

“You Can Prove Anything By The Bible”

Joe Slater

Actually, you can't. The Bible, like any other book, can be misquoted, twisted, taken out of context, and otherwise abused by unscrupulous scoundrels. But that proves nothing except the lack of character in those who so mishandle it.

For as long as God's word has existed, unprincipled persons have manipulated it to serve their own vile purposes. Satan started the process in Eden, first by casting doubt whether God had actually spoken, and then by falsely implying that God's word taught that ignorance was a virtue (Genesis 3:1-5).

Bitter critics of the Bible today follow Satan's lead, cherry-picking passages and misapplying them to look evil or absurd. Skeptics claim, for example, “The Bible upholds slavery!” Actually, the Bible has done more to end slavery than any other document. The Old Testament regulated slavery for the protection of slaves, and the New Testament goes even further as Jesus teaches us to treat others as we would want to be treated (does anyone want to be enslaved?).

Then there's the allegation, “The Bible says bats are birds, when everyone knows bats are mammals!” But taxonomy (classifying living things as birds, fish, reptiles, mammals, etc.) is a modern human invention. The Hebrew term for bird simply means a flying creature. Bats fly, do they not?

So no, you can't just “prove anything” by the Bible. The Bible is not a goofy hodge-podge of every weird and wacky idea under the sun. It is only when Scripture is misquoted, misapplied, or otherwise misused that it may appear on the surface to uphold error. When it is handled reasonably and respectfully, it teaches nothing but truth.

Optimism

Josiah Perkins, it is said, was celebrating his 100th birthday when a reporter called to interview him. “Do you think you'll live another hundred years?” the reporter asked. “Don't see why I shouldn't,” Josiah replied. “I'm a heap stronger than I was a hundred years ago today.”

Mr. Perkins, I'm sure, knew that he was being overly optimistic, but I like his attitude because it reminds me of a man in the Old Testament by the name of Caleb, who witnessed the fear of the children of Israel when they were faced with conquering the land of the giants. He said to Joshua, “. . . *I am this day eighty-five years old. And yet I am as strong this day as on the day Moses sent me; just as my strength was then, so now is my strength for war, both for going out and for coming in. Now therefore, give me this mountain of which the Lord spoke in that day, for you heard in that day how the Anakim were there, and that the cities were great and fortified. It may be that the Lord will be with me, and I shall be able to drive them out as the Lord said*” (Joshua 14:10-12). Caleb's confidence that day came by knowing that his ability to drive out the giants depended on the Lord being with him.

The apostle Paul was able to face all kinds of obstacles in preaching the gospel to a hostile world even though he was stoned, shipwrecked, thrown into prison, deserted by his brethren, and finally put to death for preaching the gospel. His determination to follow the Lord is evident from the words he wrote to the young man Timothy: “*For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed. For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that day*” (2 Timothy 1:12)

--Cecil Burch (via *Old Paths*)

A Plan That Actually Works

In 1923 Otto Schnering came up with a plan to promote his new chocolate bar, Baby Ruth. He settled on a candy drop. A pilot was recruited for a plane, complete with the Baby Ruth logo, to perform some trick flying over Pittsburgh. As crowds gathered and curiosity rose hundreds of candy bars with little parachutes attached began falling from the plane. What happened next was not part of Schnering's plan. Office workers reached dangerously out of windows trying to catch the candy. Children ran into the streets to catch or retrieve their prizes. And when some of the parachutes failed to open people were struck on the head and car windshields were broken by falling bars. Drivers, taking their eyes off the road, looked up instead as they crashed into other cars (*The Memory Palace; Mental Floss*).

There are other seemingly good ideas that failed to come off exactly as planned (remember the Ford Pinto?). Unlike mere mortals, when God comes up with a plan, He is always successful in making it work. Isaiah said it best when he said that God's word “shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper ...” (Isaiah 55:11).

God has a plan that includes you. We should feel confident in conforming to the New Testament plan and design of Christ's church. It is a kingdom of servants, joyfully serving their Lord and Master while sharing their hope with the lost. That is God's plan. Any plan of human origin is bound to have problems, but God's plan actually works.

--David Bragg (via *Bulletin Gold*)