

Is Seeing Believing?

“We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.”
(1 Corinthians 2:12)

We sometimes get frustrated when those outside of Christ do not seem able to understand the teachings of Scripture. It all seems so obvious to us. If they'd just use their heads, they'd be able to see the truth. The truth is clear and simple, we surmise, anybody ought to be able to understand it... if they'd just be honest. We actually think and say things like that. Other times, we get aggravated with one another or other believers in Jesus when they do not understand things just the way we think they should. However, there are two realities about the depths of the Scriptures that we must not forget.

First, the truth of Scriptures often becomes fully understandable only after we come to faith and obey it. Augustine of Hippo famously said, “I believe in order to understand.” Centuries later, Anselm echoed this statement in similar fashion: “I do not seek to understand in order that I may believe, but I believe in order to understand.” These great Christian thinkers of old were onto something with those thoughts.

Our understanding of the deep mysteries of God cannot come purely through human intelligence and observation, like in science. To understand the God of the *super*-natural, we must look beyond human categories of wisdom and reasoning to faith and revelation.

The Hebrews writer wrote, “By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.” (Hebrews 11:3) The scientific method and man’s reasoning alone cannot see nor fully understand how God *super*-naturally brought

something out of nothing. We believe it by faith and revelation—not by intellect alone. In other words, we believe in order to see.

Furthermore, Jesus said this to doubting Thomas, who demanded verifiable, physical, human proof of the resurrection: “*Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.*” (John 20:29)

I believe and can see the mysteries of God in Scripture! But I do believe because I see, rather I see because I believe.

Second, the Holy Spirit, who inspired Scripture and uses Scripture to transform us, also helps disciples of Jesus understand the truths that God has given us. The Holy Spirit is at work helping us understand the Scriptures He inspired! Let’s never approach our time in Bible study without asking for the Holy Spirit to make God’s truth known to us!

In 1 Corinthians 2, Paul writes this:

“We declare God’s wisdom, a mystery that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. However, as it is written: ‘What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived’—the things God has prepared for those who love Him—these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. . . . What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words. The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness, and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.”

PRAYER

“Father God, I thank you for blessing me with your Holy Spirit. I pray that as I open the Bible I will be able to see your truth, hear your voice, and understand your will. I ask, dear Holy Spirit, that you open my eyes of my mind and work on my heart so that I can understand and obey the truths that the Father intends for me. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.”

Scott

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