



Can The Bible Just Mean Anything?

We live in a society that seeks to “interpret” everything. When the President or some other important official makes a statement, news commentators are quick to point out what was said and what wasn’t said. Did he mean this or did he mean that? The analysis is endless. Many take words that were said, rip them out of their context, and “sound bite” them giving them an entirely different meaning than when they were originally uttered. And this is, more or less, an accepted practice among some because of the failure of many to believe that there is such a thing as truth. If there is no truth, then the words that I say can mean anything that you want them to mean and what you say can mean anything that I want it to mean and we just end up believing what we want to believe regarding someone else’s statements without ever having considered the possibility that someone might have meant something different than what we thought they meant.

The truth of the matter is that words have real significance or, as Rush Limbaugh says, “Words mean things.” Many people believe that they can say what they want without consequence until they are forced to face the facts of the words that they used and the meanings that those words have. At that point, many don’t like the idea that you have pointed out to them what their words truly mean because if

words have objective meanings and their words don’t line up with truth, then they might just be wrong and that would be something that they couldn’t accept.

In that regard, the Bible is no different. The Bible has words and those words have meanings. Those words were originally uttered in a specific language and in a specific context, which, when we properly investigate, will render for us the objective meaning of the word. It’s not up to us to redefine those meanings to fit our own interpretations; it’s our task to understand what those words meant when originally uttered. So, the Bible just can’t mean anything. The Bible must mean certain specific things.

The Bible is a book that claims to be truth, not truth as we filter it through our subjective mind, but truth in the objective sense; it is true for everyone. Jesus said, “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, 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” (John 8:31-32). It was through abiding in the word of God that the disciples came to know the truth. So, since the objective truth is in the words, then that puts objective meaning in those words. The implication of that is that the Bible can’t just mean anything.

And we can’t just understand the Bible to mean anything that we want it to mean. Look at

what Paul said regarding revelation in Ephesians 3:3-4: “how that by revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote before in few words whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ.” God’s words can be understood, Paul says, just as he, Paul, understood them. That means that there is no reason not to understand the Bible alike. That the Bible can’t mean just anything.

Yet, there are millions today who are convinced that the Bible can mean just anything. When individuals say things like, “You can interpret the Bible for yourself as long as you don’t force your opinions upon me,” they are in essence saying that the Bible can mean anything. When someone says, “Well, that’s just your interpretation” they are in essence saying that the Bible can mean anything. When others say things like, “This is what the Bible means to me, but it has it’s own meaning for you” then one is saying that the Bible can mean anything.

If the Bible is God’s truth for man, then it can’t just mean anything. It must mean that which God intended it to mean. And we can KNOW what God intended it to mean because he has revealed these things to us through the Mind of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:12). It is incumbent upon us, therefore, to learn and believe God’s objective truth (2 Timothy 2:15).

Kevin Cauley

“On The Nature of the Gods”



(Editor’s note: These words were originally written by Cicero, a Roman orator who lived from 110-43 B.C. While he was a polytheist, he still recognized the need to explain the creation in terms other than itself. The following excerpt echoes many arguments for God’s existence today and in that regard is appropriate.)

“The fact is, they indulge in such random babbling about the world that for my part I cannot think that they have ever looked up at this marvelously beautiful sky....”

“At this point must I not marvel that there should be anyone who can persuade himself that there are certain solid and indivisible particles of matter borne along by the force of gravity, and that the fortuitous collision of those particles produces this elaborate and beautiful world? I cannot understand why he who considers it possible for this to have occurred should not also think that, if a countless number of copies of the one-and-twenty letters of the [Latin] alphabet, made of gold or what you will, were thrown together into some receptacle and then shaken out on to the ground, it would be pos-

sible that they should produce the Annals of Ennius, all ready for the reader. I doubt whether chance could possibly succeed in producing even a single verse! Yet according to the assertion of your friends that out of particles of matter not endowed with heat, nor with any ‘quality’ (the Greek term *poiotes*), nor with sense, but colliding together at haphazard and by chance, the world has emerged complete, or rather a countless number of worlds are some of the being born and some perishing at every moment of time — yet if the clash of atoms can create a world, why can it not produce a colonnade, a temple, a house, a city, which are less and indeed much less difficult things to make? The fact is, they indulge in such random babbling about the world that for my part I cannot think that they have ever looked up at this marvelously beautiful sky—which is my next topic. So Aristotle says brilliantly: ‘If there were

beings who had always lived beneath the earth, in comfortable, well-lit dwellings, decorated with statues and pictures and furnished with all the luxuries enjoyed by persons though to be supremely happy, and who though they had never come forth above the ground had learnt by report and by hearsay of the existence of certain deities or divine powers; and then if at some time the jaws of the earth were opened and they were able to escape from their hidden abode and to come forth into the regions which we inhabit; when they suddenly had sight of the earth and the seas and the sky, and came to know of the vast clouds and mighty winds, and beheld the sun, and realized not only its size and beauty but also its potency in causing the day by shedding light over all the sky, and, after night had darkened the earth, they then saw the whole sky spangled and adorned with stars, and the changing

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Bible Studies for the week of September 4th, 2005



- AM Sermon..... Messianic Prophecies Fulfilled
- Scripture Reading..... Acts 13:27-39
- PM Sermon..... The Bible Doctrine of Wisdom
- Scripture Reading..... Proverbs 1:1-6
- Sunday ClassThe Book of Matthew
- Wednesday Class..... Minor Prophets

Kevin's Korner

Tomorrow afternoon, Lord willing, I will drive to Highfill and get on a plane for Atlanta. In Atlanta, I will change planes and fly to Sao Paulo, Brazil. This will be a 9 and 1/2 hour overnight flight, so I will arrive in Brazil on Tuesday morning. There are the airport, I will be met by Randal Matheny who has been a missionary in Brazil for many years. He has scheduled me to preach in various different congregations while there

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phases of the moon's light, now waxing and now waning, and the risings and settings of all these heavenly bodies and their courses fixed and changeless throughout all eternity, - when they say these things, surely they would think that the gods exist and that these mighty marvels are their handiwork." ("On the Nature of the Gods," 2.37 The Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP.)

and I will be at his disposal. And I understand that he has me completely booked while I am there which is exactly how it should be. Lord willing, I will return home on the 15th and arrive back in Arkansas the morning of the 16th and be back with everyone on Sunday the 18th. I appreciate all of the prayers that have been offered on my behalf for this mission trip. Please continue to pray that the trip will bear fruit for the Lord and that the kingdom will increase and prosper!

As, no doubt, all are aware, the recent hurricane has brought terrible devastation and loss of life to the people of southern Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. There are many who need aid and we need to make sure that the Lord's church is involved in that effort. Today, the elders have decided that we will begin taking donations for this situation. The elders will seed the fund with \$1000 and then whatever is given on top of that will be donated to an appropriate congregation. If

you wish to contribute to this fund, please mark your donation "Hurricane Relief" and it will be set aside for that purpose.

Mary Lynn's mother, Mary Forehand, will be coming Tuesday to visit with her briefly, but then will be returning on Thursday and then Mary Lynn and the boys will be on their own until I return. Several have offered to "check in" on them while I am away, and I certainly appreciate your kindness in doing this while I am gone. I know Mary Lynn appreciates it as well.

While I am gone, Bob Deffenbaugh will be preaching in my absence. He has preached before here and I know that everyone is looking forward to his lessons and also to visiting with his lovely family.

Simply for everyone's information, there will be a bulletin next week, but because of my absence, it will not have the weekly information in it such as sermon topics, scripture readings, weekly records, or new announcements.



Today we will begin taking donations for the victims of the hurricane. Please mark your donation 'hurricane relief.'

Records for the week of August 28th, 2005

Sunday Bible Class	59
Sunday AM Worship.....	71
Sunday PM Worship.....	50
Wednesday Night Study.....	52
Contribution	\$1529.80
Budget.....	\$1662.00



Praises, Prayers, and Proclamations

Announcements

- We are thankful to God for this new Lord's Day. It is the day we honor His Son and the Love that He has shown us through Him. Let us worship in spirit and in truth!
- Please remember the following in prayer: Cooper Doss, John Gass, Kala Grigg, Bryan Guess, Hughetta Hand, Bill Jones, Jimmie Tucker, Wayne Whitely, Billie Wylie.
- There is a singing at Monett this afternoon at 2:00 PM.
- Men's breakfast is this coming Saturday morning at 7:00.
- There will be an elders and deacons meeting tonight after services.
- There will be no bible study at the nursing home this week.
- Please check the outreach board for your assignments.
- Monthly assignments for September are as follows: Announcements — Rusty Windle; Worship Coordinator—Jerry Roller; Communion Prep—Debbie and Kendra Smith; Communion Carry — Clay Bozarth and Dan Hand; Outreach Coordinator — Ken Smith and Bruce Foster.
- Our pantry item is: Peanut Butter.

God's Salvation Plan

1. **Hear** the Gospel—Romans 10:17
2. **Believe** on the Lord & His Word—Mark 16:16; John 8:24
3. **Repent** of your sins—Luke 13:3,5; Acts 17:30
4. **Confess** Christ—Matthew 10:32,33; Luke 12:8; Romans 10:9
5. **Be Baptized** for the remission of sins—Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; Galatians 3:27
6. Live a **faithful**, dedicated life—Revelation 2:10; 2 Peter 1:5-10

Welcome!

Visit our web site: <http://www.the-churchofchrist.com>

Family Times for Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class:	9:30 AM
Sunday Morning Worship:	10:20 AM
Sunday Evening Worship:	6:00 PM
Ladies Bible Class:	10:30 AM
Wed. Evening Bible Class:	7:00 PM

Serving Each Other

	Sept. 4th, 2005	Sept. 11th, 2005
Sunday Morning		
Songs:	Barrett Brown	Ken Smith
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Bob Deffenbaugh
Opening Prayer:	Leon Duncan	George Eddings
Scripture Reading:	Matthew Morrell	Brent Moore
Lord's Table	Clay Bozarth	Dan Hand
	Bruce Foster	Leon Duncan
(assist)	Michael Morrell	Matthew Morrell
	Jerry Roller	Brandon Foster
Closing Prayer	Ray Duncan	John Gass
Sunday Evening		
Songs:	Rusty Windle	Bruce Foster
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Bob Deffenbaugh
Opening Prayer:	Dan Hand	Clay Bozarth
Scripture Reading:	George Eddings	Glenn Williams
Lord's Table	Brandon Foster	Leon Duncan
	John Gass	Jack Gentry
Closing Prayer	Ken Smith	Ervin Hand
Wednesday		
Songs:	Glenn Quigley	Glenn Williams
Opening Prayer:	Clay Bozarth	Dan Hand
Invitation:	Dale Pinkley	Ken Smith
Closing Prayer:	Bruce Foster	Dale Pinkley

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