

Have You Understood the Scriptures?

Acts 8:30-31,35

³⁰ Philip ran up and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" ³¹ And he said, "Well, how could I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.

³⁵ Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him.

Understanding the Word of God can be hard; it is a difficult book to make sense of, and we will all need help.

Help, however, has been guaranteed by Jesus through the Spirit of God. The scriptures are understood as they are explored IN THE SPIRIT.

The barrier to understanding is invisible, but very real. We have to get into the Spirit with Jesus to see as He sees.

John 3:1-21

3 Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews; ²this man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." ³Jesus answered and said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

What is happening here? Is Jesus just spouting profound (but unrelated) mysteries to confuse Nicodemus?

No, Jesus is addressing the barrier that keeps Nicodemus from the realm of understanding- superficial knowledge.

The Word for "know" and "see" are the same Greek Word, meaning "to perceive, discern, or become skilled in".

1 Corinthians 8:2

² If anyone supposes that he knows anything, he has not yet known as he ought to know

Woman at the well- "I who speak to you am He"

We lose our bearings when we forget that Truth is not an idea first, but a Person- Jesus Christ Himself.

Colossians 2:2-3

² that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and *attaining* to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, *resulting* in a true knowledge of God's mystery, *that is*, Christ *Himself*, ³ in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Superficial knowledge of spiritual things will cause an earnest, seeking Christian to have a stronger relationship with the Bible than they do with the One who is the Truth.

"You search the Scriptures b/c you believe in them you have eternal life, but it is these that testify of me"

⁴ Nicodemus *said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" ⁵ Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'⁸ The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know (same word) where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Jesus is challenging Nicodemus with a spiritual truth- the things of God are hidden in plain sight!

1 Corinthians 2:13-15

¹³ which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual *thoughts* with spiritual *words*. ¹⁴ But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. ¹⁵ But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one.

The intrinsic value of a spiritual person, or spiritual things, is only properly assessed by those familiar with that realm.

⁹ Nicodemus said to Him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰ Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things? ¹¹ Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony. ¹² If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

Jesus turned the question on Nicodemus: How can this be? Do you really study the scriptures this way? Do you read past the things you cannot understand, never seeking out deeper understanding from the Spirit?

¹³ No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man. ¹⁴ As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; ¹⁵ so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.



¹⁶ “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. ¹⁸ He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹ But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.”

“Nicodemus, you would have understood all of that if you had ever entered the realm of the Spirit!”

How can we enter the realm of the Spirit?

Be diligent in your pursuit of God through His Word; those who seek Him most know Him best.

As we read and pray, ask Him to search you, wash in the Blood of Jesus, and ask Him to begin to speak.

As we encounter difficulties, don't ignore them and don't run too quickly to easy answers- ask the Spirit of God to speak to you.

Trust Jesus- He will send the wind of the Spirit to guide the sons of daughters of God.

1 Corinthians 2:9-10

⁹ but just as it is written, “Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, And *which* have not entered the heart of man, All that God has prepared for those who love Him.”

¹⁰ For to us God revealed *them* through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

John 6:45

⁴⁵ It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught of God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.