

UNCERTAINTIES IN SCRIPTURE

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During most of our lives as believers in Jesus Christ and in the truth of Scripture, we find ourselves living with a measure of uncertainties, potential conflicts and lack of understanding reflecting our inability to comprehend all that is in Scripture. Our path to the Kingdom of God requires us to exercise faith especially in those areas where we do not fully understand Scripture or the will of God. We move with a partial understanding as opposed to a complete understanding. As it says in 1 Corinthians 13, we see partially but the time will come when we will understand more fully. Scripture also makes it clear that God's ways are above our ways. We, with finite minds, find ourselves in the position of not comprehending the infinite.

From a practical standpoint, the inability to comprehend the infinite has a limited adverse effect upon our ability to function in life. I may not understand electricity but I use it every day. In short, I can live in the benefits without having a complete mastery of the particulars. The same application is also true in numerous other areas of life including medicine, automotive, space and numerous other disciplines.

Both in the human and spiritual spheres, I can have relationships based upon a limited understanding of the objective of my relationships. When I was born, I was able to have a relationship with my parents based upon satisfaction of my needs, but only with a limited understanding. As it says again in 1 Corinthians 13, as I grew older I ceased speaking and understanding as a child and put away childish things. Similarly, when I met my wife, I could come into a relationship without understanding everything about her. I was quite satisfied to move into that relationship with a limited knowledge which would slowly grow and develop over many years. A similar thing occurs when we are birthed into the family of God. We have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ that we do not fully comprehend; however, we are happy and excited about that relationship and we grow and develop in that relationship over the years. Just as my parents brought more to my relationship with them than I as a child did, so God brings infinitely more to my relationship with Him than I bring whether as a child in the faith or a mature adult believer. In essence, we begin our relationship as a seed but in that seed is unimagined potential for further growth and development. From the mustard seed, a mighty tree develops in faith and over time.

We are not born theologically sophisticated. We may go through our lives never understanding the complexity and wonders of the Incarnation, Trinity, resurrection or eternity. We may not fully understand the wonders of the atonement; yet that does not mean that we have not experienced a relationship with God and the benefits and blessings from the atonement.. Our understanding may not fully comprehend, but then my understanding according to 1 Corinthians 13 will someday pass away. Even my faith will pass away; but Love remains. The Word of God stands true throughout eternity.

Somehow God does not demand that I develop a well thought out theological system for me to come into relationship with him. With time, my relationship with God grows and becomes deeper. Yet at the beginning it is simple, unsophisticated and is theologically clad in rags. With time, I learn more but I am always thrust back to coming back to the kingdom of God with the simplicity of a child. God did not make his kingdom so high that only the sophisticated and intelligent could enter into it. Instead he

made it with a low threshold so that the ignorant and those low in intelligence but high in faith might enter in.

As I look back over my life, I find that many of the complexities of Scripture and Science I still do not understand. I am still a novice in the most complex areas of theology. I do not understand the nuances of creation or the extent of the universe. I am surrounded by miracles in the microcosm and macrocosm which I do not understand. I am unable to explain certain Scriptures. I am unable to understand the nuances of the flood or explain all of the details of the Apocalypse and Second Coming. I am unable to explain all in the Book of Revelation or how dinosaurs fit into God's plan. I stand amazed at Elijah's Wheel and at the river flowing through the Book of Ezekiel and through the Book of Revelation.

My view of the Kingdom of God is like a child in wonder looking down at the earth from the top of a mountain. However, who I know transcends what I know and understand.

In the Spiritual area, faith moves mountains. Love transcends understanding, gifts and knowledge. Simplicity often becomes as important as complexity.

We operate our lives in a sea of ignorance. However, ignorance is not the goal or a good thing to be desired. Like sailors we shoot the stars with our navigation instruments and sail through uncertainty looking to the guidance of our Morning Star, Jesus Christ. At the same time, we set the sails of our ships depending on the Spirit of God to propel us through to a safe destination. We focus upon the points of light to lead us to safety even though we do not understand the seas or the Leviathan's of ignorance which inhabit the mysterious deep.

In my opinion, it is not absolutely necessary that I resolve all conflicts in Scripture and answer all questions and lay every doubt to rest. Instead I continue to operate according to those absolutes that I understand through Scripture despite the details and facts that which I do not fully understand or resolve.

Instead I must live by faith. I cling to the many basics which I understand (but am still learning to understand better). I know that God is. I know that God is good. I know that he sent Christ to save me. I know that I am to love my brother and sisters in Christ. I know that I am to love God with all of my heart, soul, mind and strength. I know that I am to love my neighbor as myself. I know that studying Scripture and seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit is good and will help lead me to a safe port.

My problem is not that I do not know or understand enough. My problem is that I do not practice what I already know. I suspect that if I would "do" the word, then perhaps more insight would be given to me to understand more about God.

In conclusion, the goal of Christ in my life is not to lead me to understand all but to come into a knowing and loving relationship with God through Christ which will mature and grow over time. This process will help me to recognize God in my life and in the lives of my brothers and sisters who are my co-pilgrims in this life helping all of us to grow and experience love from and to God as well as love for one another. Knowledge shall pass away (and questions will remain unanswered) but love, faith and hope shall endure and remain.