

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Theme: What Are You Doing With God's Word?

Lessons Realized While Picking Blueberries

Bill Brinkworth

We can see examples of biblical principles all around us. We should expect to find these visual “parables” because the God who preserved His written Word for us is also the same One who created all in this universe. He has not left you on your own. He wants you to see and follow His way, and there are many ways to see it.

While picking blueberries from my sprawling bushes, I related many situations of that job to principles about our handling of God’s Word. I was reminded that:

- Although you think you picked all the juicy berries in front of you, when you look back at where you have already plucked, you find you missed some. Often, they are hidden behind leaves or branches that shield them when picking from another direction.

This brought to mind the many times I have read certain scriptures, but their principles were not understood at the time or were not relevant to me when I first read them. However, when in need of specific godly advice, the same verse can be looked at from the angle of need, and it becomes a light or solution to a situation one is currently facing.

When the Bible is read, we may not always find something that applies to our lives at the time, but when it is needed, God allows us to understand His advice.

- Sometimes good fruit has fallen off the bush and lies wasted at the base of the tree. We often read the Bible with other things on our minds and miss God’s advice that could help us.
- Unharvested, ripe fruit laying at the base of bushes also pictures godly direction that one never bothered to glean from God’s preserved, Road-map for life. Solutions to problems are close at hand, but the pages of the Bible are not opened to find them.
- Sometimes berries have rotted or have been ruined by nibbling birds. Too often, we read something in God’s Word and believe it means what we were previously told it meant. We fail to study what other Scriptures say about the situation and believe in unusable, untrue doctrines.
- Sometimes a strong wind came and blew much of the fruit off the tree. Those wasting winds are like many false teachings that have been heard. They invalidate the truth and value of God’s Word, causing people to pay no mind to the Bible’s advice. Untrue statements like “A bunch of old men wrote the Book, and it is not what God said,” “There are errors in the Bible, and it cannot be trusted,” and “Different versions say it better” convince too many to ignore the Bible’s truths.
- Sometimes, intermingled among the branches, a wild, thorned blackberry bush manages to grow. Among delicious blueberries, blackberries are tempting fruits, but they are not blueberries. However, when picked, one gets scratched, and annoying

chingers cause tremendous itching. For the next few days, one regrets being tempted to pick those non-blueberries because of the painful scratches and the insect bites.

Likewise, Christians who get sidetracked from doing God's will and way by some unscriptural temptations many times regret straying from God's direction for them. Too often, wrong acquaintances, watered-down Bibles, unbiblical doctrines, and involvement in sin get one off-course from God's direction, and it causes much regret.

Life certainly is not a bowl of blueberries. There is not much easy-picking, and it requires much work and discernment.

Read and study God's Word. Pay attention to every Word because one day you will need His wisdom. Do not be distracted by philosophies, opinions, or popular trends if they do not align with what is taught in the Bible. God does not desire you to go through life without His help. His Way is there for you to follow. Read and apply His Truths.

In One Ear and Out into the Fire

Bill Brinkworth

God gave His Word to the prophet Jeremiah (*Jeremiah 36*). It was shown in hopes that the people of Israel, when they heard how their sin would be judged and punished by God, would repent and stop their wickedness. That is always the first desire of God. He does not want any to perish.

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." II Peter 3:9

Baruch, Jeremiah's scribe, heard the Words from Jeremiah and recorded them on a scroll. For an unspecified reason, the prophet was not allowed in the Temple. Jeremiah commanded Baruch to read it, in his place, to an array of princes. Fear struck the listeners, and they immediately wanted the king to hear God's judgment by hearing the words of God. "Surely, as they were touched and convicted, so will the king be," they must have thought.

Jehudi was selected to read the prophetic words to the king. Instead of being grieved and burdened as he heard a few pages read, the king cut them up with his penknife and threw them into the fire. As more were read to him, he did likewise. Soon, all the Words given to Jeremiah were destroyed.

Just ignoring the Words, however, did not lessen his responsibility to deal with the warnings. As for the Word, it was simply rewritten, and today we have all the same Words that Jeremiah was given, plus some additional truths Jeremiah added. God could preserve His Word then, and He is still doing it today in the preserved King James Bible for English-speaking people, despite all that man is trying to do to dilute His truths.

What is interesting is to see how these men handled what was heard. The prophet heard, knew their source, and knew they were valuable to share with others so they could divert a terrible fate. He knew how many would react, but he still made sure others had the opportunity to hear God's Words as he had. Today's Christians should have a similar burden to want others to listen to the truths as taught in God's Word. If we do not tell others, who will?

The princes heard the same words and were afraid of what was prophesied to happen. They too wanted another to hear it. I am sure they were hoping their leader would help change the situation so God would not judge their nation.

The king reacted like so many do today. He heard the words, was not convicted or disturbed, and burnt them up. He did not do with the Truths as God intended.

Destroying or ignoring the truths from the Bible is certainly going on today. God's Word is ridiculed and demeaned. We hear all the "arguments," which include:

- "Only the weak believe it." However, are we not all "weak"? Most do not recognize their weaknesses – yet! I heard this defense from a man who was on his fifth marriage, and he is a young man. He just does not see where he is failing, perhaps because he is comparing himself to other "weak" persons around him, and does not seem as "bad" as others. If he and others would compare themselves to what the Bible says about their condition, actions, and sins, they might see a truly different picture of themselves.
- "It is filled with errors." People often say that, but most cannot give an example of an "error". The majority who have given the Bible open-minded study have concluded that there are no errors.

Years ago, one website offered thousands of dollars as a reward to anyone who could find errors in it. They never gave one cent of reward because no one could find a mistake. None of the big talk about contradictions and errors proved true when they were challenged. I have found that many who claim this excuse have never even read it for themselves, or have formed an opinion before they even read some of it.

- "It's too hard to understand." Actually, the majority of the King James Bible is at a fifth-grade level. The difficulty in reading and understanding it depends on whether or not the Holy Spirit of God is in the reader's heart. God's Spirit is the only One that can allow anyone to understand it.
- "It's not important." This is the excuse many use for not even attempting to read it. It is shocking to know how few have read it at all, and even fewer that have read it from cover to cover — even amongst Christians!
- They do not want to hear it. They have already purposed in their heart not to obey the highest Authority. This was the case of the king in Jeremiah 36. He, like so many others, had his plans as to how he wanted to live his life and did not want any authority telling him how to live it. It is when people realize their way does not work that they turn to God's way and allow Him to lead them in the direction He desires for them.

How are you handling the Word of God? Is it so precious to you that you are burdened to share it with others, no matter what it costs you in popularity, friendships, and others' opinions about you?

Are you believing every Word and trusting its Author, even though you may not initially understand it all? Are you asking and allowing the Spirit of God to help you know His Word? Are the truths within the pages of God's Word so important to you that you make the effort to read and obey them, or are you allowing it to go in one ear and out into the fire as the king did, and not letting God's Word influence and direct your life? Read God's Word and let Him show you His truth.

“... For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.” *Luke 12:48*

Forgotten Treasure

Dr. Edmond

A man once entered a home in Germany and found it very wretched — no fire, no furniture, no food. Everything bore the appearance of utter poverty. Glancing around, he saw, in a neglected corner, a copy of the Bible, and when he went away, he said to the poor tenants, “There is a treasure in this house that would make you all rich.”

After he had gone, the people began to search the house for what they thought must be a jewel or a pot of gold, and found nothing. They dug up the floor in hopes of discovering the hidden store of wealth. Their labors were all in vain. One day, the mother lifted the old Bible, and found written on the flyleaf these words, “The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.” (*Ps. 119:72*)

“Ah!” she said, “can this be the treasure the stranger spoke of?” So, she shared her thoughts with the rest of the family. They began to read the Bible and were transformed in character, and the blessings of God came to stay with them.

The stranger came back to find poverty gone, contentment and peace in its place, and a hearty Christian welcome. With grateful joy, the family told him, “We found the treasure, and it has proved all that you said to us it would.”

“A man may read the numbers on a sundial, but he cannot tell the time of day unless the sun shines on the dial. We may read the Bible over and over, but we cannot learn its purpose or words until the Spirit of God shines into our hearts.”

— *T. Watson*