

BEING A BIBLICAL CHRISTIAN

By Fred Orcutt, Coordinator, Hood County Prayer Task Force

I was with some folks about a year ago just hangin' out. Several of us were believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. Others weren't. They were atheists and agnostics. We were discussing various topics, including some that are sources of controversy these days. Suddenly, one of the people, whom I had thought was a solid, conservative Christian, said about the topic currently under discussion, "I don't care what the *Bible* says about _____, I believe _____."

Oops! Alarm bells began to sound in my head. God gave us His Word out of His great love for us, so we would know how to relate to Him, so we could know Him and have joy and peace. You don't care what God has said in His Word! Are you wiser than He?

Jesus cared a lot about what God's Word says. Listen to what He told Satan when tempted by the devil in the wilderness, "*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.*" (Matthew 4:4) This verse is foundational and for many years I have had an understanding of how it should be applied. It means that people who want to please God must accept and act on what He says. It's called *obedience*.

To be sure, we don't come into the Christian life fully grown and understanding all of the *Bible*. There is a growth process involved. God is still teaching me, and I have been a believer for a long time. But, if we are to please God, we must study His Word to know what He wants and then live in the light of what He shows us. Listen to what the Bible says about His Word:

"These are the ones I look on with favor: those who are humble and contrite in spirit, and who tremble at my word." (Isaiah 66:2)

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed." (John 8:31)

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)

It is not enough to get your information about what God has to say from your pastor, priest or *Bible* study teacher. It is not enough to simply read your *Bible* daily, good as that is. Many of us read it but don't let God use it to affect change in us. If we are to become the faithful servants God wants to use, we must read the Word, interact with it until we understand it and surrender our wills to God's revealed will as His Word sets it forth.

Certainly, God has given us free will. We can choose to obey Him or not, but there are consequences either way. You can be a Christian and not care what God has to say in His Word (provided you indeed trust that Jesus died on the cross for your sin and rose again), but you can't be a good one!

Think on this! Pray about it! Dig into His Word. Accept it. Receive it as His love-gift to you. If you will agree with and obey Him, He will give you unbounded joy and peace.

Next week, we will explore the implications of knowing the *Bible* and our obedience to Jesus, our Lord.