

## Ramblings

In this folder (Ramblings) are my thoughts and study results on various topics. Here you will find the results of my endeavor to *"make sure of the more important things."* (Php 1:10) And the contents of the Bible are definitely among the *"more important things."*

If you look at the third column in the file name on my server you can see the date of the file. If the date on the file you downloaded is older than the file's date (Timestamp) on my server than that file has been updated/edited since you downloaded it. I am also now adding the "Last Edited" date to the end of my articles. I do not consider a typo or similar correction to be an edit and therefore does not warrant a change in the "Last Edited" date, but you will see a change in the "Timestamp".

## Directions

In the past the Governing Body (GB) have often directed us to improve our understanding of the Bible. Here are just a few examples:

**[w02 4/1 p. 4]** True Christianity encourages the use of both the heart and the mind in building faith that pleases God. IN FACT, Christianity's founder, Jesus Christ, taught that we must love God with our "whole mind," or intellect, in addition to our "whole heart" and "whole soul." (Matthew 22:37) Yes, our mental faculties must play a key role in our worship.

**[it-2 p. 181]** *E-pi'gno-sis*, a strengthened form of *gno'sis* (*e-pi'*, meaning "additional"), can often be seen from the context to mean "exact, accurate, or full knowledge." Thus Paul wrote about some who were learning (taking in knowledge) "yet never able to come to an accurate knowledge ["a real knowledge," *TC*; "a personal knowledge," *Ro*; "clear, full knowledge," *Da ftn*] of truth." (2Ti 3:6, 7) He also prayed that ones in the Colossian congregation, who obviously had some knowledge of God's will, for they had become Christians, "be filled with the accurate knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual comprehension." (Col 1:9) Such accurate knowledge should be sought by all Christians (Eph 1:15-17; Php 1:9; 1Ti 2:3, 4), it being important in putting on "the new personality" and in gaining peace.—Col 3:10; 2Pe 1:2.

**[be p. 231 par. 3]** As you examine the material, stimulate your own thinking by asking such questions as *what? why? when? where? who?* and *how?* For example: Why is this true? How can I prove it?

**[wp16 No. 2 p. 15]** Convenient though the chapter-and-verse divisions are, always keep in mind the importance of getting the big picture—understanding the whole message God gave. Cultivate the habit of reading the context rather than just isolated verses. Doing so will help you to become more and more familiar with all "the holy writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation."—2 Timothy 3:15.

**[w17.12 p. 20]** <sup>7</sup> Thomas, the father of an 11-year-old girl, relates: "My daughter might ask, 'Could Jehovah have used evolution to develop life on earth?' or, 'Why don't we get involved in the community—with elections, for example—to try to improve things?' Sometimes I have to bite my

tongue so as not to give a **dogmatic** answer. After all, conviction isn't the result of one large chunk of truth. It comes from many small pieces of evidence."

<sup>8</sup> As Thomas knows, teaching takes patience. Actually, patience is important for all Christians. (Col. 3:12) Thomas realizes that there may be a need for many discussions over a period of time. He needs to **reason** on the **Scriptures** so that his daughter develops conviction about what she learns. "Especially on important points," says Thomas, "my wife and I want to know if our daughter really **believes** what she is learning and if it makes sense to her. If she has questions, **that's good**. Frankly, I would worry if she accepted something without asking questions."

The Bible, of course, also brings out the importance of scriptural understanding. Here are some examples:

**(Matthew 5:3)** "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need, since the Kingdom of the heavens belongs to them.

**(Matthew 15:10)** With that he called the crowd near and said to them: "Listen and get the *sense* of it:

**(Acts 17:11)** Now these were more **noble-minded** than those in Thes·sa·lo·ni'ca, for they accepted the word with the greatest eagerness of mind, **carefully examining the Scriptures** daily **to see whether these things were so**.

**(Romans 12:2)** stop being molded by this system of things, but be transformed by making your mind over, so that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

**(Colossians 1:9, 10)** That is also why from the day we heard of it, we have never stopped praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the accurate knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual comprehension, <sup>10</sup> so as to walk worthily of Jehovah in order to please him fully as you go on bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the accurate knowledge of God;

**(1 Timothy 2:3, 4)** This is fine and acceptable in the sight of our Savior, God, <sup>4</sup> whose will is that all sorts of people should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth.

**(1 Timothy 4:15)** Ponder over these things; be absorbed in them, so that your advancement may be plainly seen by all people.

**(1 Corinthians 2:15)** However, the spiritual man examines all things, but he himself is not examined by any man.

**(1 Corinthians 3:1, 2)** So, brothers, I was not able to speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to fleshly men, as to infants in Christ. <sup>2</sup> I fed you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet strong enough. In fact, neither are you strong enough now,

**(Hebrews 5:14-6:1)** But solid food belongs to mature people, to those who through use have their powers of discernment trained to distinguish both right and wrong. Therefore, now that we have moved beyond the primary doctrine about the Christ, let us press on to maturity

**(Philippians 1:9, 10)** And this is what I continue praying, that your love may abound still more and more with accurate knowledge and full discernment; <sup>10</sup> that you may **make sure** of the more important things, so that you may be flawless and not stumbling others up to the day of Christ;

## Findings

Now in your study of the scriptures, if you come across what seems to be a mistake or oversight when compared to our current thinking, remember that the light continues to get brighter and brighter as the end draws near (Pr 4:18), which means flaws in the teachings of the GB will continue to be discovered. So don't let any temporary inaccuracies stumble you. We are not the only ones who need our understanding corrected. Even the "*holy ones*" need the occasional "*readjustment*".

**(Ephesians 4:11-13)** And he gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelizers, some as shepherds and teachers, <sup>12</sup> with a view to the readjustment of the holy ones, for ministerial work, to build up the body of the Christ, <sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the oneness of the faith and of the accurate knowledge of the Son of God, to being a full-grown man, attaining the measure of stature that belongs to the fullness of the Christ.—(1Co 6:2; 1Th 3:13; 2Th 1:10)

Keep in mind too that the GB are imperfect men. As the February 2017 Study Watchtower says:

**[w17.02 p. 26 par. 12]** The Governing Body is neither inspired nor infallible. Therefore, it can err in doctrinal matters or in organizational direction... Jesus did not tell us that his faithful slave would produce perfect spiritual food.

And remember that the GB have a different hope for the future than we do. In their own words:

**[w16.01 p. 19 par. 8]** This calling causes a profound change in the thinking, outlook, and hope of a person when he is anointed.

So they may perceive some things from a different perspective than we do. For instance: Their goal is **not** to live in an earthly paradise while ours **is**. If they weren't wrong about some things than the light could not get brighter, right?

The GB have acknowledged that they are not given a better understanding of the Bible.

**[w20.01 p. 28 par. 5]** They know that Jehovah does not necessarily give anointed ones more holy spirit than he gives his other servants. They do not feel that they have a deeper understanding of Bible truths than anyone else.

**[w16.01 p. 23 par. 6]** They do not claim to have special knowledge or revelations.

**[w16.01 p. 20 par. 15]** "Jehovah's spirit works with equal force in those who have the hope of living forever on earth"

The GB are not inspired and are imperfect men. There has been only one perfect man who led new ones to Jehovah, and that was Jesus. Imperfect men took over where he left off. Jehovah knows this, and that is why the scriptures tell us to *"make sure of all things"*. (1Th 5:21)

Only men who have given way to arrogance and pride tell you not to question what they say. Christendom is filled with such men who have succumbed to the intoxicating allure of power, however insignificant their position of power is. When Thomas demanded proof, he was kindly shown proof. (Jn 20:25-27)

Humble servants of Jehovah know that they are imperfect and make mistakes. That is why we should always remember to *"make sure of the more important things"*. (Php 1:10)

There are those that become upset by hearing such information, but putting an imperfect man on a pedestal can be detrimental to our spirituality when his imperfection shows through. And showing undue reverence to an imperfect man makes his battle to remain humble that much more difficult.

### Response

Is your response: *"If 'accurate knowledge' is so important how can we Jehovah's Witnesses have the true religion if our understanding of the Bible is flawed?"*

Well let's let the Bible answer that.

**(1 Corinthians 13:8-13)** Love never fails. But if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away with; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away with. <sup>9</sup> For we have partial knowledge and we prophesy partially, <sup>10</sup> but when what is complete comes, what is partial will be done away with. <sup>11</sup> When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, to think as a child, to reason as a child; but now that I have become a man, I have done away with the traits of a child. <sup>12</sup> For now we see in hazy outline (indistinctly) by means of a metal mirror, but then it will be face-to-face. At present I know partially, but **then** I will know accurately, just as I am accurately known. <sup>13</sup> Now, however, these three remain: faith, hope, love; but the greatest of these is love.

Until Armageddon arrives and the perfect world after it (*"what is complete"*) mankind will not have full understanding. *"At present (we) know partially, but then (we) will know accurately."* Even the apostles did not have complete understanding and they not only had the holy spirit actively working through them but had experienced direct and prolonged interaction with Christ himself.

God's true followers today are still in that time of *"partial"* knowledge before Armageddon. In fact Christ himself said that our thinking would still have inaccuracies at the end just before Armageddon.

**(Matthew 24:44)** On this account, you too prove yourselves ready, because the Son of man is coming at an hour that you do not think to be it.

But as Armageddon gets closer and closer our understanding of the Bible also increases.

**(Proverbs 4:18)** But the path of the righteous is like the bright morning light That grows brighter and brighter until full daylight.

**(Ephesians 5:13, 14)** Now all the things that are being exposed are made evident by the light, for everything that is being made evident is light. <sup>14</sup> Therefore, it is said: "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and the Christ will shine upon you."

Jehovah's true followers will not have complete accurate knowledge this side of Armageddon. So lack of scriptural accuracy is not a justification to disqualify someone. But a refusal to correct oneself would be justification to disqualify them since the light only gets brighter for God's true followers ("*the righteous*").

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**See the article "- Final Straw -" for my current stance on the Governing Body.**

**And for more information on The Governing Body and how Christ predicted that they will be at the end of this system of things, see my articles "The Governing Body" and " Know One Thing".**

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**[w14 12/15 p. 7 ¶4]** <sup>4</sup> If we want to understand Jesus' illustrations, we need to follow the example of his faithful disciples. This also involves three steps. First, we need to be willing to take the time to study and meditate on what Jesus said, to do the necessary research, and to ask the appropriate questions. This leads to knowledge. (Prov. 2:4, 5) Next, we need to see how that knowledge fits in with what we already know, discerning its benefit to us personally. That results in *understanding*. (Prov. 2:2, 3) Finally, we should use what we have learned, putting it into action in our lives. This shows *wisdom* on our part.—Prov. 2:6, 7.

**[w16.09 p. 25 ¶7]** <sup>7</sup> Is it wrong to ask sincere questions about the Bible? By no means! Jehovah wants you to use "your power of reason" to prove the truth to yourself. He does not want you to believe just because others do. So use your thinking ability to gain accurate knowledge. That knowledge can then become the firm foundation for genuine faith. (Read Romans 12:1, 2; 1 Timothy 2:4.) One way to gain such knowledge is through the study projects that you choose to pursue.

**[w17.06 12 ¶13, 14]** <sup>13</sup> A third spiritual treasure is our repository of revealed truths. Jehovah is the God of truth. (2 Sam. 7:28; Ps. 31:5) As a generous Father, he shares divine truths with those who

fear him. From the time that we first heard the truth, we have had the opportunity to collect truths from his Word, the Bible, from our Christian publications, and from our conventions, assemblies, and weekly meetings. Over time, we develop what Jesus described as a “treasure store” of old and new truths. (Read Matthew 13:52.) Jehovah will help us to collect precious new truths into our “treasure store” if we search for them as for hidden treasures. (Read Proverbs 2:4-7.) How do we do that?

<sup>14</sup> We must develop good personal study habits and do careful research in God’s Word and in our publications. This will help us to discover truths that may be “new” in the sense that we did not know them before. (Josh. 1:8, 9; Ps. 1:2, 3) The very first issue of this magazine, published in July 1879, stated: “Truth, like a modest little flower in the wilderness of life, is surrounded and *almost* choked by the luxuriant growth of the weeds of error. If you would find it you must be ever on the lookout. . . . If you would possess it you must stoop to get it. Be not content with *one* flower of truth. . . . Gather ever, seek for more.” Yes, we must be eager to enrich our own treasure store of divine truths.

**[w18.06 p. 19 ¶14]** <sup>14</sup> All Christians should want to move “beyond the primary doctrine about the Christ” and to “press on to maturity.” (Heb. 6:1) This does not happen automatically. We need to “press on,” or keep working at it. Growing to maturity involves advancing to an increased level of knowledge and insight. That is why we have repeatedly been encouraged to read a portion of the Bible daily. (Ps. 1:1-3) Have you made that a personal goal? Doing such reading can give you greater insight into Jehovah’s laws and principles and a deeper understanding of God’s Word.

**[w19.06 p. 13]** <sup>17</sup> We need to be convinced of our beliefs. If we leave challenging questions unanswered in our minds, they can become serious doubts. Those doubts could eventually distort our thinking and destroy our faith. What, then, do we need to do? God’s Word tells us to transform our minds, so that we may **prove to ourselves** “the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” (Rom. 12:2) By regular study, we can prove to ourselves the truths we have learned from the Bible. We can be fully convinced that Jehovah’s standards are right. Then, like a tree with solid roots, we will be firmly rooted, “stabilized in the faith.”—Read Colossians 2:6, 7.

**[w02 12/1 p. 17]** <sup>18</sup> Although the slave class is defined as “faithful and discreet,” Jesus did not say that it would be infallible. This group of faithful anointed brothers still consists of imperfect Christians. Even with the best of intentions, they can be mistaken, as such men sometimes were in the first century. (Acts 10:9-15; Galatians 2:8, 11-14) However, their motive is pure, and Jehovah is using them to supply us with Bible study aids to build up our faith in God’s Word and promises.