

Can We Understand The Bible?

by Bill Crews

One of the popular ideas that has been given wide circulation is the notion that men cannot understand the Bible, or the notion that people who have different and contrary religious beliefs became that way because the Bible simply cannot be understood alike. Often, it is true, that men fail to understand the Bible, and often people with divergent views do not reach the same conclusion on the same Bible passages. But to say that men cannot understand the Bible is a reflection upon man, upon the Bible, and upon the God who gave it. In John 8:43 Jesus said, *"Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word."* With their minds made up and closed, they were unable to really hear or pay attention to what He was saying. Matthew 11:25 says, *"At that time Jesus answered and said, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent (in their own eyes — BC) and have revealed them to babes'"* (the humble and receptive — BC). Matthew 13:10-15 sheds light on this last passage. There Jesus charged those who did not understand His teaching with having closed eyes, being hard of hearing, and having hearts that had grown dull. The apostle Paul, in Ephesians 3:1-4, writes: *"For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles — if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I wrote before in few words, **by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ**)"* (emphasis mine — BC). He also wrote in Ephesians 5:17: *"Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is."* In the Bible God has revealed His will unto men; He wants men to understand that will; and He is certainly capable of expressing Himself in words that men can understand. If He could not write words that men can understand, then He is not God. If He could, but chose not to, then he would be evil and, therefore, not God.

330401