

Tyranny of the Bible

Commentary for November 14, 2015 — Are We Being Mean to People?

Others and I have been accused of trying to impose a “tyranny of the Bible” upon others, because we insist that the Bible should be far and away the greatest influence on your spiritual life. Nothing is further from the truth. Rather than a tyranny, the Bible is a blessing that should be understood and used in several ways.¹

How Reading Communicates to Your Mind

Understand, when you read one of Jane Austen’s novels, you are reading her thoughts from symbols on paper, thoughts that she put to paper over 200 years ago. When you read the Roman statesman and diplomat Cicero on the mortality of man and how religion with a “hell” teaching was used to control the masses (and still is used as such today), you are reading the thoughts of Cicero from over 2000 years ago.²

When you read the Bible, the written Word of God, you are reading God’s thoughts, but the author is living, not dead as are Jane Austin or Cicero. And, the author is present with you in the room as you read. This is true whether what you read is a Bible narrative, an epistle, a vision, a prophecy, a Gospel, or an apocalyptic portion of Scripture (such as in Zechariah chapters 12–14, parts of Isaiah, Daniel, or Revelation).

ALL OF IT is the Word of God, even when Satan is quoted, even in its “errors.”³ That Word of God, particularly the Gospel of humanity’s salvation, shines through in all translations.

Your experiences of God, your feelings about God are impure, no matter how ecstatic or profound. Such experiences and feelings are received and filtered by the flesh. They MUST, in my opinion, be moderated, molded, and shaped by the written Word of God. That means you should be willing to subordinate your feelings and experiences to the Word of God, yes — the WRITTEN Word of God. Some don’t like that idea, and think that makes the Bible an idol.

By reading God’s thoughts (even when you disagree), God’s Spirit (a force, by the way) is the medium by which God and Christ conform you to fulfill His will a tiny bit each day in your mind, words, and deeds in your life. This is not a matter of feelings. It is a matter of God building character in you to conform to His will now, and so you can fulfill His will usefully after your resurrection from the dead.

¹ 2 Timothy 3:16–17:

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: [why?] That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

² See the article, “[The Pagan Immortal Soul and ‘Double Doctrine’](#)” about religious lies and control.

³ “[The Tomb of Rachel](#)” by Dr. Martin explains one instance of “biblical error” and how truth is shown through that error.

Perfection Will Not Come — Yet

No one will be perfected this side of death. Consider these two verses below from the Concordant Literal Translation, which I consider more precise than the KJV in these verses:

“Now we are aware that God is working all together for the good of those who are loving God, who are called according to the purpose that, whom He foreknew, He designates beforehand, also, to be conformed⁴ to the image of His Son, for Him to be Firstborn among many brethren.”

• ***Romans 8:28–29, Concordant Literal Version***

“For our realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Savior also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of his glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself. So that, my brethren, beloved and longed for, my joy and wreath, be standing firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.”

• ***Philippians 3:20–21, Concordant Literal Version***

When we are resurrected to glory with Christ, God and Christ will give you feelings and experiences unimagined and even indescribable. Can you get this type of message anywhere else? Does your body give you those feelings? Have you ever experienced anything like this? No.

Even the most ecstatic of experiences in the flesh (and they can be profound) can only be interpreted through your conventional five senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell, etc. They are physical. This is the case even when it may seem as if they are “super-sensual,” but isn’t that just a crossover of synapses, resulting in the sensations of “hearing smells,” “seeing sounds,” or “touching tastes”? (Some of you know what I am alluding to.) Even these are physical responses to stimuli.

God’s Word working within you is always gentle, always subtle, always leading, always restorative, ever slightly nudging you. The **“fruit [singular in Greek] of the Spirit”** listed in Galatians 5:22–23 is just this way.

I am not saying you should deny or reject your feelings or the effects of your experiences; they are symptomatic of many things in your life and should be examined, but not so closely that they eat away at your soul. God’s Word must be the guideline by which we live. After recommending the writings of Paul, the apostle Peter wrote that we should: **“grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”** (2 Peter 3:18).

I have seen several spiritual burnouts through the years in my Christian experience because people have trusted their feelings and experiences, and have been disappointed because God — supposedly — did not follow through on what they “knew” was their special calling in life. They imply that God made a mistake. I am talking about ministers, evangelists, missionaries, mental health professionals, ritual abuse counselors, the list goes on and on. People almost blame God because they have not lived up to their special calling, as they perceived it.

⁴ Imagine ... God wants to make you to be something better than you are at present. Some take offense at that, as if God has no right to do as He pleases with His creation.

Your Freedom in Christ

“In Christ” we have great freedom to do as we want in life. (Only **“in Christ”** do we even begin to be free at all.) Consider that your feeling or drive to fulfill a “calling” may be nothing more than a recognition that there is something in your life that you want to do to forward the Kingdom of God and Christ. If that is so, then go do it. Do not expect God to give you a “sign.” You never need an invitation to do good. It pleases God when you want to do good.

Those who had callings from God are required to fulfill that calling under threat of ... let’s just say you will be made uncomfortable until you do fulfill God’s calling. Don’t ask for a calling.⁵

“As he says also in Osee [Hosea], ‘I will call them my people, which were not my people [that is you, if you are a Gentile]; and her beloved, which was not beloved.’ And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, ‘You are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.’”

• ***Romans 9:25–26 KJV***⁶

Once you realize you are saved, then suddenly works are incredibly beneficial for you personally, while you benefit the *ekklesia* of God, and others, who will remember at a later time your kindness and love toward them. You can rack up as many works “points” as you desire to increase your reward. God will bless you for it, but probably not in this life. All your works will be a fulfillment of your God-given abilities, and your heartfelt desires to serve others. Even your desire to do such works will come from God:

“For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That you may be blameless and harmless, the sons [children] of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.”

• ***Philippians 2:13–15, KJV***

“You shine as lights” when you do good works, even though you do not realize it.

Spiritual Abuse?

For those who have suffered “spiritual abuse” from those who said (make that “lied”) that the Bible required this or that abusive behavior (often involving money), part of that abuse occurred because God placed you in that situation, and part of that occurred because you let things happen even when you suspected things were “not quite right.” A teacher once said, “eat the meat, and throw away the bones.” Do that with negative past spiritual experiences. Do that with bad experiences that were not spiritual in nature. Keep what was good, learn from what was bad or evil. Help others avoid what you experienced and suffered, if possible.

⁵ There will be those “called” in the future to perform particular deeds. The two witnesses (Revelation 11:1–14) and the 12,000 “virgins” (spiritual virgins) of Revelation 14:1–5 come to mind, as do those old men who will dream dreams and men who will have visions before Christ returns (Joel 2:28–29). But note they are Israelites who have these callings.

⁶ Study Old Testament prophets such as Jonah and Jeremiah to see what happened when they tried to avoid God’s precise requirements for their particular callings. What God required Hosea to do to fulfill his calling was not pleasant for him or his family.

In the meantime, there are many things to think about as the apostle Paul wrote:

“And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Finally, brethren,

**whatsoever things are true,
whatsoever things are honest,
whatsoever things are just,
whatsoever things are pure,
whatsoever things are lovely,
whatsoever things are of good report;**

if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, THINK ON THESE THINGS.

Those things, which you have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, DO: and the God of peace shall be with you.”

• *Philippians 4:7–9 KJV*

Paul was not just spouting fine words. They are true words. With God’s help and His Spirit, what you think is what you will conform to: it is what your character shall become. Note how the Word of God, the Bible, actually has practical concepts on “how to live” and not just platitudes or positive experiences with good feelings. God’s Words of Scripture change lives.

Understand that God is not in the salvation business, God is in the CREATION business.⁷ He is creating you to be an Elohim like Christ is now (1 John 3:1–3; Philippians 3:21) so eventually you will fully conform to His image (Genesis 1:26). He shall finish His work in you, and in every other child of Adam. Now, as a believer in Christ’s resurrection, you are legally “in Christ,” a child of God. You have been chosen to know your status as a child of God, far ahead of the vast majority of human beings. You won the lottery and few of you realize it.

The Bible is not a tyrant, and neither am I for insisting people should go there first for information about their Creator, God the Father, and their Savior Christ Jesus. God’s Word is not just a litany of demanding do’s and don’ts. Scripture is God’s mind communicating with you, His child. He speaks to you through His written word; feel free to respond by speaking to Him in return. Jesus said:

“It is the spirit that quickens; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

• *John 6:63 KJV*

The apostle Paul explained

“... you received the word of God which you heard of us, you received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually works also in you that believe.”

• *1 Thessalonians 2:13*

Live responsibly as God’s child and may God bless you.

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⁷ Dr. Martin used to say that, and it is still true.