



February 15, 2009

## *The Added Value Of The Scriptures*

One of the greatest problems that most folks deal with is that of making sense of life and finding a direction that will improve the quality of their existence. The search for meaning leads in many directions as we turn to the wisdom of the world and attempt to define our lives. God has provided a way for us to accomplish that through the revelation of his word. Paul spoke of the value of the scriptures in his letter to the Corinthians. The church at Corinth was beset with just about every problem that we can imagine a group of people could have. There were factions among them (**1 Cor 1.10**) and they had allowed fornication to flourish without rebuke (**1 Cor 5.1-2**). The Corinthians had lost site of the meaning and role of spiritual gifts, becoming competitive and disorganized in the process (**1 Cor 12-14**). Their observance of the Lord's supper, or communion, had been transformed into a feast that spoke more of pagan practices than worship toward God (**1 Cor 11.20-29**) and were in need of correction in this matter. There were other problems as well, but these are some that we are more familiar with in our studies of the writings to the Corinthians. In his writing to them, Paul points out that the scriptures contain the stories of the lives and decisions of others that had been recorded for our benefit. Paul reviewed the problems that the children of Israel had during the time of Moses and the negative consequences that befell them. Paul states, ***"But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted."*** (**1 Cor 10.5-6**). Paul comments on the value of these things as he states, ***"Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."*** (**1 Cor 10.11**). As we face the many problems that come our way in life we have the task of deciding what course of action to take both in a physical and a spiritual sense. We have a saying when dealing with a situation that it is best "not to reinvent the wheel", meaning that we do not have to start

from nothing and try to solve something. We can rely on the scriptures to show us examples of how others dealt with various situations and the outcome of those decisions. The Bible serves as a guide in this respect. We find that the overall message is plain. Those who trusted God and obeyed his commands were able to persevere in times of trial and remained faithful to God. Others we read about chose to neglect the directives of the Lord and found themselves in dire straits. Bad decisions in a physical sense have a profound effect on shaping our attitudes toward spiritual things. In studying the origins of error in the Old and New Testaments, we find that departure from God began with a rejection of what God has told us. This is the story of mankind from the very beginning. Sin and death entered into the world when man listened to the influence of Satan and sought to do things in human ways. God observed that ***"...the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth."*** (**Gen 8.21**). Paul tells us that the downfall of man began with an attitude of rejection and rebellion against the Lord (**Rom 1.21**) and resulted in God's rejection of those who sinned against him. Paul also told the Romans, ***"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."*** (**Rom 15.4**). The Bible is a great resource when it comes to figuring out how to deal with the problems of life. The requirement is that we need to develop an acceptance of the authority of God and then learn about him through reading, studying and obeying the scriptures. Solomon states, ***"The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."*** (**Prov 14.27**). If one seeks to find God, as well as meaning in life, we need look no further than God's word. We don't have to reinvent the wheel relying on our own experience.

TLC