

## THE DEMANDS GO WITH THE BIBLE

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Many homes have yet to give up the Bible. It has its place on a certain table or shelf, and it is in no danger of being carted off to the half-price bookstore. The Bible will survive in a multitude of homes and perhaps even be passed down from generation to generation.

Now, the demands the Bible makes are a different matter! Many folks buried the demands of the Bible long ago, and they have no intention of resurrecting them. When one gives serious thought to the matter it doesn't make much sense. What does one have left when all the demands have been stripped from the Bible?

The demands go with the Bible. Removing the demands from the Bible is reminiscent of those who sought to separate Christ from His church. One does not have the option of Christ without the church or the Bible without its demands.

One demand the Bible makes that is so frequently ignored is that it be believed. A geometry book or a grammar book is designed to be believed. These books are worthless to the unbeliever. One reads these books in vain unless he chooses to put into practice the examples and instructions that lie therein.

Paul reminds the Roman brethren, "*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*" (Romans 10:17). The Bible is of no value to one who does not believe it is God's divine pattern for man. Will a person trust his feelings or will he believe the Bible? A person may say, "I just feel that I am saved and that I will go to Heaven when I die." This person has not been "*baptized for the remission of sins*" (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16; Galatians 3:27; I Corinthians 12:12), but he "feels" that he is saved. He reads his Bible but he does not believe it. If he did, he would yield to the Bible's demand to be immersed for the remission of his sins.

The Bible reveals the attitude one should possess toward the Scriptures: "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek*" (Romans 1:16). The writer of Hebrews says, "*For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it*" (Hebrews 4:2).

Another demand the Bible makes is that it be obeyed! If a student does not believe the geometry book he probably will fail the course. A failure to obey the geometry book's instructions will not help his GPA, but it will not cost him his soul. A failure to obey the Bible will doom one to eternal torment. However, the Bible is of no value to one who chooses to disobey its teaching.

Multitudes claim to love the Lord while adamantly refusing to obey the teaching of the Bible. Such actions caused Jesus to say, "*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven*" (Matthews 7:21). Peter makes it clear that we purify our souls in "*obeying the truth*" (I Peter 1:22). The admonition from James is to "*be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves*" (James 1:22).

So many today feel they do not have to obey the teaching of the Bible if it contradicts their man-made creeds. Millions become members of and attend the "church of their choice" while refusing to obey the Bible command to "*worship in spirit and in truth*" (John 4:24). The truth of the matter is that the Bible teaches that the Lord promised to build His church (Matthew 16:18), and thus there is but one body (Ephesians 4:4). The Bible does not teach that one joins a church of his own choosing, but the Bible does declare that the Lord adds those who obey the Gospel to His church (Acts 2:47).

Faith without obedient action is dead (James 2:1-26). To sing "Give Me the Bible" while refusing the demands of the Bible is hypocrisy.

Friends and brethren, the demands come with the Bible. Please consider this truth as you read from the Holy Book. If you truly love the Lord and respect the Bible, you will gladly submit to the demands contained in the inspired Scriptures.