



BEACON

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Perverted Passages

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We are admonished to handle the Scriptures properly (2 Tim. 2:15) that we might answer correctly when others ask us about the Gospel (1 Pet. 3:15). That makes it extremely urgent that we never take texts out of context or warp the Bible to suit our own desires (2 Pet. 3:16). Sometimes we fail to “search the Scriptures daily” (Acts 17:11) and, thus, we do not discern truth (Heb. 5:14). One generation, sadly, passes on to another inherited, slanted, and mistaken views of certain verses because sincere personal study is not esteemed as highly as “the status quo.” Sectarian preference is often stronger than the pain of **accuracy**. Human pride gets in the way of honesty and genuine scholarship. We are often reluctant to admit we have lazily and conveniently become “willingly ignorant” (2 Pet. 3:5). Nothing makes spiritual error thrive so strongly as *good people* who hold on to old, traditional positions, just because **they like them** or because **they have always believed that way!** In the general religious world, no passage has been twisted more ridiculously than the Adventists’ crazy misuse of “the mark of the beast” in Revelation 13. In recent days, some of their own writers have even tried to soften Ellen G. White’s writings, in which she applied that concept to those who worship on the first day of the week instead of the Sabbath! The followers of Joseph Smith have tried to mutilate Ezekiel 37 in a similar fashion to gain sanction for the *Book of Mormon* on equal footing with the

Bible. However, any honest person who can read and reason knows that the **two sticks** in that passage refer to kingdoms, not books, for Ezekiel says so later in the same chapter!

We are not immune to the temptation to force unfair conclusions on Bible verses. One of the most often abused passages is found in the second chapter of 1 Corinthians. Many times, especially at funerals, preachers refer these words to heaven, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (2:8). However, if one reads the context he can clearly ascertain the subject is not heaven but the inspired, revealed will of God, found in the Sacred Text!

Another frequent blunder that creates erroneous concepts is the verse in 1 Corinthians 8:1, “Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth.” I have personally heard preachers infer that this proves that Bible knowledge is of little value and might even be harmful, despite many verses that challenge us to know the Scriptures! How could it be dangerous to be like Jesus, who knew the Holy Word so thoroughly that He sent the Devil reeling (Mat. 4; Psa. 119:11)? If the Bible is God’s revelation to us of heaven’s will, how does a thorough knowledge of it corrupt us? The context of the Corinthian text sheds great light upon the subject. Paul is speaking of the knowledge of indifferent matters, such as meat offered to idols. He does

not refer to knowing the Bible and its message. The more we really know the Scriptures, the humbler we will be, for the Bible teaches us true humility. The passage before us is not a contrast of two men with converse views, but a study of how one man (Paul) balances love and knowledge in dealing with weaker, untaught brethren. Paul **knew** that meat offered to idols was still just meat because an idol was zero in God's counting method. But new Christians, coming out of paganism, did not yet have that level of perceptiveness. They could remember the heathen rites wherein meat was offered to an idol and thus associated such matters together. Paul's **love** for

The King of Kings

H. L. Gradowith (Tim Smith)

He raised the dead and to the blind He gave sight,
He is truly the King of kings;
He made the broken whole and made all things right,
He is truly the King of kings!
He's always there when you need a Faithful Friend,
He is truly the King of kings;
He's always there for you to the very end,
He is truly the King of kings!
He understands when you're lonely and afraid,
He is truly the King of kings;
He'll wash away all the errors that you've made,
He is truly the King of kings!
He knows your heart, and He'll make it white as snow,
He is truly the King of kings;
He feels your pain and will heal it, for you know:
He is truly the King of kings!

Deceased

them was more vital than his knowledge concerning this indifferent situation (1 Cor. 6:12). However, the great apostle would, because of his knowledge **and** love, teach them the truth and forbid them to bind their conscience upon others (1 Tim. 4:1-3). Let us learn to use passages properly and within the accuracy of the contexts wherein they are found!

Amos 4:12 is a brilliant verse, very familiar, and yet abused. The phrase "prepare to meet thy God" does not mean that Israel had time to avoid punishment, but, to the contrary, it meant that sudden bondage awaited them because of their ungodly lives. Therefore, they only had time to get ready to meet the judgment of God that captivity would bring. Amos 6 is also a poor passage to use against instrumental music in worship today because the setting is foreign to that point. In the chapter under discussion, the bold prophet of Tekoa rebuked the shameful indifference and materialism of Israel, which led them to bask in the ease and pride of secular comfort. Just reading the context proves this point. The best argument against mechanical music in New Testa-

A tragedy, to have any unity of action when played on the stage, must be planned and written by one person, at least under the direction of one person. Imagine, if you can, a play written by several men, neither of whom knew what the other was writing, or that he was writing at all. Yet, the prophets so wrote the tragedy of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus. And then the play—none of the actors in the drama, save Jesus, knew that the part he was playing had been written, yet each played his part according to the record. God knew what would be done and had the prophets to write it down.

R. L. Whiteside, Deceased

ment worship is the lack of authority, under Christ, **for** its use (John 4:24; 17:17).

Another favorite misused text is the “touch not; taste not; handle not” of Colossians 2:21. Rather than being a good three-point lesson against worldly pursuits, it is a warning to Christians who were free from the ordinances of Judaism yet submitted to the ritual and ordinances imposed by men!

John 6 does not refer to the Lord’s Supper when Jesus said, “Eat my flesh and drink my blood.” We can infer that He was talking about something else because, in verse 51, Christ tells them that His subject matter therein was “for the life of the world.” However, Luke 22 proves that the Lord’s Supper is only for the kingdom of the

Savior and is a **memorial** of His death (1 Cor. 11:23-29).

Let us remember the poet’s words:

So many people in this latter days
Have read the Bible in so many ways
That few can tell which system is the best
For every party contradicts the rest.
So trust no creed that trembles to recall
What has been penned by one
And verified by all.

The Bible is its own best commentary. Let us allow all that the Bible says on any subject to teach us the whole truth and nothing but the entire counsel of God (Acts 20:27).

Deceased

Grasping for a Zestful Life

Life is brief at best and God expects us to grasp the fullness and beauty of it, which leads to happiness. When the proper ingredients are added, life takes on a pleasantness otherwise missed—just as a little ketchup and mustard make an already tasty hamburger more palatable. We are the “salt of the earth” (Mat. 5:13), meant to give flavor to the lives of all we touch. The Laodiceans were “neither cold nor hot,” therefore lacking *zestos* (Rev. 3:15). Please consider some things we can do to have a more zestful life.

We Need to Keep Healthy. John recorded this admonition, “I wish above all *things* that thou mayest prosper and be in health” (3 John 2). Jesus was balanced in His development, a part of which was caring for the physical body by increasing in “stature” (Luke 2:52). Good health requires that we rest, eat a proper diet, enjoy an outdoor life. Jesus and His apostles took every opportunity to rest (Mark 6:31). Paul expressed concern for Timothy’s stomach condition (1 Tim. 5:23). He also told Timothy that there was some profit in bodily exercise (4:8).

Becoming and Remaining Happy. A rich man was asked if he was happy. His reply was, “No! I

have a bad heart, an ulcerated stomach, seven houses I don’t live in, friends I don’t trust, and a wife that married me for my money!” Solomon observed that “The spirit of man will sustain his infirmity” (Pro. 18:14). Early Christians were joyful: in Jerusalem, they ate “with gladness” (Acts 2:46), there was great joy in Samaria (8:8), the Ethiopian left the waters of baptism rejoicing (8:39), and the converted jailor rejoiced (16:34).

Keeping Busy. Idleness is the menace of earthly aspiration and a bar to heaven’s door! The one talent man lost his reward because of laziness (Mat. 25:26). Doctors report that more than 33% of their patients suffer from inactivity and emptiness of life. The Bible points us to the sluggard and warns against slothfulness in business despairingly (Pro. 6:6; Rom. 12:11).

Learn to be Content. Life is not all daylight; it has darkness too. The sun hides behind clouds as joys are dampened by hurt and loss. We cannot always choose our circumstances, because they often do not fit into the will of God (Luke 22:42). But we can learn to be content in whatever state we are in (Phi. 4:11-12; 1 Tim. 6:6-7).

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Sick

Remember in your prayers:

Bill & Peggy Crowe

Nancy Travis

Linda Worley

Carla Burleson

Bill & Pam Busch

Linda Parks

Sympathy

Our deepest sympathy is extended to Lester Kamp in the death of his sister. Please keep Lester and his family in your prayers.

Please Remember

August 30

Fifth Sunday Dinner after the morning service. Singing and a devotional service at 1:00 pm.

Defender and Beacon

Available Via Email

Send your email address to:

bellviewcoc@gmail.com

Weekly Services

Sunday

Bible Classes for all ages — 9:00 a.m.

Morning Worship Service — 10:00 a.m.

Afternoon Worship Service — 1:00 p.m.

Wednesday

Bible Classes for all ages — 7:00 p.m.

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