

A BETTER BIBLE STUDY METHOD – BOOK TWO

Be Not Deceived

How to Know the Truth

According to the Scriptures

J. Phillips

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All scripture references are from the Holy Bible, King James Version.

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Preface

"Whom the LORD loveth he correcteth" (Prv 3:12).

"Reproofs of instruction *are* the way of life" (Prv 6:23).

"The fear of the LORD *is* a fountain of life" (Prv 14:27).

"Teach me thy way, O LORD; I will walk in thy truth" (Ps 86:11).

"O LORD: give me understanding according to thy word" (Ps 119:169).

"The fear of the LORD *is* the instruction of wisdom; and before honor *is* humility" (Prv 15:33).

"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name" (Ps 96:8).

"Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name" (Ps 138:2).

"The word of our God shall stand for ever" (Is 40:8).

"Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps 119:105).

"The entrance of thy words giveth light" (Ps 119:130).

"All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God" (2 Tm 3:16).

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much" (Lk 16:10).

"A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (Gal 5:9).

"Cease, my son, to hear the instruction *that causeth* to err from the words of knowledge" (Prv 19:27).

"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word" (Ps 119:9).

"The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe" (Prv 29:25).

"The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom" (Ps 111:10).

"The LORD *is* nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth" (Ps 145:18).

Introduction

How should we go about determining what is true on biblical matters? We should do so according to the scriptures. Proverbs 30:5 tells us, "**Every word of God** is pure: he *is* a shield unto them that put their trust in him," and the evidence herein will show how God's word can correct errors in our understanding or prevent them from occurring in the first place. For instance, the following example shows how terms used in scripture can be easily misunderstood if they are not defined according to a biblical standard.

Word pictures, or figures of speech, are used in language to briefly convey a complex idea. A word picture that was used several times by Jesus was that of drinking a man's blood, such as when he said, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (Fourth gospel 6:54). Given his words, should one assume drinking his blood referred to sipping the liquid in his veins?

No, to do so would only reveal a problem with the method that was used by anyone who comes to such a conclusion.

On other occasions the Jews picked up stones to stone Jesus or they tried to throw him off a cliff (cf. Lu 4:29, Fourth gospel 8:59, 10:31). Yet, they did not react this way when Jesus said, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life." Why not? Because God's word had already established what his words meant.

Consider the following example from the life of David that shows how a straightforward reading of scripture can open our eyes to the truth like nothing else can. This took place when David was in "the cave of Adullam" (1 Chr 11:15), the city of Bethlehem was in Philistine hands, and three of David's "mighty men" (cf. 2 Samuel 23:16-17) risked their lives on a covert mission behind enemy lines:

"David was then in the hold, and the Philistines' garrison was then at Bethlehem. And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, that *is* at the gate! And the three brake through the host of the Philistines, and drew water out of the well of Bethlehem, that was by the gate, and took *it*, and brought *it* to David: but David would not drink *of* it, but poured it out to the LORD, And said, My God forbid it me, that I should do this thing: shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy? For with *the jeopardy of* their lives they brought it. **Therefore he would not drink it**" (1 Chr 11:16-19).

When "the three" brought the water to David, he refused to drink it! Some might think David's response to their gift would have shocked or even infuriated the men who put their lives in jeopardy in order to get it. However, if he did right in the sight of the LORD when he "would not drink *of* it, but poured it out to the LORD," then his act provided an important lesson about the value of life to those three men, along with the rest of David's men and all the readers of scripture since then.

In any case, "the well of Bethlehem" passage does more than provide a record of those events for people who read the Bible today. It also gives us the key to a word picture that is found elsewhere in scripture. When a person learns how this works, then that person learns one of the ways the Bible can teach people how to separate truth from error.

The way to understand the things in God's word is to consider them in light of the whole counsel of God. When David poured out the water "to the LORD" he said, "shall I drink the blood of these men that have put their lives in jeopardy?" (1 Chr 11:19). "Drink the blood" was, clearly, not a physical description. Rather, it is a word picture about one man accepting the sacrifice of another man's life on his behalf – and this is precisely how people need to view themselves in relation to Jesus!

Why would anyone teach about the blood of Jesus and fail to mention the foregoing point if scripture itself can establish a clear connection?

Jesus' statements, "Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day," and "He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him" (Fourth

gospel 6:54 & 56), displeased some of his disciples. We know this because the passage that records those words is followed by a note that says "many" of his disciples called Jesus' words a "hard saying" and they "murmured at it" (Fourth gospel 6:60-61).

If they knew about David's use of this word picture, then why did they kick against Jesus' words?

It is a natural response for those who do not think eternal life depends on Jesus laying down his life on their behalf, and later we will consider how pride sometimes leads people to resist truth to their own hurt.

The wisdom of the world leads some to think Jesus' use of the phrase "drinketh my blood" means eternal life depends on the oral intake of a liquid (his blood), yet this is not true. In the two "well of Bethlehem" passages (2 Sa 23:14-17, 1 Chr 11:16-19), **God's word provides the key to the word picture that was used by Jesus** (and it always has).

People can see this and think it through once scripture teaches them to see "drink the blood" as a word picture. Until this occurs, however, a lack of knowledge leads many to be deceived as they misconstrue those words and go on to attribute a wrong meaning to Jesus' words. In the same way, we end up deceived when a wrong assumption or an erroneous teaching leads us to think an idea is true when it is not.

As the above example showed, we must view the words of scripture according to scripture or we get it wrong; and this book will show how upholding God's word as the measure of truth on biblical issues can counteract the effects of false assumptions and unbiblical methods.

"Be not deceived" is a warning that shows up in several Bible verses. Those verses, along with many others, let us know followers of Jesus can be misled. But the words "be not deceived" also indicate people can take steps to keep this from happening. Honoring God's word is one of those steps and yet, as the Bible reveals, sometimes people choose to honor the teachings of men instead.

Jesus publicly berated the religious leaders of his day who promoted the teachings of men, instead of faithfully speaking the word of God. He said:

"Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men" (Mk 7:6-8).

Their preference for the teachings of men is what led them to trample on the authority of God, as Jesus noted when he said: "Ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition" (Mk 7:9) and when he said they were "making the word of God of none effect" through their tradition (Mk 7:13).

At another time, Jesus said, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves" (Mt 23:15). He did not rebuke those missionaries for their missionary zeal, but because they did not lead people to trust in God. Rather, they produced converts who would follow them in trusting in the teachings of men (i.e., adopt their belief system; join their group).

"*It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man*" (Ps 118:8). Since this is true, scripture will be the only source cited herein.

If we can make mistakes, it makes sense to test our beliefs and invite biblical correction. Conversely, it makes no sense to turn a blind eye to scripture on any point, for if we disregard the truth on one issue, then we are taking a pick and choose approach to God's word.

If our Bible study method leads us to hold a wrong view on one issue, then it may have done so on other matters. This is why it is important to focus on the process we use to go about ascertaining biblical truth.

Whenever we learn our view on a verse or issue was wrong, we need to ask ourselves, '*What caused me to be deceived on this – where is the flaw in my method of assessing truth?*' Identifying the source of a problem allows us to take steps to improve our Bible study method. Asking good questions is critical to the pursuit of truth and this book will show how scripture can draw us to the truth by raising questions that provoke us to search for an answer. Looking for and pondering the questions that the word of God presents to us is a key element of a better Bible study method. So, when you find a question in this book that helps you to see things in scripture which you did not see before, then consider that example and take note of how the facts in scripture can teach us by raising a question that demands a biblical answer.

Many people think a good way of deciding what to believe is to pick a view which is '*traditional*' or is espoused by one or more scholars. However, scripture tells us this practice is not wise, as will be shown.

[Note: herein a number of commonly taught ideas will be shown to be contrary to scripture. Any readers of this book who are not aware of some of these ideas can easily confirm if an idea is commonly taught by doing a simple Internet search on the topic or verse in question. Also, this book cannot deal with every element in all of the passages that will be considered. Nevertheless, a truth that is confirmed by the biblical evidence on any point needs to be respected, even if one still has other unanswered questions that are related to the same issue.]

Results speak for themselves, so the case studies herein will contrast the results of the common practice of relying on the teachings of men with the results of sticking to an evidence-based Bible study method. If one of those methods honors God's authority and can consistently produce better results, then the contrast will make this apparent.

A high regard for the name of the LORD is encouraged in scripture, as we see in these words, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" (Mt 6:9, Lk 11:2). But Psalm 138:2 also tells us this about the LORD, "thou has magnified thy word **above** all thy name." So, one should be diligent to always have the highest regard for his word.

Chapter 1 – "Founded Upon a Rock"

"The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of knowledge" (Prv 1:7).

"Trust in the LORD"

This chapter looks at some principles for a better Bible study method – starting with "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Prv 3:5-6). Along with every other admonition in the Bible, those words should influence one's approach to scripture (because the counsel that is in the word of God also teaches us how to rightly divide God's word).

The words "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" contrast the source of truth with a person's current views and assumptions. Whenever we let our understanding serve as our measure of truth, we are not trusting in the LORD with all our heart. So, we need to be diligent about obeying this passage.

"Lean not unto thine own understanding" does not mean we should lean on the understanding of other men. If other men should not lean on their own understanding, then we cannot assume it is safe for us to rely on their understanding! The passage then says, "In all thy ways **acknowledge him**, and he shall direct thy paths," and the examples in this book show how God's word works to lead people to the truth.

Profiting from Biblical Correction

Paul urged Timothy to strive to be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tm 2:15). "Rightly dividing the word of truth" takes diligence, but it also takes humility, because we have to stand corrected when God's word shows us we have been wrong about something.

"All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tm 3:16). Profiting from scripture comes at a cost. If we want to profit when it comes to "doctrine," "reproof," "correction," or "instruction," something must change. While it is easy to say we want to '*go deeper in God's word*' or to '*grow in grace and knowledge*,' two things are true:

- (A) there is no such thing as growth without change, and
- (B) change often makes people uncomfortable, which can lead people to resist change for this reason alone.

If we find out something we believed is not in line with God's word and subsequently change our thinking to be in accord with scripture, then that would be an example of "correction." This cannot happen unless we are willing to admit we have been wrong. Yet, no one likes having their judgment called into question. This is why we need to be conscious of the tug of war which goes on between pride and humility (because pride naturally tends to lead us to resist correction).

"God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pt 5:5), so if we want "grace," humility is a good first step. We will come back to this verse in a minute. For now, though, realize we have to admit we have been wrong in order to profit from biblical correction, and this humbling process can also help us to receive the grace of God.

Many people have had the experience of reading a verse and getting a new insight that corrects their understanding. In such moments, a key benefit of biblical correction is lost if we do not realize correction teaches us more than just the truth on a particular issue.

Correction on Two Fronts

A common saying tells us giving a man a fish helps him for a day, but teaching him how to fish helps him even more. This idea can help us to see the two different ways we can benefit from biblical correction. Learning the truth on any issue is good. If we stop there, however, it is like taking the fish and skipping the fishing lesson.

A teacher can give a student the answer to a math question. But to help the student grow, the teacher needs to show the student how to derive the answer. Biblical correction can do both! God's word can move us from error to truth on a given issue, and it can also teach us how to rightly derive the answer. This is why we can profit more from biblical correction if we identify what caused us to be deceived when it turns out we have believed something that was not true.

This book does not merely put a new spin on certain verses. Rather, it will show how unbiblical methods cause people to be deceived, and it will also show how God's word provides us a reliable measure for discerning truth on biblical issues.

Jesus told his followers, "Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you" (Mk 4:24). This indicates we must be careful when it comes to what we hear because what we "hear" affects the "measure" we use, and the measure we use affects how we perceive things.

If we believe what we hear, then that becomes part of the measure we use when we are deciding what is true. If something we believe is actually not true, then that false belief will lead us to be deceived on other matters.

"The Wisdom of this World"

"Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God" (1 Cor 3:18-19). The words "let no man deceive himself" were written "to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus" (1 Cor 1:2), so we should not think believers today are impervious to being deceived.

If scripture says, "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God," we should realize people who apply worldly wisdom to their study of God's word are likely to be led astray. This question, "hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (1 Cor 1:20) and this statement, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (1 Cor 1:27) suggest the same thing. But sadly, "the wisdom of this world" is the foundation which underlies many of the ideas which are presented as biblical truth in our day.

The public is taught to esteem men with degrees and titles. Yet men with the same status or level of training often contradict each other. So, the honors men bestow upon other men offer *no* guarantee that the truth will always be taught by the ones who receive such honors. This is why we need to subject every teaching to biblical scrutiny.

"Measuring Themselves by Themselves"

It goes against the advice of scripture, but measuring truth by looking at what others believe is a common practice. In 2 Corinthians 10:12, Paul and Timothy wrote, "we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." Thus, looking to what others think and conforming our mind to some groupthink measure is not a wise thing to do. Nevertheless, people today are often urged to assume 'the consensus' is where the truth lies.

If the beliefs of men and popular ideas (i.e., 'the consensus') are not good ways to measure the truth, then what measure should we use? We should look to scripture as the standard of truth on biblical issues. Acts 17:11 tells us the Bereans "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so," and this offers us a good model.

A good investigator does not base his conclusions on the conclusions of others. Instead he will base his conclusions on the evidence, and when we are considering biblical issues, our conclusions should be dictated by the evidence in scripture. Being driven to a conclusion on a biblical issue because of what is said in God's word is not the same as holding a belief because others hold that belief. Still many simply adopt the beliefs that are taught to them and assume those ideas are in line with scripture. But if we trust *what people say about scripture* before we look to scripture itself, are we honoring God by doing so?

If someone says the Bible says 'x,' how would you know if that is true or not? Often people say *'the Bible says...'* and then state their beliefs on an issue. No doubt they do so because they assume their beliefs are true, but what if they are wrong? What test can a person use to know if someone has misconstrued or misrepresented God's word? God's word is the authority on biblical issues. If we let the authority of non-Bible sources serve as our measure of truth, then the authority of God's word is undermined. If we want to know what is scriptural, we need to use scripture as our measure. Period!

"Written for Our Learning"

Jesus frequently confronted those who substituted their own ideas and teachings for the truth found in God's word and a few of those exchanges will be cited to show how we can learn from the correction Jesus offered them. In Jesus' day the only scripture they had was the portion of the Bible which we call the Old Testament. Some think the Old Testament has little to say to the followers of Jesus. However, the New Testament lets us know this is not the case.

1 Corinthians 10:11 says, "Now all these things happened unto them for examples and they are written for our admonition." Romans 15:4 says, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning." So, the followers of Jesus can learn from the things written in the Old Testament. For example, consider what we can learn from this report about Naaman the leper from 2 Kings 5:1 & 9-14:

"Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master and honorable, because by him the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria: he was also a mighty man in valor, *but he was a leper...* Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot, and stood at the door of the house of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean. But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. *Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage. And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.*"

What strikes you from the foregoing account? A Bible passage can teach many things, but one of the most striking things in this passage has to be Naaman's near-miss. First he turned away from the truth the messenger had delivered. Then he obeyed, and he was healed as a result. What can we learn from this episode?

How to Get Grace

"God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pt 5:5). The contrast in this verse shows how the choices people make can affect their relationship with God. At one point, Naaman was on the wrong side of that formula, and the benefit of a humble response to the truth is highlighted by what happened after he humbled himself.

Naaman was a key man in his country, but he had leprosy. He heard of a prophet in Samaria who could help him recover and his pursuit of a healing led him to Elisha's house. Naaman arrived "with his horses

and with his chariot" and, no doubt, an entourage befitting a man of his status, which explains the presence of "his servants." We are told, he "stood at the door of the house of Elisha." Scripture does not say how long he stood there, so we cannot tell if he had to wait a while or if he got a fast response. What it does say, however, lets us know Naaman was not happy with the way things transpired.

Elisha did not come out to greet Naaman. He "sent a messenger unto him." The messenger told Naaman, "Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee and thou shalt be clean." Naaman did not say thank you or rush off to wash to see if it worked. Instead, "Naaman was wroth, and went away."

Clearly, Elisha's communication via a messenger and his prescription for healing did not fit Naaman's view of what should have happened:

"I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. *Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage*" (2 Kgs 5:11-12).

At that point Naaman, leaning on his own understanding, decided he knew better than the word which was spoken by Elisha's messenger. Does this, along with his anger and his boast of "better" rivers in his own country, indicate pride was what led him to storm off in a rage? If so, then we need to consider the episode in light of this verse: "God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble."

Sound Reasoning Exposes Unreasonable Thinking

What was the result of Naaman's decision to reject the truth that was presented by the messenger? It brought him no blessing. Contrast this with the result of his later decision to submit to the logic that was used to prove he was not being reasonable. "His servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, *if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing wouldest thou not have done it?* how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?"

"Wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean" was a promise of healing, so it made sense to try it. It was unreasonable to ignore the message simply because it was delivered by a messenger and/or it did not conform to his view of what was "better."

Elisha's reputation brought Naaman to his door. Still, Naaman did not believe the promise, for if he had, his desire to be healed would have led him to obey. Because the promise came via a messenger and/or because Naaman did not like the prescribed remedy, he concluded the offer in those words did not deserve respect. However, when his servants presented a logical argument that proved he was not being reasonable, his humbling response to their correction enabled him to receive the blessing those words had promised all along.

Since the servants' question showed he was being unreasonable, he could have become angry or defensive. Yet, rather than turn on them because they had questioned his judgment, he submitted to the truth. He did the same thing we need to do whenever we have been wrong or unreasonable. He exhibited humility. He set aside his pride and admitted he had been wrong.

The Authority of the Message

Elisha was not the authority behind the message. When Elisha spoke a truth from God, his words carried God's authority. This same idea is echoed in these words written to the church of the Thessalonians: "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received *it* not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God" (1 Th 2:13). Although the Thessalonians heard words that were spoken by men, they did not receive them as merely being "the word of men." Just the opposite, they rightly "received" the message as "the word of God."

Naaman did not receive the message as it was "in truth" until he faced an argument showing his position could not stand the test of reason. In the same way, if we learn a belief of ours is contrary to scripture, then we must stand corrected. The admonition, "Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Ps 95:7-8) warns against resisting the truth, and if the things in scripture were "written for our learning" (Rom 15:4), then we need to heed those words.

Treating God's Word with Respect

"The truth shall make you free" is a commonly quoted line that distorts the words of Jesus. Integrity should lead us to consider his words in light of the context where they appear. The truth is those words were addressed to people who "believed on him," and those words are only the last part of a qualified statement: "If **ye** continue in my word, *then* are **ye** my disciples indeed; and **ye** shall know the truth, and the truth shall make **you** free" (Fourth gospel 8:31-32).

"If ye continue in my word" is a condition. Thus, it is wrong to treat the words, "the truth shall make you free" as if they were a promise to all people even if they do not believe on Jesus or "continue in" his word. While it may tickle the ears of an audience, quoting "the truth shall make you free" without any conditions falsely represents God's word (by taking away the conditions which precede those words).

Taking a verse out of context is something preachers will frequently speak against, and this is good. However, if those who deride others for taking verses out of context do the same thing at certain points in their own teaching, then they are being inconsistent. Even if it is not done intentionally, God's word is misrepresented when scripture is misquoted. This is why it is important for us to be diligent to speak the word of God faithfully (cf. Jer 23:28).

The Case Studies

The only authority cited herein is God's word. Scripture will be used to test some common views on a given Bible passage. If those views cannot hold up under biblical scrutiny, then we can benefit by learning what led others to miss the truth on those points. So, various methods of assessing truth on biblical issues will also be considered. You can also put your own method to the test in each case. It may be that the evidence will challenge your own views on various points. But, if we want to avoid leaning on our "own understanding," then we should be willing to make sure our own beliefs can stand up to biblical scrutiny.

The King James Version is used herein, so you may occasionally find an unfamiliar word or spelling. Those who use other Bible translations can still follow the biblical evidence and it will make the same points. Note: since scripture is the only source quoted in this book, the use of double quotation marks will be reserved for quotes from scripture. Single quotation marks will, therefore, be used in other places where double quotation marks would traditionally appear. Also, when words in a Bible quote appear in italics, it is because this is how those words appear in the KJV.

"A Lamp unto My Feet"

"Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps 119:105). This verse pictures one of the ways the word of God can direct us if we will let it show us where to stand on an issue and where to go with a thought. As will be shown, if we let God's word light the way as we move through scripture, it can focus our attention on things we might otherwise miss. But if scripture teaches us something, then we have an obligation to act on that information.

Jesus compared those who hear his sayings and act accordingly to a "wise man" who built a house that can stand up to storms because it was "founded upon a rock" (Mt 7:24-25). Then he likened those who hear his sayings but do not act accordingly to a "foolish" man who built a house that would fall in a storm because it was built "on sand" (Mt 7:26-27). Similarly, if scripture teaches us something and thereafter we do not act in accord with what we have learned, then we are being unreasonable and making the word of God of no effect.