
BIBLE TALK

This week the question is: **Is it wrong to argue over the Bible?**

Some people have a rule by which they live. They have decided there are two things which they will never discuss with anyone: religion and politics; and as hard as you may try they refuse to be lead into a discussion of either topic.

The general belief of some people is that it is wrong and sinful to argue over the Bible. It is their feeling that God frowns upon anyone who would discuss and argue over what the Bible says. Is this true? Is it always sinful and wrong to argue about what the Bible says?

IT IS NOT ALWAYS WRONG TO ARGUE

Let us begin by observing this: If it is always wrong to argue over the Bible, then Jesus Himself sinned, because He argued with others about what the Bible says and the very first person He argued with was the Devil:

Matthew 4:5-7

5 Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple,

6 and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written:

'He shall give His angels charge over you,'

and,

'In their hands they shall bear you up,

Lest you dash your foot against a stone.'"

7 Jesus said to him, "It is written again, 'You shall not tempt the LORD your God.'"

Notice here that the Devil quoted Scripture and from that Scripture He drew a false conclusion. Jesus argued with the Devil about this passage. Jesus pointed out that the passage quoted by the Devil did not mean what the Devil was trying to make it say. Jesus, then, was arguing over the Bible.

Again, if it is always wrong to argue over the Bible, then the apostles of Christ were wrong, because they continuously argued with people about what the Scriptures said:

Acts 9:29

29 And [Paul] spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus and **disputed** against the Hellenists, ...

Acts 17:17

17 Therefore [Paul] **reasoned [disputed]** in the synagogue with the Jews and with the Gentile worshipers, and in the marketplace daily with those who happened to be there.

From these passages and examples we may certainly declare that it is not always wrong to argue over the Scriptures. Many were the times when Jesus, His apostles and the prophets would argue with men about that the Scriptures said.

SOMETIMES IT IS WRONG TO ARGUE

But sometimes it is wrong to argue over the Bible. The Bible lists at least three times when it is wrong to argue over the Scriptures.

1) It is wrong to argue over the Bible when the argument involves foolish and unlearned questions.

2 Timothy 2:23

23 But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate **strife**.

If you will go back and read the passages where Jesus and His apostles argued with men over the Scriptures you will find that they were arguing with them over matters that pertained to salvation. They did not involve themselves in arguments over trivial matters that were worthless.

To give an example, how many times have men argued over when the Lord shall return??? When all is said and done, what difference does it make when the Lord shall return? Is it not enough to simply know that He shall return? Is it really that essential that we know when it shall be? And . . . did not the Lord tell us plainly that no man knows the day, nor the hour when He shall come again (Matthew 24:36)? Why, then, spend our time arguing over when Jesus will come again? Why not live our lives as if every day were our last day and then we would always be ready?

When men begin to argue over when the Lord shall return they are truly arguing over a "foolish and unlearned question" and the Bible says we are to avoid those type of discussions. These type of discussions edify no one and they only cause strife!

2) It is wrong to argue continuously with men who resist the truth.

Matthew 7:6

6 "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

There are so many people in the world who have never heard the truth that it becomes a waste of time to continually argue with someone who resists the truth. When someone proves themselves unworthy of the truth it is unprofitable to waste precious time on them any longer. It is time, rather, to go on and seek someone willing to listen.

Jesus said:

Matthew 10:14-15

14 And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet.

15 Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city!

We should be cautious that we do not immediately write someone off as being unworthy to hear the truth. It is easy, when someone challenges us to prove our doctrine, for us to ignore them and justify ourselves by saying, "They were simply resisting the truth." No . . . we should only write someone off only when they have proven beyond doubt that they are resisters of the truth.

This brings up the third point:

3) It is wrong to argue the Bible with a heretic.

As old fashioned as it may sound, the Bible does speak of heretics--men that are so divisive and obstinate that they must be withdrawn from. These men thrive on arguments and they thrive on causing division and strife. Because of their divisive ways, the Lord instructed His church to withdraw fellowship from these sinful men and in doing this it would become wrong to argue the Bible with them.

Titus 3:10-11

10 Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition,

11 knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.

These men have had plenty of opportunities to hear the truth and to obey the Lord. It's not as though they never had a chance. Instead, these men know the truth and they love simply to argue and strive with men--often over "foolish and unlearned questions."

AN EXCUSE FOR NOT HAVING TRUTH

Before closing, let me say one word about some people who do not discuss the Scriptures. Some do not discuss the Scriptures because they are not doing what the Scriptures say and they know they are not living right. Others are in churches that are not worshipping God like the Bible says and they know it. When you try to talk to these people they use an excuse. They say, "I don't believe in arguing over the Bible." In reality, their problem is they are wrong, they know they cannot defend their sinful practices and they are using this for an excuse for not listening to the truth.

Let us not use this as an excuse. Let us study the Bible with one another in hopes of helping one another see the will of God clearer. Why should we be afraid of studying the Word of God with those who disagree with us? If someone can show us from the Bible where we are doing something wrong, that person would surely be our friend. It would certainly better to discover our errors during this life than to wait until the Judgment Day and discover our errors then when it is too late to change!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Well ... thanks for listening to our message this week. To speak with someone about the congregation simply you may call **405-567-0575** or you may leave your name and number at the sound of the tone and one of our brethren will be glad to call you back and assist you. We also invite you to visit our web site www.WillOfTheLord.com where you may also download the notes from the message you just listened to.

Call again next week when we consider a new subject on ***Bible Talk***.