

Where Do You Get Your Answers? By Dave Butts

~Other Speakers S-Z: Classic Christian Writings:

We live in a day and age when everyone is looking for answers to life's tough questions, but no one knows where to find the answers. Those in industrialized countries find themselves on overload from too much information, but still no satisfying answers. The result is a scurrying about; looking for solutions and wisdom, but without any assurance of finding what is looked for.

Most major newspapers carry daily horoscopes to satisfy the need of many who look to the stars for wisdom. These days, it's hard to turn on the television without seeing ads for fortune-tellers or tarot card readers, all encouraging gullible watchers to pay money to receive answers from them. Many still follow the writings of so-called "prophets" like Jeanne Dixon, Edgar Cayce and Nostradamus. Some societies still seek out witch-doctors and shamans to find direction. Others are more modern in their search and look to futurists who predict human future with pseudo-scientific methods. Perhaps the most common place to find answers among western countries is the poll or survey. If 60% of the population believes it, it must be so. Society becomes its own god and sets its own rules.

Into such a situation, the prophet Isaiah speaks and sounds so very contemporary: "When men tell you to consult mediums and spiritists, who whisper and mutter, should not a people inquire of their God? Why consult the dead on behalf of the living? To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn" (Isaiah 8:19-29).

"To the Law and to the Testimony!" Isaiah seems almost to shout the words. Back to the Book! Where are you looking for answers? If it's not in God's Word, you are looking in vain. Isaiah's phrase reminds me of Billy Graham standing before millions in his crusades and repeating the refrain, "the Bible says...."

The Bible gives us the ultimate answers to the meaning of life. Man created by God and for God. Man created to worship, serve and enjoy God forever. It gives us answers to the future of man. There is coming a day when the Son of Man will return in the clouds and time as we know it will be no more.

God's Word gives us the answers to life's problems. Romans 15:4 says, "For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." Whether we are seeking answers regarding morality, ethics, money, relationships, or family matters, God's Word stands alone as the only sure source of truth.

The Bible gives us answers in the area of personal guidance as well. Many of us years ago memorized Psalm 119:105, "Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path." God's Word is not merely a doctrinal workbook, but a very personal guide for our lives. And not only as individuals, but together as the Body of Christ. The Bible gives guidance and direction for the Church as it seeks to line its life up alongside what God has said.

Our Response?

What do we do with this teaching regarding the Word as the answer for life's questions? Let me suggest several appropriate responses.

1. If you are looking elsewhere for answers...stop! Especially if you are delving into areas that are forbidden in Scripture. Christians have no business consulting fortune-tellers, astrologists, or the like, even if we say it's "just for fun." God's Word forbids us to seek into areas of darkness for information that should be obtained only from Him.

2. Place your trust in God and His Word for the answers to life's situations. This will mean a renewed commitment to studying the Bible.

3. Submit your life to the authority of God's Word. The Bible gives us stern warnings about being a hearer of the Word, but not a doer. It's not just a matter of firmly believing that the Bible is the inspired Word of God...it's a matter of doing what it says in your own life. There's an older poem that says it this way:

What if I say--

The Bible is God's Holy Word,

Complete, inspired, without a flaw--
But let its pages stay
Unread from day to day,
And fail to learn there from God's Law;
What if I go not there to seek
The truth of which I glibly speak,
For guidance on this earthly way--
Does it matter what I say?

What if I say--

That Jesus Christ is Lord Divine--
Yet fellow pilgrims can behold
Naught of the Master's love in me,
No grace of kindly sympathy?

If I am of the Shepherd's fold,
Then shall I know the Shepherd's voice
And gladly make His way my choice.
We are saved by faith, yet faith is one
With life, like daylight and the sun.
Unless they flower in our deeds,
Dead, empty husks are all the creeds.
To call Christ Lord, but strive not to obey--
Belies the homage that with words I pay.

Maud Frazer Jackson

4. Allow the Word to go to work in your life. Paul wrote, "And we also thank God continually because, when you received the Word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe" (1 Thess.2:13). Understand that this is no ordinary book, to be read, dissected, understood, and mastered like another textbook. It is the Living Word of God. There is power in it; power to work in you as you hold on to it. It is the power of God's Holy Spirit who works in and through the Word to transform lives and empower believers to do the work of Him who saved us and called us to be His own.

To the Law and to the Testimony!