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The Real Meaning of Biblical Words

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Edited by David Sielaff, 2004, July 2021

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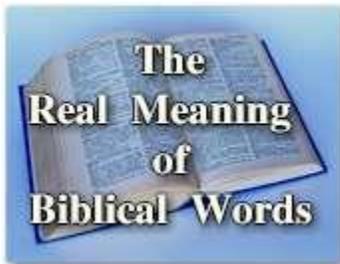
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The Holy Bible is a very large book. It contains thousands of sentences made up of words. Those words are important because they give meaning to inform us about God’s intentions for us, so we can know His will, His way, and His plan.¹ You could not know what God’s plan for the salvation of humanity without the words of the Bible, and especially without knowing the meaning of those words. In this lecture I give you the essentials to understand the principles governing the real meaning of biblical words.

This is an awesome assignment. And it may appear to some as blatantly arrogant and dictatorial at first. But why should it be? Jesus told His disciples (who later became the apostles), the statement in John 16:13–15 of which we are all familiar. It was quite arrogant as far as that statement was concerned. He said, “**Howbeit when he, the Spirit of Truth is come. He will guide you into all truth.**” He spoke to the 11 apostles (Judas left by this time), on the eve of His crucifixion. He gave final teachings before He went through His ordeal of crucifixion. There is a definite article there in the original. He said to them,

“**He [it], the Spirit of truth [the Holy Spirit²], is come, he [it] will guide you [you apostles] into all **THE truth** [all of it]; for he [it] shall not speak of him [it]self; but whatsoever he [it] shall hear that shall he [it] speak: and he [it] will show you things to come.**”

• *John 16:13*

¹ This material is derived from a 1993 Associates for Scriptural Knowledge audio lecture tape. DWS

² The Holy Spirit is not a personality, but “**the power of the highest**” (Luke 1:35; 1 Corinthians 8:6).

“Things to come” means prophecies. We have prophecies in the New Testament; we have one book entirely devoted to prophecy, the Book of Revelation. Jesus said the Spirit would guide these apostles **“into all truth”**:

“... show you things to come. He [it] shall glorify me: for he [it] shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father has are mine: therefore said I, that he [it] shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.”

• *John 16:13–15*

After the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and His appearance to them again, we find more truth was given. He returned to heaven after 40 days of seeing them after His resurrection. Since that time, the Spirit of God has come to reveal what the truths of the Scripture are, and they were to be given to all mankind.

Ten days after His return to heaven, on Pentecost day in 30 AD the apostles assembled in the house at Jerusalem and there God filled all who were there with His Holy Spirit. They began to speak, inspired by His Spirit. From then on, step by step, the Spirit of God revealed new knowledge, new understanding. The teaching of God to govern mankind was given to those apostles and to Paul who came later. All of them together were to be given **“the truth.”** I am not making an arrogant statement. The real meaning of biblical words can be understood, and understood absolutely because the Spirit of God is there guiding individuals into the understanding of those truths.

Paul also comprehended made His truth accessible. He spoke of it at the beginning of his First Corinthian letter. He wanted them to understand how the spirit of truth was given to him and others, so the Corinthians and all of us might understand the real meanings of words of the message of salvation.

He stated in 1 Corinthians 2:10 how **“God has revealed them unto us by his Spirit ...”** He is talking here about various principles and wisdom and teachings. **“For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?”** We ourselves must have a spiritual understanding one from another if we will really comprehend what another person is talking about. **“Even so the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God.”** This is key: you must have the Spirit of God to comprehend the real meaning of the words of Scripture.

“Now we have received [so Paul says], not the spirit of this world, but the spirit which is of God [meaning the mind of God]; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teaches, but which the Holy Spirit teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

• *1 Corinthians 2:12–13*

At the end of verse 13, the word “spiritual” is plural and actually means **“comparing spiritual things with spiritual [things].”** That is how we will get to the real meaning of the biblical words, sentences, and paragraphs that make up the Bible. Paul goes on in the next verse:

“But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.”

• *1 Corinthians 2:14*

Reading Words Is Not Enough

Paul is not saying man cannot read what the Bible says. You can study Scripture from a translation, such as the King James Bible, starting with Genesis and going to Revelation. My bibles are in English, but they could be in French or German. The original is in Hebrew or Aramaic in the Old Testament, and Greek in the New Testament. If you know Aramaic and Hebrew or Greek, you can learn and read the words easily in the original languages. Many scholars in the world who would not claim to have the Spirit of God can read these words just as anyone can. They see the sentences. They can analyze the words and tell you where the nouns are, the prepositions, the verbs. They can tell you about the grammatical structure of the biblical languages. In fact, any of us who are just grade school graduates can basically get the meanings of words, of sentences, and even put together whole chapters.

Paul knew that, but he still says in 1 Corinthians 2:14: **“But the natural man ...”** That means the ordinary person on the street, each of us fits the category **“the natural man.”** We are like anyone else by nature. **“But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him ...”** How many people on the street, when you start to discuss spiritual matters (or matters dealing with the Holy Scriptures), think they are foolish? They think they are intelligent, but Paul says such “things” are not only **“foolishness”** to such a person, but **“... neither CAN he know them [Why?], because they are spiritually discerned.”**

First Corinthians 2:15: **“But he that is spiritual judges [or examines] all things.”** If you are spiritual and if you want to apply spiritual principles, which means to be guided by the Spirit of God in these things, these words will begin to make sense because God’s Spirit has been working in you. That is what the apostle Paul is saying, **“... yet he himself is judged of no man.”** The spiritual person cannot be judged by natural teachings of men. You must be judged by spiritual teachings, spiritually understood, because the Spirit of God motivates you spiritually. To get the real meaning of the biblical words, you must have God’s Spirit to guide you.

We must be able to read; we must be literate. Those not able to read can understand, certainly, but they can have no confidence except in man, regarding the Scripture. They cannot read for themselves or come to conclusions of what is right or wrong. They must depend on man to tell them what the text says and not themselves determine what God is saying. Only literate people can do that.

In Christian society the first thing a parent should do is teach their children to be literate. Then they will be able, with God’s Holy Spirit, to determine the teachings of God on their own. That is why educational systems are especially important to understanding the Gospel. In my professional experience as I pursue literacy, I have had opportunity and privilege to teach people and help them become more literate, so they in turn can help others be literate. That is one of the finest things we can do for mankind. That is why education is important. Literate people are free to read Scripture on their own and determine on their own what it means.

From what I have given you so far, you can read Scripture and still not understand it as Jesus and Paul said. In Ephesians 4:11–16 Paul continues this theme: it is essential to have the Spirit of God guide our understanding of the real meaning behind words of the Scripture. It says God **“gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists and some, pastors and teachers.”** God gave these offices for a purpose.

The purpose was **“for the perfecting of the saints.”** *Saints* means “holy ones.” He was talking about you. He wrote to the Ephesian Gentiles of course, but his epistles has come down to you. These teachings are given to you and to me: **“... [1] for the perfecting of the saints, [2] for the work of the ministry [the service of God], [3] for the edifying of the body of Christ”** (Ephesians 4:12). The word **“edifying”** means building up the body of Christ stabilizing it, making it strong. The result will be:

“Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the son of God unto a perfect man [in Greek, a mature individual] unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”

• **Ephesians 4:13**

The apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers, and pastors of old were brought up by God, by Christ, to perfect the saints, to perfect you, to perfect me, to build you up, to build me up. God intends to build all of us up until we come to the unity of the faith of the knowledge of the Son of God. It means a full and perfect knowledge. It says, **“unto a perfect man,”** the fully adult, mature, spiritual man, **“unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”** We can truly approach His own understanding of the truth. We can reach the very dimension of being equal to none other than our elder brother Christ Jesus. Once we reach that stature:

“Be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine [teaching] ... But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him [into Christ] in all things, which is the head, [Who is the head?] even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted ... according to the effectual working in the measure of every part [of this body] making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”

• **Ephesians 4:14–16**

We should strive to become exactly like Jesus Christ in knowledge, in understanding, in wisdom, in morality,

and eventually in power and glory. It comes, finally, by our resurrection from the dead.

Paul is being quite arrogant here when you think about it. He says we have the capacity of knowing the real meaning of the teaching of the Gospel, and if we do not have it, we ought to continue until we get it. We should continue to be built up and edified until we come to the full stature of Jesus Christ our elder brother Himself. This was the reason the word of God was given to us. We cannot do it on our own.

In all this growing in grace and in knowledge (though we must supply a lot of elbow grease, work, and effort ourselves) it is really God Himself who gives us the capacity and the ability, and I might also say the will, to perform what He tells us to do. It is up to Him. You are called by Him at this time to have this knowledge of the Gospel. You have been given a tremendous privilege and you have nothing to say about it. We have been given the knowledge of Christ supernaturally.

Chosen and Anointed

When I look at people I know, including myself, who believe in the Scriptures, we are the most unusual and unlikely people I can imagine to succumb to the teachings of the Gospel. But we do. Do you know the reason? It is because God selected us to do so at this time and there is no way out of it. It is irresistible. It is irrevocable. In no way can you possibly get out from understanding the truth of God if God chooses to open your mind. He has done it for all of you learning from this lecture at the present time.

Go to First John chapter 2. This principle is found throughout the Scriptures. It is God's Holy Spirit that guides us. But let me emphasize, God guides us. He guides us through His Spirit to understand the words of Scripture. **"But you have an unction [anointing] from the Holy One [Jesus Christ], and you know all things"** (1 John 2:20). This amazing Scripture is tucked away, you might say, in a corner of this small epistle. First John has 5 short chapters. But with verse 2:20 I could take the rest of this lecture and still not exhaust teaching what that one verse means; it is so powerful.

Read carefully what John is saying. **"But you ...,"** John wrote to his audience in the 1st century AD, but it has come down to you and me. He wrote not just for the people in his time. He says they already knew the truth. He wrote for all those after him, and to us today so we might be aware of them, we who live in the 20th [now the 21st century, *DWS*] at the period before the close of this age.

"But you have an unction [an anointing] from the Holy One [Christ] and you know all things. I have not written unto you because you know not the truth, but because you know it [the truth], and that no lie is of the truth."³

• 1 John 2:20–21

That is an bold but true statement for John to make. Writing to those people, he said they know **"the truth."** He did not say part of the truth, but all the truth. He meant the truths that were essential for salvation.

"But the anointing [the "unction" in verse 20] which you have received of him abides in you, and you need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you of all things, that is truth, and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, you shall abide in him."

• 1 John 2:27

This anointing given to these people had such a profound impact that they already understood what the words of God were. They knew the truth already. John said, because you know it already and because you know all of it, why do you have any man teaching you? He is not saying they do not need to learn more about God. He is talking about the revelation of the truth being given — about the basics of the Gospel.

³ John was not talking about all the truths of nature and how God formed through His own creative powers the heavens and the earth. He did not say that, but, those words also include that. It includes even the understanding of the natural things. That will come in the future when we will have the mind power and ability to comprehend everything about God's creation. *ELM*

Truth and the Word of God

John also wrote powerful words in John 17:17 which further define what he means by the truth and how to come to a knowledge of the truth. This is again Jesus Himself, on the eve of His crucifixion, teaching last principles to His apostles for them to remember. Thankfully through the Holy Spirit they have been written down and preserved for us. We can read them plainly. Jesus spoke His last prayer to His Father: **“Sanctify them [the apostles, and through them all of us] through your truth: your word is truth.”** Truth means the Word of God.

John begins his Gospel by saying, **“In the beginning was the Logos and the Logos was with God and the Logos was God,”** “Logos” is a Greek term; it means “word.” In the King James Version it says, **“In the beginning was the Word.”** It more appropriately means “saying” or “statement.” When God makes a statement (and the statement is written down, as a noun, a verb form, etc., everything needed to make sentences and so on) the statement is so powerful, it will be made to happen. Why? Because God said it. Yes, that is why, **“In the beginning ... Logos,”** or **“the saying,”** was with God, and was God as a matter of fact. John identifies the Logos with Jesus Christ. [See Dr. Martin’s article, [“How Did Jesus Become God”](#) for more about Logos DWS.]

Go back to Genesis chapter 1 and note the power of the Logos, the power of the Word. It says God created the heavens and the earth. **“And God said ...”** That is all He did; He said, He spoke. He said, **“Let there be light.”** Light did not evolve; it came on the scene when God told it to. He knows how He can do those things. They are in those statements, in these words.

The words of Holy Scripture, or any words uttered by God, uttered by Christ Jesus, are powerful words. **If you want to know the truth, you must know the words of God.** The words of God can be spoken audibly (as to the prophets, apostles and to the early church), it is quite true; but the words we find in the New Testament were uttered by the apostles. Christ told them just before His crucifixion, that He was leaving it for them to tell others what the truths of God are. Write them down and put them in a book. That book is the Holy Scriptures. You should not have any man, anymore, try to tell you exactly what the Word of God says if you have all the truth at your fingertips. I can show you how you can know all the truth and the real meaning of biblical words. It is simple. But I will tell you this, it means you must study the Word and understand the Word in a proper way, because the truth is resident in God’s Word. **“Your Word is truth”** (John 17:17).

The prophet Isaiah said the same thing in the Old Testament. It does not matter what mankind tells you. It does not matter if they claim to be religious people or wise people. Read the context of Isaiah chapter 8, because the 6 chapters (chapter 7 on through chapters 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12) give a prophecy about Jesus Christ coming on the earth, Him raising up some apostles, about books being written so we might have the Word of God in written form. You must understand the context when Isaiah wrote:

“To the law and to the testimony: if they [anybody], speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

• *Isaiah 8:20*

Such is the standard you must go by, but how do you gain the knowledge of God’s word? Obviously through having God open your mind through the Holy Spirit. Even when the Holy Spirit opens your mind, even when you have a basic understanding, you might be able to say that you have all truth relative to salvation. Yet you may not know all the intricacies, all the factors that make up the truth in all its dimensions. But you can know all the truth as far as has been given. I give below some teachings in Scripture that if you know them alone, you will know “all” the truth. You will see what I am saying is true because it is direct from the Word of God.

A Christian Creed

Do you realize there is a Christian Creed in the Bible? It is in the New Testament, written by an apostle. In that creed are all the essentials of the Gospel, all the teachings needed to get the real meaning of every biblical word. You can know the practicality of it and be able to get all intricate details if you stay with it as the Bible says. Yes, details may take time, but you can know if God begins to open your mind (as He has done

for all of you) to essential truths relative to salvation and know the real meaning of the words.

To get to the details requires effort. God will increasingly open your mind and let you know more and more of His truth based upon the essential teachings given from the very beginning. To know that truth, read what Paul said is essential to understand the intricacies of the Word of God.

“Study [be diligent] to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing [cutting or apportioning] the word of truth.”

• *2 Timothy 2:15*

“The word of truth” is the Scripture. But if you want to know its fullness, and not be ashamed when someone asks you a question, you must expend effort. You have to study. Each one of us should set aside at least once a week, if not every day, to study the Word of God. You will find answers to back up the essential truths known from the beginning.

The last thing Peter wrote was that we were to, **“grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”** (2 Peter 3:18). He meant for each of us to fully commit yourself to study to learn all the basic truths of the Scripture. Then you should go and continue to study to get the intricate details.

A First Principle to Learn — God Hides the Meaning of the Words of Scripture

Look at the first principle for finding the real meaning of biblical words, sentences, paragraphs, and books, and the message of the whole Bible. This is an amazing principle, because most people when they find out are not pleased with it. They do not like the way God wrote the Scriptures. While the educated natural mind can read the words of Scripture, the real meaning behind those words may not be what God intends for them to accept. People normally do not like that idea. If you want to truly grow in grace and knowledge, then you must deal with this first principle.

It is this: though you read the words in the Scriptures (even if you read and understand biblical languages perfectly), it does not mean you will understand the true sense behind the words. God tells us in the Old and New Testaments that you cannot understand or comprehend those words unless the Holy Spirit opens your mind to learn what they actually mean:

“But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery [secret], even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world [aions, before the eons] unto our glory ...

But God has revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man, save [except] the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knows no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God ...”

• *1 Corinthians 2:7, 10–12a*

Why do we need to have God’s Spirit now?

“... that we might KNOW [be perceiving] THE THINGS that are freely given to us OF GOD. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teaches, but [words] which the Holy Ghost [Spirit] teaches; comparing spiritual things with spiritual [words].

But the natural man receives NOT the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness [stupidity] unto him: neither can he know them, [why?] because they are spiritually discerned.”

• *1 Corinthians 2:12b–14*

The **“natural man”** can know what the words say, he can analyze the grammar perfectly, but he cannot know God’s intended meaning of the words unless he has one other ingredient, the Holy Spirit of God. This principle is found throughout the Scripture. Let me sum it up quickly then I will give you some details.

What God did by writing His Bible was to give clear, plain, simple Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek words, to be translated into simple and plain English words, simple and plain Italian words, Russian words, or German,

French, whatever. But even when you have those simple words put in the languages that can be understood, so far as the natural man is concerned, he still lacks a knowledge of the spiritual teaching behind those words unless God opens his mind. That is the first principle.

This principle is defined in Scripture. You know what God does? God says in effect: I am giving you in (in the King James Bible) some 1356 pages, I am giving you My Word. It is something that you can read, but I will hide the real meaning in section after section; and I will hide it in the open. I will hide the real meaning from people in the world who can read the words but not be able to understand them.

The first thing God does is to tell you how He does it. God does not hide the fact He hides the meaning. In fact, He says He will give words that can be comprehended, but to understand the meaning from those words, something else is needed.

Each of us need the Holy Spirit to enable us to see the meaning those words convey. In a sense the Bible is written for the initiated, those who are initiated into an understanding of what God's principles are in the first place. He gave you understanding to interpret these words that He has not given to the world. God stated openly that He wrote His Word that way. That is how He intends it to be understood. He said it time and time and time again.

If the natural man wants to really understand God, he should first read those Scriptures about how God is hiding the real meaning. If you want to know the real meaning behind the words of Scripture, you must get the meaning from God's point of view. You will not get it from man. You will not get it from yourself or your own experiences, though they are helpful. You must understand the knowledge of God given to you from the outside. It must come from somewhere else.

It comes from God. It comes from our Elder Brother through the Holy Spirit uniting with our minds, our spirit, so we can extract the real meaning behind those words in the Holy Scriptures. You must be selected by God to understand these words supernaturally. God created everyone from Adam down to today. There are over 6 billion souls on this earth today. Very, very few understand the real meaning behind the Scriptures. Several billion people (1½ to 2 billion) call themselves Christian. That is a large number of people who have the Bible in their midst which they claim to live by. While they can read and argue about what the words say, they do not understand or comprehend the real meaning behind the words they read, because they are not in touch with God in the way that He wants them to be, for He has not YET called them to His truth.

Jesus spoke to the Pharisees in the Gospel of John chapter 6. Those Pharisees were made up of Jews, of the Abrahamic race, from Jacob, from the 12 tribes. They had privileges others did not have concerning the knowledge of God. Those Pharisees disputed with Christ time and again. He was crucified because the people did not agree with Him that He was the very Son of God bringing the Father's message to them. If they had understood who He was, they would not have killed Him (1 Corinthians 2:8).

They killed Him because they did not know who He was. They did not comprehend His words. They heard His words and were quite capable of putting the sentences and paragraphs together, but they were unable to get the full meaning of the message of Christ or His reason for coming to this earth.

Christ understood that those people could not help themselves. How can you be guilty of something when God has not given it to you yet? Jesus said to those people in John 6:44: **"NO MAN can come to Me EXCEPT the Father, which has sent me, draw him and I will raise him up at the last day."** That statement shows God gives certain people an understanding of Himself and draws them to Him, while He does not do so for others at the present time. You may call that discriminatory — and it is — but this is how God operates.

Christ Jesus later restated the same principle. He knew why most people were not accepting Him and His teachings at the time. It was because God had not opened their minds to it. He gave a reason why in John 6:65: **"And he said, 'Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.'"** The fact that you believe the Scripture, that you know the Scripture allows you to realize the full meaning of the Scriptures, you are able to do that and know it is because God the Father has supernaturally opened your mind to see it. It is not something of your own doing. The Father has done it.

John 8:43 says virtually the same thing. Pay attention to these short verses tucked away in longer passages of Scripture. **"Why do you not understand my speech?"** [a long discourse He just gave the people, He answers

His own question] **because you cannot hear my word**" (John 8:43). They heard the words, but they did not "hear" the Word. They knew what He said in Greek (or Hebrew or Aramaic if He was speaking that language). They knew the sentences, the words and all the components of speech, but they were not able to put them together correctly. Why not? Because they were not called of God — **yet**. We see the same thing later in John:

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: that the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, when he spoke, 'Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?'

Therefore they could not believe, Jesus said, because that Isaiah said again, 'he has blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should NOT see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.' These things said Isaiah when he saw his glory and spoke of him."

• *John 12:37–40*

God is able to hide the meaning of His truth from people even when the words are plain. He has done it in the past, and God continues to do it today. Jesus told people He was teaching that even though He performed many miracles before them, they would not accept His teachings, and would not believe on Him. **That was not their fault!** He goes on to quote Isaiah chapter 42:19–20 that YHWH Himself blinded their eyes.⁴

The difficulty people have with this is they say, "God is discriminating. Why does He do it this way?" We will get to that later. The fact is this is how He does it. He actually puts down His words from the beginning of Genesis to the end of the Book of Revelation, gives it to everyone on earth, then He tells them in effect, "This is My Word. What you need to do is to search out its meaning. Because it is hidden from the world."

Christ's Method of Teaching

Read Matthew chapter 13 where Christ told the common people the method of His teaching. You would be surprised how many people today believe that Christ gave parables as illustrations to make the meaning of His message clear and plain. That was not the reason Christ gave the parables.

There was a prophecy in the book of Isaiah that parables would be given by Messiah when He would come. Christ fulfilled that prophecy by giving His parables. However, the teachings found in the parables were not given so that people **could** understand the truth, but so they **would not understand the truth**.

Those who were initiated into the final Mystery of God, the great secret of God, can go to these parables, read them and they make perfectly good sense when you have the keys to comprehend them. However, if you take these parables the way Christ gave them to the people in the 1st century AD without the teaching of the Mystery that God gave later, you will not comprehend them, just as the people did not comprehend what Christ talked about. Again, these teachings by Christ **were designed so they could not understand**.

"And the disciples came and said unto him, 'Why speak you unto them in parables?' He answered and said unto them, 'Because it is given unto you [you apostles] to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.'"

• *Matthew 13:10–11*

All people will come to a knowledge of the truth one of these days. But Christ did not want most people to come to the knowledge of the truth back then. But He is giving you open teaching, while He gives the parables. They were given as mysteries that you can understand them. When the apostles first heard those parables, they were as confused as the people were. You know why? Because the Holy Spirit had not yet been given to them. Christ said when the Spirit of truth is come, He would lead them into all the truth, and He did just that. Then these parables made sense. You must have God's Holy Spirit. The Word of God is **"the truth"** that the Holy Spirit will allow you to understand what God's message is. Jesus continued,

⁴ Also note Jeremiah 5:20–21: **"Declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying, 'Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not.'"** DWS

“Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven but to them it is not given. For whosoever has, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever has not, from him shall be taken away even that he has.”

• **Matthew 13:11–12**

In the 1st century AD, the Jews had the 22 books of the Old Testament. They already had made up their minds what it taught. When Christ came along and fulfilled the prophecies, they were so confused about what they thought the prophecies said, that they lost even some knowledge they thought they had. That is what Christ is talking about. They did not know who He was, the Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament.

“Therefore speak I to them [the people] in parables: because seeing they see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah which says,

‘By hearing you shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing you shall see, and shall not perceive. For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.’

But blessed are your eyes [the apostles], for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which you see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which you hear, and have not heard them.”

• **Matthew 13:13–15** [referencing Isaiah 6:9–10]

Note the distinctions between the people and the apostles. He spoke to the people in parables. He explained the parables to the apostles who did not fully understand until the later revelation of the Mystery was given.

“All these things spoke Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spoke he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets saying, ‘I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.’”

• **Matthew 13:34–35** (referencing Psalm 78:2)

The parables when properly understood reveal things that had been kept secret. When Paul in 63 AD received the revelation of the great Mystery, the great secret, he said how long it was kept secret — from **“before the foundation of the world”** (Ephesians 1:4, 9). The finality of the great secret was made known some 33 years after Christ made these statements. The understanding of these mysteries was given to the apostles, but the Holy Spirit had to come first and lead them step-by-step so they would finally have all the truth. Read John chapter 16 with this in mind.

All Truth Comes from God

Knowing the truth is all in how God dispenses it. God must flip the switch in your head, so to speak, so that you can see the truth. God must open people’s minds to it. Most people today do not have the truth of God. They have the truth of God as far as the words are concerned, and the Bible is the most popular book published today. But even though the words of God are there, people cannot comprehend their meaning unless God begins to open minds of the people. Only then will they see the real meaning of biblical words.

This teaching is found throughout the Bible. In Ephesians 2:8–9 Paul told the Ephesians, **“By grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”** I have written much to show that people must do certain things to come in contact with God. But doing those things they will find it is God doing those things for them. They may think they are doing them, but everything has been given by grace. The fact that you come to the knowledge of Christ and accept Him is not because of something that you did, it is something God the Father has done.

Philippians 1:29 is a particularly important Scripture where Paul says, **“For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake.”** You could not even believe on Him unless God granted that privilege to you. Each of you appreciates the words of God not because Ernest Martin

gives them, but because God gave them. Read the words of God for yourself without me. But once you read them, once you understand them, once you believe them, know that God the Father has given you that great gift and privilege. Others can read the same words and not understand what they mean at all.

In Philippians 2:13, **“For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”** The fact that you will to study the Bible, that you set your mind to do it, you might say you are the one doing it. Indeed, you are. Ultimately who is responsible for your willpower to do that? Who gives you the willpower, if someone stands against the teachings of God, you stand firm in them, and express your will to stand firm?

God’s Holy Spirit gives you that ability. He not only gives you the will to do right, or the will to accept Christ, or the will to teach the Gospel, but He gives you the will to do the things that are necessary, and the ability to perform has all been given by God. It says by God’s “good pleasure,” not your pleasure. In Second Timothy Paul continues this theme that it is God who gives us the things we need just to be Christians.

“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure [perhaps] will give them repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth; and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”

• 2 Timothy 2:25–26

Paul speaks here about people who have gone astray from the truth. He says we should show meekness, but keep instructing them, and if we do, then God — perhaps — **“will give them repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth.”** It is up to God to flip the switch in their heads, so to speak, so they will respond.

Many of us have relatives that we desire to know the truth of God. Maybe they responded and maybe they have not. What you have to do in meekness and instruction is to keep giving them truth with wisdom. If God wishes them to understand the truth, He will flip the switch and they will accept and understand these truths. In his epistle to Titus we find Paul saying,

“For we ourselves were also sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving diverse lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.”

• Titus 3:3

Does that sound like human nature? Paul says we will continue to experience those things.

“But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost [Spirit]; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal [eonian, age-lasting] life.”

• Titus 3:4–7

We were doing all those things, but a kindness suddenly came, not by any works of righteousness which we have done, but because of God and His mercy toward us. He flipped that switch in our minds and we had a renewing of the Holy Spirit. God felt it was time to wake us up and He did it. He poured out His Holy Spirit on us **“abundantly.”** He justified us by His grace, by His gift. Paul continually tells us, even our expressions of faith are a gift from God, not something we work up. Truly, that gift is also the faith of Jesus Christ that saves us. Do you know what He does? He supernaturally gives us faith so that we can express it on our own.

The very fact of belief is not something you concocted in your own mind. Belief is the supernatural ability given by God through grace. The fact that you confess Jesus Christ as Lord, as your master, as your elder brother, as the One who has done all the things to get you saved, the fact that you believe those things, as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 12:3, is not because you decided to do so in cooperation with God. God gave you the ability and He gave you a change of mind, whether you want to or not.

His grace is irrevocable. His Spirit is irresistible, and powerful enough to change your mind to the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit. You cannot get out of it. When God wants to turn you into one of His children who has knowledge and understanding and wisdom, He gives you these factors of salvation. Faith, confession, repentance are all given to you as a gift. You do not suddenly read Scripture, say

“I’ve been wrong” and make up your own mind to repent. That superficial repentance would not work. It must be a repentance motivated, charged by, and energized by the working of God’s Holy Spirit.

When the Holy Spirit begins to do that, then you will open your Bible, and little by little you will be able to read and understand it at last. You will get the real meaning of the biblical words. You will find out how simple it is to know all the central truth of the Gospel in an utterly simplistic way. Yet if you want to know the intricacies of the Gospel, all its ins and outs, and every particular factor of it, you will need to study to be able to see what the truth is. But you can know all the truth of the basics easily if God opens your mind to see the principles guiding the teachings of these words of Scripture.

In Hebrews 12:2 Paul wrote, “**Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith ...**” That is all I need to give you in that verse. Read the rest to get the whole context. He says that the faith you have is contained in and derived from Jesus. Who is the author of your faith? You? No, Jesus was. Who is the finisher of it? You? No, Jesus is. You do not have faith of a mustard seed. If you had that much faith, it would grow and grow like a mustard seed, and a large plant full of faith would result.

That is the kind of faith that God gives to you through grace. That is the kind of faith that will save. The faith to believe in Christ, and in the Father, and in the message of the Gospel is not something you have authored. It is not something you have finished. Jesus is the author of it and finisher of it. God the Father initiated the whole thing in the first place. We find James, the brother of Jesus, telling people not to err on some important cardinal principles of the Gospel. He said,

“Do not err, my beloved brethren, every good gift and every perfect gift [that we might have] is from above and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth that we should be a kind of firstfruit [singular in Greek] of his creatures.”

• *James 1:16–18*

Whose will is it that we will know the word of truth? Whose will is it that we should become “**a kind of firstfruit**”? It is the Father’s will. It is God the Father who gives every good gift.

You want the gift of salvation? **It comes from Him.** You want the gift of knowledge? **Ask Him for it.** Do what He says though — study, study, study. He will give more and more to you. You want the perfect gift? **It will come from God from above.** Verse 18: “**Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth ...**” You have that because God has placed that truth in you.

God can cause people to believe falsehoods if He wants too, even people who read the scripture. In 2 Thessalonians 2:8–12 we read about the end time when antichrist will be on the earth. Paul calls him “**the wicked [one].**” At that time, the whole world will go over to believe the lie that this man is the Christ. Why? Because God shall send them strong delusion.

God hides the meaning of things from people if He wishes to do so. He does it time and time again. I could give many verses to show that God sometimes deceives people into believing mistruths if they are prone to do so and want to perpetuate them. He will give them deception. He has hidden the meaning of many things from you and from me.

Though we have the Spirit of God there are many things that God would like to tell us that we are incapable of knowing at present because of our being in this flesh. But we do not have, at present, enough education to put together and productively use the words He would give us. That is promised in the future. We will know everything about God. We will know Him as a Father and Christ as an elder brother. We will know the very essence of God.

The Learning Process

At present time we are, as His children, in a learning process. Step by step, we can know all the truth of the principles of the Bible, what makes God the Father tick. And we can know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of heaven. We can also know the mysteries of salvation. I will show you how simple

it is to know them. There are three major points you must know for you to comprehend the real meaning of virtually every word in the Scripture, every verse in the Bible, every chapter, every book.

But God must open our minds to understand these truths. At the end of the age, as He said in Daniel 12:4, 9, He will open the understanding of prophecy as never before. People will begin to see what the truth is. In Acts 3:21 when the apostle Peter was teaching in the Temple in Jerusalem just after Pentecost, and he said to the people that God was about to restore all things. Before the end of the age, the restitution, the full knowledge of the truth, will be given to the world. There is no doubt that will be the case.

Jesus Himself said in Matthew chapter 17 that a man would come in the spirit of Elijah the prophet and that He would restore all things to the knowledge of the people and give them understanding of what Moses was all about, what the patriarchs were all about, and be able to show messages and teachings that will be clear and plain. All this is prophesied to occur just before the Second Coming of Christ back to earth.

God gave the words of Scripture to the world to read, and those who are literate can read them. But only those of us who have, so to speak, that switch flipped in your mind supernaturally by God can really understand the meaning. Christ talked about the time just prior to His Second Coming. He said in Matthew 24 that as far as the Gospel was concerned, many people would superficially believe it, but not many would comprehend it. This is important.

The first principle is: God hides the meaning of the words of Scripture.

The second principle is: People who read Scripture, though the meaning is hidden, in most cases do not think it is hidden from them. They think they have the truth. But people who are deceived believe they have the truth.

Just prior to the Second Coming of Christ, the words of the Bible will be made known to such an extent that many, many people will admit that Jesus is the Christ. But will they understand the real teaching of the Scripture? No. It will be given only to those few who God picks by His wisdom to understand the truth.

I do not understand why you have been picked right now. I do not understand why I was given a certain understanding of the Scripture. I know I have it. You know you have it too. God has not told me why except He said that we are given it by lot before the foundation of the world when a great lottery took place and certain ones were to be given knowledge of the truth and others were not. But why me? Why you? Paul admitted that he was known before he was in the womb, even before the foundation of the world. So was each of you. That is knowledge others do not have.

The apostles were given a message by Christ concerning His Second Coming two days before His crucifixion. They were told that at the end of the age many in the world would correctly believe that Jesus was the Christ, but they would not understand (1) the real meaning of salvation or (2) the message of the Gospel.

“And as He [Jesus] sat upon the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when shall these things be? [talking about the destruction of the Temple] and what shall be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age [“world” in the KJV]?’ Jesus answered and said unto them, ‘Take heed that no man deceive you. [Talking about deception ...] For many shall come in my name saying, I am Christ [Messiah]; and shall deceive many.’”⁵

• **Matthew 24:3–5**

“Many” will say or admit that Jesus is the Christ but in so doing they **“shall deceive many.”** When will this occur? Just prior to the Second Coming of Christ. The apostles asked when these things would be and when would the sign of His coming take place. Jesus responded that, from that time, many would start accepting Him. Within three centuries the entire Roman Empire accepted Jesus as the Christ, and they perverted the

⁵ It does not mean many people would come saying that they themselves are the Christ, as we hear occasionally. That will happen, but that is not what Jesus is referring to. Regarding this illustration of coming in His name and saying Jesus is Christ, go to Jeremiah 14:13–16 and 23:25–32 where you find illustrations of the heretical prophets coming in YHWH’s name, but deceiving the people. They did not call themselves YHVH, but they came in His name and by His authority. That is what Jesus meant.

Gospel in a way that we have been subjected to ever since with Constantinian Christianity.

Instead of Sabbath it is Sunday. Instead of Passover it is Easter. Instead of Tabernacles (or something else of the Old Testament) it is Christmas. Instead of mortality of the soul, it is the immortality of the soul. Instead of Christ we have a long-haired Zeus called Christ being worshipped.

All these are Constantinian Christianity and every one of those people called themselves Christian. Exactly as Christ said would happen, many people will claim to be Christian, but they are coming to deceive. This is the result of **the second principle**: If the many say Jesus is the Christ, and begin to prove it, you could almost be assured that their denominational teachings are likely wrong, simply because they are there to deceive. And just as Christ said would happen prior to His Second Coming, **“For many shall come in my name saying I am the Christ [Messiah] and shall deceive many.”**

What it means is this: establishment Christianity in existence presently, with its 20,000 different types of beliefs all admitting that Jesus is the Christ, are there to deceive. You can almost be certain of it. You cannot be certain on every single doctrine. But in general, know that established Christianity is basically wrong according to the prophecies. Christ said, **“Many shall come ... and deceive many.”**

He goes on to say that a change is coming near the end of the age (before the abomination of desolation set up in a Jerusalem Temple), and the Gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the world as a witness to all nations. Then shall the end come. In other words, the real Gospel will go forth as prophesied. An Elijah will come out of the Middle East who will preach the Kingdom of God throughout the world. It will be quite different from what is taught by traditional Christianity today. This is one thing all of us need to understand.

If people then have the Bible in their midst, read about Jesus, and say they like Jesus, they begin to accept Him. Yet it says, **“Many shall come ... saying I am the Christ and shall deceive many.”** It must mean they are not getting the real meaning of the biblical words. They read the words, but God has not flipped the switch in their minds to see the real meaning behind the words, which you and I are privileged to know.

You might say, Ernest, what gives you the arrogance to say we know, and they do not? Good question. What is it that gives us the truth? How can we be assured that we have the basic truths such as John says that we have all the truth? What is it that puts us in the category of saints to comprehend the basic truth when others do not? This question is answered by Paul in a way that if you read it, you will find how you can know the central doctrines that will open the whole mystery of the Gospel of Christ and of God the Father. You can get it from the Scripture yourself if you pay close attention.

A Christian Creed

Do you realize that there is a Christian Creed given in the Bible? It is almost like the creeds of various denominations or church councils, but Paul gave it to us. Where is it? It is found in 1 Corinthians chapter 15, basically in the first 28 verses. The first 8 verses are a prelude. From 1 Corinthians 15:29 to the end of the chapter Paul gives a commentary based on that creed. But if you accept the basics of 1 Corinthians 15:3–28, analyze its factors, you will get out of it three principle doctrines. If you accept these three, everything fits perfectly from the Old Testament and the New, so you can now know what the meanings of the words and the verses are, from beginning to end. Let us begin in 1 Corinthians 15:1:

“[Paul wrote to the Corinthians:] **I declare unto you the Gospel which I preached unto you, which also you have received and wherein you stand; [He sums up the Gospel:] by which also you are saved, if you keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received ...”**

• **1 Corinthians 15:1–3**

The creed starts in verse 3. Here is what you must believe to be able to understand the real Gospel:

Point 1: **“how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.”** You must believe that (verse 3).

Point 2: **“And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”** Yes, you must believe that He was buried and rose again the 3rd day (verse 4).

Point 3: **“That he was seen of Cephas [Peter], then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some have fallen asleep.”** [You must believe the witness of those who saw Jesus alive from the dead (not some disembodied state).] **“After that he was seen of James; then of all the apostles [again]. And last of all he was seen of me also, as one born out of due time.”** (verse 5–8)

Paul put himself in there. You must believe what Paul says, not just the others but what Paul says. Why?

“For I am the least of the Apostles and that I am not fit, or meet, to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church [the *ekklesia*] of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: [than all other apostles] yet not I but the grace of God which was with me.”

• 1 Corinthians 15:9–10

By now you must understand that God is the one who opens the mind. God gave this teaching to Paul:

“Therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so you believed. Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some of you that there is no resurrection from the dead? But if there be no resurrection from the dead, then is Christ not risen: But if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.”

• 1 Corinthians 15:11–14

He goes on to give the statement that Christ is now resurrected from the dead and in a glorified state. Look at 1 Corinthians 15:20: **“For now is Christ risen from the dead and become the firstfruit [singular in Greek] of them that slept.”** Enoch and Elijah and all the others that died and supposedly went to heaven, did not receive the resurrection that Christ received. The firstfruit was Christ. Paul relates Christ’s experience to mankind’s experience with the following doctrines and conclusions:

Doctrine 1: **“For since by man came death,**

Doctrine 2: **by man came also the resurrection of the dead.**

Doctrine 3: **For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.”**

• 1 Corinthians 15:21–22

That is what you must know — those basic teachings. First, that Jesus really died. He was a mortal being while He was here; He died on the tree. That is **Doctrine 1**. Jesus was resurrected from the dead (not the living) as the Christ, the Messiah. Paul emphasizes that for the rest of the chapter. That is **Doctrine 2**. Finally, you must believe that all will be made alive, that all will be saved. That is **Doctrine 3**.

What happens after we all are **“made alive”**? Paul goes on to say: **“Then comes the end”** (1 Corinthians 15:24). This occurs when the last resurrection takes place and the last enemy, death, is subdued (verse 26). Jesus hands over all power to God the Father once He has conquered all enemies in verse 28. This all takes place **“that God may be all and in all.”**

These basic doctrines are “the truth” that will open the totality of the Scriptures for you. They are what Paul preached and believed (verse 11). You should believe likewise. Once you know and believe each of these doctrines in the Creed of 1 Corinthians 15, then “The Real Meaning of Biblical Words” will begin to be clearer as you ask God to open your mind more and more to the full knowledge of His Grace and to His Word, all to the glory of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember what Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:15–16:

“But he that is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who has known

the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But **we have the mind of Christ.**"

Dr. Ernest L. Martin, 1993
Edited by David Sielaff, July 2021

Additional Resources

"The Mystery" is this: every human being will become a mature Child of God, and become as close to God the Father as Christ is to God now. This greatest secret was not revealed to the apostles at first until about 63 AD. when it was revealed to Paul finally and others. It is recorded in Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and other advanced New Testament writings.

Yes, there are several other "mysteries" or secrets revealed in Scripture, but most of them in the New Testament refer "the Mystery" with the definite article. They refer to the secret revealed to the apostle Paul around 63 AD

If you have not yet read my July 1, 2021 Commentary "[The Mystery, A Definition](#)," read it now. Also read Dr. Martin's other writings that refer to "The Mystery":

- "[The History of the Revelation of the Mystery](#)"
- "[The Mystery and the New Covenant](#)."
- "[The Time Periods for the Resurrections](#)"
- "[Illuminati in the Bible](#)" There is a true "illuminati" of "enlightened" ones, but they have no connection with occult or radical politics. They are those called of God.
- Chapter 24, "[Our Destiny' The Final Revelation of God](#)" in Dr. Martin's detailed book [Essentials of New Testament Doctrine](#) has the word "Mystery" within it 78 times. It contains the fullest explanation of the Mystery on the ASK website.
- Chapter 25: "[How Were We Chosen?](#)" goes a bit deeper about other aspects of "the Mystery."

Paul in Colossians and Ephesians wrote about his ministry given to him by God

"Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil [complete] the word of God; even the mystery which has been hid from ages and from generations, but NOW is made manifest [obvious] to his saints:

To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; Which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which works in me mightily."

• ***Colossians 1:25–29***

"How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is NOW revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; [Why?] That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel."

• ***Ephesians 3:3–6***

The information about the revelation of the Mystery to the apostle Paul, its rejection, and eventual acceptance (even if misunderstood) by the Christian *ekklesias*, and the leaders after Paul's death such as Peter and John is found in Dr. Martin's book [Restoring the Original Bible: The Design and Development of the Holy Scriptures](#), in Chapter 15, "[The Book of Acts and New Testament History](#)"

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