

WHAT IS YOUR VIEW OF SCRIPTURE?

Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and Thy words were unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; for I am called by Thy name, O Jehovah, God of hosts. I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor exulted: I sat alone because of Thy hand. (Jeremiah 15:16-17)

Jeremiah had been called by God as a prophet of the nations to proclaim God's word to them. But if he was to give the food of the word to others, how vital that He should feed on God's words himself! Indeed, when feeling the sorrow of having his message rejected, how precious that God's words were found. He does not specially say which words they were, but just as Josiah's servants found the Book of the Law in the temple, so at least some of God's words were found by Jeremiah. If others refused them, at least Jeremiah did not, but gladly ate them. This involves his digesting them, so that they became a part of his very being.

How many since Jeremiah have found in precious experience that the words of God become the joy and rejoicing of their hearts! This inner joy is something that is totally foreign to those who refuse or ignore what God has to say to them. Many of such are actually mockers, despising that which they do not understand. Jeremiah says he did not sit in the assembly of the mockers. A believer surely realizes that an association such as this is not only offensive to God, but deeply dishonoring to Him. Jeremiah rejoiced, yet he did not exult, as unbelievers are prone to do, who pride themselves on their unbelief and refusal of God's Word.

The Role of Scripture

The role of Scripture in making daily decisions is a subject of debate. At the heart of this debate lies the true issue, **do we believe and trust God or is my way just as good?** These two views on scripture we might call: Centralism and Peripheralism. These terms will not be found in any dictionary.

The Centralist View

In the Centralist's view, the teachings and principles of Scripture are relevant to and should guide every decision in the believer's life. It is the "light" for the "path," "understanding to the simple," and equips believers "for every good work." This view points out that the Christian must "do" what the Bible says. *Thy words were found, and I did eat them, and Thy words were unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart . . .*

The Peripheral View

In the view of the Peripheralist, the Bible has relevancy to certain issues and beliefs, but as far as how to live life, there is not much relevance. "Let's not be too serious about this; it's an antiquated book which has some relevance but mostly sits on the peripheral of life to be referred to when needed or not at all." Those who hold this view may point out that believer's "*have the mind of Christ*" and that God's laws are in their "*hearts*" and "*minds*."

Unfortunately for the latter view, Paul also warns that there is a spiritual war going on. Believers must continually have their mind transformed: "*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. It is a process!*" The book of Judges repeats and even ends with the phrase that "*everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*"

Shouldn't we be like Joshua and his family in choosing *to serve the Lord and in not departing from the book of the law but meditating on it day and night, observing to do all that is written within it; for then we shall prosper and have good success?* **What is your view of scripture?**

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