

"Book, Chapter And Verse"

Christians have always been a "book, chapter and verse" people. They insist on having Bible authority for all they say and do. This is not some arbitrary belief or behavior, but an obedient response to God's will. "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him" (Col. 3:17). Christians "speak as the oracles of God" (1 Pet. 4:11). They do not add to or take from God's word (Rev. 22:18-19; cf. Gal. 1:6-9).

In contrast to "book, chapter and verse" religion, denominations, and those who are members of them, have "a book, a chapter or a verse" religion. In other words, they may choose a book, a chapter or a verse that pleases them the most and not pay attention to the rest. One well-known example is John 3:16. This verse is used by denominationalists to say that faith alone saves. They ignore James 2:24 which says we are not saved by faith alone.

Robert Wilkin, a denominational false teacher, debated Larry Ray Hafley, gospel preacher, several years ago. In the debate Wilkin claimed that the book of John was the only evangelistic book in the New Testament (guess he forgot about Acts, sfd). He asserted that since it repeated "believe" over and over, and did not contain a command to be baptized for salvation, then baptism is not necessary. The problem was, and is, the book of John is not the only account of the gospel, let alone the only inspired New Testament book.

The Spirit revealed Jesus' command to teach all men, "baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" to be saved (Matt. 28:19; Mk. 16:16). Peter commanded the convicted Jews to "repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." (Acts 2:38). Annanias inquired and insisted of Saul, "And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

If one wants to be a Christian, honor God and go to heaven, then that one must have a "book, chapter and verse" religion, not "a book, a chapter or a verse" religion. If we are free to pick and choose, accepting and adhering to some parts of the New Testament while ignoring others, then we are no better than pagans who do what is right in their own eyes.

Steven F. Deaton