men, such that those who hear may believe and "*aspire to what is said*" to "*grasp what is said*"

aspire to what is said

" and thus benefit in their understanding and practice of godliness. This abundant clearness also leaves men without excuse for neglecting to properly respond.

Most of all, we must remember that the Word of God is "*living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart*"

"

(Hebrews 4:12)

. Yes, doubting man; yes, mature believer; yes, you who are now hearing God's Word: the Word of God can judge your thoughts, desires, intentions, and also subconscious motivations, even penetrating to your very soul and spirit. It will with great effectiveness expose what is therein. For those who have sin in their heart, the Word of God is like salt in a wound and is like the stench of death

(1 Corinthians 2:16)

. To such "

sin will keep you away from the Bible

". Nonetheless, God's Word will not return void. And His calling and persistent pressing through His Holy Spirit, in order to present the Word of truth to all people, will not "

let you alone

" or permit you to remain untouched.

Though you may rail against it, the Word of God still stands, as voidless and full of authority as when it went forth from God. However for those who feel that sting of death; and the agitation of the flesh in opposition to God's spiritual ways (for the two are perpetually contrary to one another); and the true "*power over man's conscience*" that the Scriptures wield; and then repent of that sin and believe in Jesus for salvation from sin and death: to them God's Word is "*a light in a dark place*

" and they come to realize that it "*ever has been a witness for God*

". And yes, to them it is even a "*fragrance of life*

"

(1 Corinthians 2:16).

Neither God's Spirit nor His Word will "*let you alone*" because His Spirit has come to "*convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment*

"

(John 16:8)

, and only by receiving the Word in faith can anyone be saved from sin and judgment, hence, "*faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ*

"

(Romans 10:17)

. Do not resist the working of the Word on you, because it can save your soul from eternal death. As the Scripture wisely admonishes, "

Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as Israel did when they rebelled

"

(Hebrews 3:15)

. Do not approach the Word with your intellect solely because you will ultimately be confounded and frustrated in your efforts to carnally apprehend the spiritual truths of Scripture. That approach can quickly lead some to disgust and tossing out the Scriptures, or even hostile opposition to Scripture and attempting to bring it down to the level that they themselves are at, in order to interpret it according to their own desires and inclinations.

For by God's wisdom and design the wisdom of man cannot attain to true spiritual understanding, and we are to rather realize that "*not everything is intelligible to us*". Yet in the confines of faith honest inquiry, examination, study, and searching for truth can indeed yield understanding and may even benefit the intellect. However in that case it would benefit one whose intellect and mind is possessed by Christ and is apprised of spiritual things through the Holy Spirit, by which one may know the mind of God

(1 Corinthians 2:11)

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So surely we must hear the Word of God, confront it (for surely it confronts us - even as an unchained lion as Spurgeon says), believe in it, and then also seek to be as the Bereans who examined Scripture carefully to test if the things that they heard were true. And we must never

forget to "*Test everything, and hold on to the good*" (**1 Thessalonians 5:21**).

See also: [Quotes about the Scriptures](#)