

Bedford Bulletin

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"God made us alive..." *Together with Christ*
Ephesians 2:5

"Then they took up stones to throw at Him" (John 8:59)

One thing is certain; the nature of man has never changed. Love for this old sinful world the pleasures thereof are still widely sought after by the majority, even Christians become spiritual adulterers (James 4:4). When Jesus walked the earth, He was rejected by most. Today is not different, for people still cast stones at His words, thus at Him because of His Words. In a debate (July 2012) on the issue, "Is homosexual marriage compatible with Scripture?" One speaker was quoted as saying: "We can't allow the tree of the words of the Bible to overshadow the forest of God's grace" (Margaret Hawk).

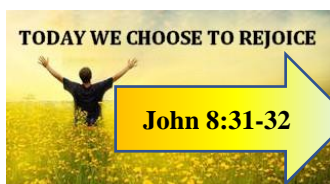
It is frightening to say the least that any person, let alone one who claims to be Christian, would make such a statement. To outright say that the Bible, the Word of God gets in the way of knowing God's grace is beyond any likeness of reason. Blasphemy, pure and simple. We are saved by grace, "*through faith*" (Eph. 2:8) and said faith comes only by hearing said Word of God. (Rom. 10:17). Yes frightening, yet more terrifying is that anyone would believe and follow such utter foolishness.

One reason this is possible is because people just want to fit in. They will follow any teacher that mixes a little Bible with worldliness, as long as it allows personal desire to rule. We want what we want, and are willing to look the other way, even look away from basic Bible teaching. Solomon said, "*There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death*" (Prov. 14:12). People say, love that teacher, love that preacher and when it allows me to do the things I like, I love that doctrine. In Hawk's quote the "tree" = the words of the Bible. You can't have a forest without trees any more than you can understand what grace is, who God is, and what it means to be Christian without the Bible. It is frightening but what Hawk wants people to believe,

and many do, is that the Word of the Lord can cause you not to be able to understand truth. The Lord Jesus said it is the Devil's work to take away the word. So, when someone teaches that God's word, gets in the way of true spirituality, tag that person as a worker of the Devil. The goal of the Devil is to cause as many as possible to lose their souls. Jesus said, "...*then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.*" (Luke 8:12) Those who say we don't need the Bible, "only to believe in Jesus", contradict Jesus who prayed, "...*those who will believe in Me through their word.*" Their word is the Bible (John 17:17).

The Paradox: Everyone wants to know Jesus, claim Him as their own personal Savior, but refuse to take the time to be diligent in their study of the Bible (2 Tim. 2:15). It just can't be done. I know a little about Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison, and George Washington though I never met one of them except through history books. Do you know who said, "Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal?" How did you know? You cannot have knowledge of anyone without hearing and Jesus made that clear saying, "...*Therefore everyone who [a]has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me*" (John 6:45). You cannot know God, Jesus, the church or what you must do to be saved apart from the Word. You must read it for yourself. Paul wrote, "*5 because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, 6 which has come to you, as it has also in all the world*" (Col. 1:5-6). We all get truth from the same source, the Word of the Lord. To know Him, His Commands, His Grace, His Love, and altogether His Will for your life, you must learn from God through the word of God. For someone to say that the Word of God blinds people from seeing God is, I can't help but say again, utter foolishness.

Anyone who says they know God or Jesus and claims to have faith in the same



"...*If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*"

apart from the Bible is a liar and is incapable of "*keeping His word*" because you can't keep what you don't have. You say you have faith. What says the scripture? Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by what? "*the word of God*" (Rom. 10:17). Paul said: "*Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain*" (1 Cor. 15:1-2). Pick up your Bible and put your faith in it alone and your faith will not be in vain. Believing in vain is accepting the teaching of men as if it were from God

Knowing & Doing God's Will

Proverbs 11:14

(Matt. 15:8-9). Listening to Margaret Hawk's quote claims ignorance of God's Word draws us closer to God. What says the scripture? John 6:63-68 Jesus addresses the importance of the Word as He said, *"It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."* If the words that Jesus spoke are Spirit that gives life, why would anyone not want you to read them? Evil men, and women simply want you to follow them. Man wants to run the show and God's Word just gets in the way.

I once asked a young self-professing Christian why he refused to study the Bible. The answer he gave: "The Bible is full of rules which get in the way of our having fun, we just want to be free to party and not be bogged down by the Bible." At least he was honest. Yet there is great consequence for not knowing His Word or rejecting it. *"64 But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him*" (John 6:64). Not believing and obeying the words of the Lord (Matt. 7:24-27) which can only be found in the Bible will bring spiritual death not life. Jesus said, *"From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?"* (John 6:66-67). Will you join with Peter who answered Him with *"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."* (John 6:68) or will you join with Hawks of this world and say the Words of God just get in the way and throw stones at it, at Him?

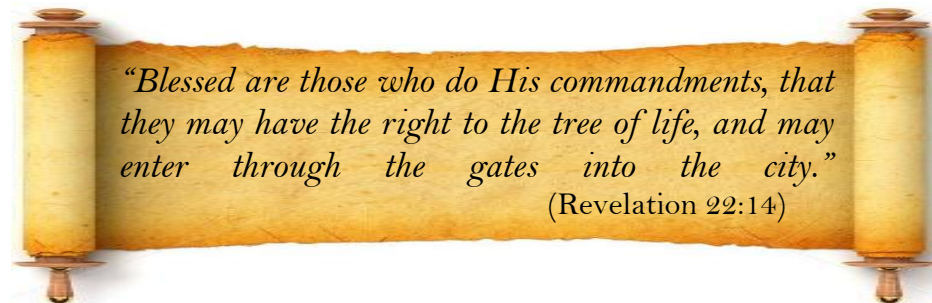
Truth: The Bible is made up from 66 books, (66 Trees if you will), which explain, define and reveal God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit, i.e. "the forest". Remember you can't have a forest without trees. **How important is the Word?** Often quoted are the words of the psalmist who said, *"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."* (Psa.119:105). His word guides us through the false teaching in this world. **How important is the Word?** When it is planted it is able to save your soul! *"...receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls"* (James 1:21). **How important is the Word?** Jesus who is the word (John 1:1) said, *"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love"* (John 15:10). You can't keep the commandment if you don't know them. Jesus said: *"Feed My sheep"* (John 21:17). Feed them with what? Answer: The word of life.

So many are sincere about what they believe, yet they are sincerely wrong, heading down the road that leads to the wide gate of destruction (Matt. 7:13).

I invite you to come and study the Word of God, the power of God to salvation (Rom. 1:16). Any day just call, and we'll set a time and place. If you're in the area check our meeting times on the back page of this bulletin, we'd love to have you join us.

Love

Dave Scarpino



Our faithful Creator is worthy to be praised in this assembly. All praise to Him who reigns above in majesty supreme! He gave His Son to die, for all mankind, that He might redeem all. Our blessed Redeemer suffered and died for our sins and is now risen and sitting at the right hand of God as Head of the church. Let us offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, knowing that He is the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him. (Hebrews 5:8-9) ***“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!”*** (Isaiah 6:3)

Times of Our Services

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	9:50 AM
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 PM
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:30 PM

What Must I Do to Be Saved?

1. Hear the gospel -----John 6:45; Romans 10:17
2. Believe the gospel -----John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6
3. Repent of sins -----Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30
4. Confess Christ -----Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized -----Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38
6. Remain faithful unto and until death -----Revelation 2:10; Matthew 10:22