

ISSUE

17.40

BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

October 11,
2015

Services

Sunday: 9:00 AM

10:00 AM

11:00 AM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter

Jeff Nunn

Kyle Pope

Deacons:

Steve Dixon

Ryan Ferguson

Arend Gressley

Ben Hight

Jack Langley

Blake McAlister

Brady McAlister

Walker McAnear

Sam Nunn

Lance Purcell

Rusty Scott

Justin Smiley

Trevor Yontz

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope



Can We Understand the Bible?

By Kyle Pope

Desiderius Erasmus was the 16th century Greek scholar who laid the groundwork for the translation of the Bible into English. In his preface to the 1516 edition of the Greek New Testament he said that he wished that the Scriptures might be translated into all languages so that all people “might read and understand them.”

A driving motivation of the Reformation movement and men like Martin Luther and William Tyndale was expressed in the motto *Sola Scriptura* - “the Scriptures alone.”

In our generation we are witnessing an information and scientific “explosion.” We can understand complexities of nature and technology as never before. We understand more about the building blocks of life and the material



Desiderius Erasmus

world than our ancestors did. From the movements of the planets to the chemistry that fuels the stars, we can chart, formulate and explain their function better than any generation in human history.

The human capacity for understanding is remarkable. Simply set a child in front of a computer or video game and in no time he or she can understand every, trick, special move and nuance of how to maneuver through complex obstacles and overcome

intricate challenges. Yet, for some reason this same generation who is capable of understanding so many things has come to believe that we cannot understand the Bible.

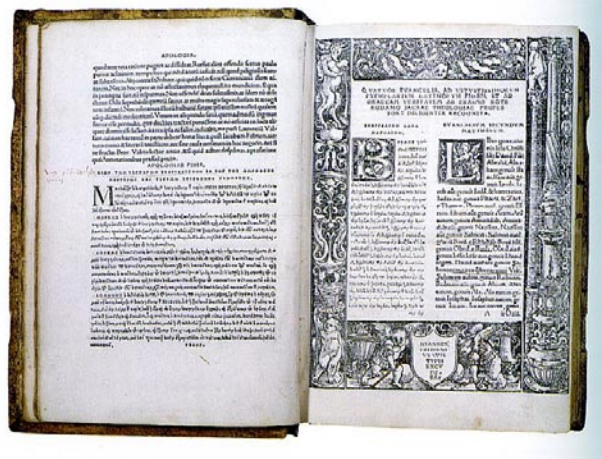
When the apostle Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus, it is clear that he did not intend for his words to be so complex and mysterious that they could not be understood. He said that God, **“...made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)..”** (Ephesians 3:3,4, NKJV). The Psalmist wrote, **“Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them. The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple”** (Psalm 119:129-130).

What was true for the Ephesians and for the Psalmist must surely be true for us today. To imagine otherwise, is to insult God. It is to say that He was incapable of communicating His word to us in a way that could be understood. It is to conclude that the God who gave us the capacity to understand so many other things did not give us the ability to understand His word. On the contrary, although we must be careful to **“rightly divide the word of truth”** (2 Timothy 2:15), the Bible was given to us to understand how we should guide our lives, the church, and all things.

How do we understand any written document? We first consider what it says. Is the



author giving instructions? Is the author telling a historical narrative or a parable to draw a moral conclusion? The Bible teaches us in the same way by its commands, its narratives, and its parables. When we read something we also consider if the author describes something that happened? We note whether the things described are positive or negative? The Bible sets for us examples of individual and church behavior that are divinely approved or condemned. These approved examples become binding standards for us to practice and also a sure test of what is sound and unsound. Does the author infer some things, without spelling them out directly? These inescapable conclusions in a novel, a mystery, or even in technical writing provide vital information that helps to complete our understanding of a text. The Bible is no different. Does this demand caution? Absolutely! Jesus warns against straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel (Matthew 23:24). Paul commanded not to **“strive over words to no profit”** (2 Timothy 2:14). Yet, Paul himself once focused on the fact that a single word in Old Testament prophecy was *singular* rather than *plural* to show that it pointed to Jesus (Galatians 3:16).



An Edition of Erasmus' Greek Bible

The necessary inferences of Scripture are just as important and binding for us today.

Perhaps the real question may not be whether we can understand the Bible, but whether we are willing to follow what it teaches?

This article first ran in *Amarillo Uptown*, September 2007.



What's Wrong With Religious Denominations?

Denominations	The Lord's Church	Denominations	The Lord's Church
1. Many bodies.	1. One body (Matthew 16:18 16:18; I Corinthians 12:20).	8. Change teaching.	8. Bible stays the same (Matthew 24:35).
2. Founded by men.	2. Founded by Christ (Matthew 16:18).	9. Many faiths.	9. One faith (Ephesians 4:5).
3. Human heads.	3. Christ the head (Ephesians 1:22-23).	10. Many baptisms.	10. One Baptism (Ephesians 4:5).
4. Human creeds.	4. Bible alone (II Timothy 3:16,17).	11. Men join denominational churches.	11. God adds to His church (Acts 2:47).
5. Human names.	5. Christians - Disciples (Acts 11:26).	12. Approve of division.	12. Jesus prayed for unity (John 17:20,21).
6. Many gospels.	6. One gospel (Galatians 1:8,9).	13. Follow human traditions.	13. Rejects human traditions. (Col. 2:8).
7. Membership not essential for salvation.	7. Membership essential for salvation. (Ephesians 5:23).	14. Practice unscriptural worship.	14. Worships in spirit and in truth. (John 4:24).

Why Be A Part of A Denomination?

Faithful Sayings Issue 17.40 October 11, 2015

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Welcome Visitors

**We are so glad that you joined us today.
Please come again.**

● **Let us know if you have any questions.**