

## Back to the Bible

What do you think of these statements: “The United States Constitution is an out-dated document that is no longer adequate to govern. Today’s society has advanced far beyond the principles stated in the Constitution. Besides, the wording of the Constitution is difficult to understand. It’s impossible for us to come together as a country and agree on the meaning of the Constitution. We need to either change it or replace it. As long as we love our country and do the best we can, a centuries old document intended to guide us as a nation isn’t really necessary anyway.”

Now let’s substitute some words and repeat the statements just made. “The Bible is an out-dated document that is no longer adequate to govern. Today’s society has advanced far beyond the principles stated in the Bible. Besides, the wording of the Bible is difficult to understand. It’s impossible for us to come together religiously and agree on the meaning of the Bible. We need to either change it or replace it. As long as we love our fellow man and do the best we can, a centuries old document intended to guide us spiritually isn’t really necessary anyway.”

Were you angered or offended by the words of the first paragraph? How did you react to the second paragraph?

The Constitution is an impressive document that has stood the test of time in demonstrating its ability to govern a country that has blossomed from a handful of citizens to over 300 million. The plea of a growing number of Americans who fear the country has drifted from its moorings is to return to the document drafted and penned by our forefathers and the principles that led to its writing. It’s believed that everyone who is willing can understand the Constitution alike.

The significance of the Constitution in building this country notwithstanding, it pales in comparison to the book that God inspired, the Bible. Yet, if we can unify the country on a 200+ year old man-made document, why can we not unite religiously on the inspired Word of God which is, in fact, timeless (I Peter 1:24-25)?

Did God give us a book that we cannot understand? Paul wrote that “God is not the author of confusion.” (I Corinthians 14:33). Writing the words that the Holy Spirit gave to him, Paul said, “Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ.” (Ephesians 3:4). There is not the slightest indication in that verse that the original readers needed a miraculous intervention of the Holy Spirit to understand what was written. The verses that follow show that the revelation had been given to the apostles and the prophets. They, in turn, wrote and spoke and many men and women heard and obeyed of their own volition. In short, they could understand God’s Word.

If understanding and being unified upon God’s Word was possible in the first century, why is it not possible now? Is it because we are too far removed from the time of the writing of the Bible? Is it because none of us today is intelligent enough to grasp what God has said? Actually, Paul himself gave the answer. After seeing the preaching of God’s Word rejected by the Jews in Rome, Paul quoted from Isaiah in saying, “Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.” (Acts 20:25-27).

The clarion call is being sounded far and wide by faithful members of the church of Christ. It’s time to get back to the Bible. God’s Word is still “quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword...” (Hebrews 4:12). If there is every to be any unity in Christ, it must come via the words that the Lord inspired writers to pen in the New Testament. We must never forget Jesus’ prayer in John 17. “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” (John 17:20-21). There is nothing more important in life, and ultimately in eternity, than living in accord with God’s Word (John 12:48; II Thessalonians 1:7-9).