

hold on tight

Some miiighty strange things can be found when you “surf the Book”. I mean things that can knock your socks off! At some point, I am sure that we have all heard or used the following expressions: “All roads lead to Rome”, or the ever popular “All paths lead to God”, or how about the all-time champ of the bunch, (or is that ‘chump of the bunch?’) “...as long as you are sincere everything will be alright” Yeah, right. Dream on. These are all fine in the fairy tale world that a lot of people find themselves living in. But when it comes to the word of God, alas, these expressions & sentiments are but the fleeting ghosts of long lost wishful thinking. You know, the type that thinks, “hey, maybe if I cover my eyes the other guy can’t see me”! Come to think of it, that worked real good when we were little kids, didn’t it?

Well, we have selected a few choice ‘gems’ from the word of God. Some folks might be shocked, to say the least, when they see these verses in print & realize that these were spoken by God Himself or were attributed to Him by the Prophets, who were speaking in His name! 2 Pet. 1:21

Let’s get started with one that is bound to raise a few eyebrows. This would be found in Jn. 9:31, Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, & doeth his will, him he heareth. Can you hear it? The crescendo that is starting to build? Talk about no sense of humor. Talk about no leeway! Let’s see if we can get this straight. If you are a sinner & do not worship God (we are not referring to Mother Earth, or Ghaia or any other wacko New Age diety) then God does not hear you! Nah. God couldn’t be that radical. Could He? Well, could He? Tell you what. Instead of us asking that question let’s just let Him answer for Himself. And guess what? I see another one back in Ps. 66:18 that is almost a match, If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. Isn’t it amazing what you find when you read the Bible?

Let’s go on. I can feel the heat rising! Can you? This one seems like it is going from the frying pan into the fire though. Mk. 7:6-7, He (Jesus) answered & said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. My, my. What language. Doesn’t sound very ‘christian’, does it? The very idea, calling someone a ‘hypocrite! And then to state that the worship that they were offering was IN VAIN!! Tsk, tsk. (I told you this was a great Book, didn’t I? Much more interesting & pertinent than the National Inquirer or the Star or the Globe or any of their ilk!).

GOD SAID...WHAT?

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In order to begin to appreciate the true nature of God, in any capacity that we are able to meaningfully employ, we must find that nature & character as spelled out in the only message system that He has given us. The Bible. The problem comes when a person has spent a lifetime assuming that the Bible say’s a certain thing. You know, “God helps those who help themselves”. Or “money is the root of all evil”. Or “as long as I am sincere & don’t hurt anyone...”, blah, blah, blah. Well, you see how it can go on & on. By the time we actually get around to reading the Bible itself we are shocked, stunned & absolutely amazed by what it actually says!

**Blessed is he
that readeth,
and they that
hear the
words of this
prophecy,
and keep
those things
which are
written
therein: for
the time is at
hand. Rev.1:3**

For instance, here comes another found in Acts 7:42, Then God turned, & gave them up to worship the host of heaven...(This was not a good thing folks). And what about Rom. 1:24 where we read, Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves.” Ah, free-will. Isn’t it a wonderful thing? God will actually give a person enough rope to literally hang himself if he chooses to do so! While we are watching a bunch of people self destruct before our very eyes let’s finish this morbid section by looking at one last one in this category. This is found again in the book of Rom. 1:26-28 (the context is talking about that fun loving, liberal minded, ‘alternative lifestyle’, madcap, adventurous, blood donating bunch known to us as ‘gays’. & lesbians). The passage says, For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another, men with men working that which is unseemly, & receiving in themselves

that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient. Mighty heady stuff, eh? Here, in the space of 5 little verses, God has taken a group of people that insist on doing it "their way" & has given them up to **uncleanness**, gave them up to **vile affections** & gave them up to a **reprobate mind**. This is God's stated opinion & stance on the subject. But, hey, what does He know? Right? After all, denomination after denomination just can't wait to ordain these folks & get them into the pulpits of America. Too bad He wasn't as understanding & accomodating as us 'free thinkers' & do gooders, huh?

Well, let's take a breather & go on to something a bit easier to take. I know, let's head over to Rom. 9:13 & read that uplifting refrain from the lips of God that goes like this, *As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*. Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! What did my eyes just read? God saying that He **HATED** someone? Yep. Well, He probably meant that He hated the sin but loved the sinner, right? That was probably it. Think so? NOT!!! Like I said, there is more to this book than Jn. 3:16.

it takes a big man to humble himself before God & let the biblical chips fall where they

This next one has never ceased to amaze me. Even after all these years I still look at it in wonder. This is the passage found in Mt. 7:21-23, *Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, **I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity**. Well, good grief. That tears it! Imagine. A group of people that prophesied, cast out devils & had done many wonderful works in his name. And Jesus turns to them & says not only that he **never knew them** but that they **worked iniquity!!!** Do you suppose that maybe Jesus might know something about human nature & the heart & the motives of an individual that we are not privy to? Is He being unkind here or is He simply exercising His Divinity in seeing thru the individual & straight to the heart?*



Some folks idea of the character & nature of God... Think again !!!

This is a big time reality check folks. We might be able to fool our mothers or girlfriends, bosses, kids - what have you. But, when it comes to 'putting one over' on the Lord of the Universe, I don't think we can get up early enough in the morning to be able to pull that one off! You see, He can spot the motives of the heart & that is what will separate the men from the boys. It's getting pretty quiet, isn't it?

Let's not get maudlin now, there is some more neat things to look at. For instance, the entire 2nd chapter of 2 Thes. is a good one, but lets look at a couple of verses in particular, vs. 10-12, *...because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: (why) that they all might be **damned** who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*. Good grief, how much more of this can we take? This actually sounds like maybe He means business, doesn't it? I mean, maybe we ought to take some time each day & read this Book & see God for how He actually is. Not in the light of some ignorant, wishfull thinking, New Age guru or some agnostic moron, but how He is presented in the Bible. Then, maybe we could see the complete nature of God. Maybe He is serious when He says that 'ye must be born again', Jn. 3:3, or that the 'fool hath said in his heart that there is no God', Ps. 14:1. Perhaps He meant it when He said 'it is appointed unto a man once to die, but after this the judgement', Heb. 9:27. Shucks, you don't suppose He meant it when He said 'it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God', do you? Or that 'there is one God & one mediator between God & men, the man ChristJesus', 1 Tim. 2:5. Hmm. Would you bet on it? Would you bet your life on it? Would you bet your eternal soul on it?

Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

...Yea, hath God said...?

Gen. 3:1

(you bet!)

Well, if you haven't been totally shocked out of your gourd by now this next one may just send you round the bend. I refer, of course, to that well known passage found in 1 Sam. 16:13-15, *Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and annointed him (David) in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah. But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him. And Sauls servants said unto him, Behold now, and evil spirit from God troubleth thee.* Now, I don't know about you, but the first time I read this one I almost had a heart attack! Do you see now why most people want to change this book & come up with revision after revision till they have watered the Book down to such an extent that it is no different than any other book on our book shelves. They insist on fashioning God 'after their own image, after their likeness'. They will not let God be God. God is relegated to the parameters that they think He should be confined to & anything that runs contrary to that image is relegated to the dustbin, ridiculed, laughed at & made fun of. After all, "God is a God of love", they say. That's right. He is. But He is also a "consuming fire", jealous & not about to share His glory with the likes of us! They read something like this & instead of just believing it as it lays, they immediately assume that God could not possibly have done what the Bible says He did. So they proceed to change it. Or not believe it. Or simply stop reading it. And at that point they have accumulated a length of rope just about long enough for them to self-destruct.

And on that positive note we come to the last couple of examples of some of the "words of God". Pretty neat so far, huh? Turn over to Rom. 9:15-16 & we see something that God said to Moses back in the Old Testament, *For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.* In the final analysis God will be God. And lest we forget, keep in mind, that with all these provocative, sensational type verses that we have looked at in this lesson, God is a God of love. He is merciful, patient, longsuffering & forgiving. But not to the point where His honor & glory are at stake. With the gift of free will we

have the privilege to say "no" to Him if we choose. But, with that gift of freewill comes the awesome burden of responsibility for our own actions or to be more specific, our lack of action (in trusting in or rejecting the Lord Jesus Christ as our own personal saviour). God has been more than ample in laying out His requirements.. He has been consistent in His warnings. And truly He has been graphic in relating the consequences of rejecting His son.

There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.

Prov. 16:25

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Isa. 55:8-9

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Prov. 3:5-6

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen

Rev. 22:20

With that we come to the last of the hard sayings in this lesson. And in some respects this is the hardest of the bunch. Because of the finality of the situation. Because of the one who is making this pronouncement. And for the fact that when God utters these words there is no recourse. There is no appeal & there certainly is no 'stacked jury' that will get you off. We finish off with Prov. 1:24-32, where God is speaking, *Because I have called, & ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as the whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: They would none of my counsel: they despised all of my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.*



