

Getting Scripture Right



Handle with care

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, **rightly** [skillfully, correctly] handling the word of truth.” 2 Tim 2:15

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the **power** [dynamite] of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

Rom 1:16



- God's Word is pure/perfect
- God's Word is inspired/inerrant/infallible
- God's Word is truth
- God's Word is sacrosanct
- Reading Scripture is one thing – but the key is *handling it correctly!*



We do this by:

- The leadership of the Holy Spirit
- Obeying the laws of Hermeneutics



“The Bible is the final court of arbitration for truth.” Hank Hanegraaff



“Christian preachers, teachers, and authors should be concerned not only with communicating a correct principle or point, but also with communicating a correct method of arriving at that principle or point. What is communicated about how we are supposed to handle God’s Word matters as much as the principle or point itself ... [The] mishandling of Scripture not only sets a bad example, it damages the church’s ability to criticize, or even recognize, the faulty interpretive methods of cults and aberrant teachers.”

Steve Bright, M.A. from Southern Evangelical Seminary, assoc. editor of *Christian Research Journal*



1. It is easy to improperly interpret and therefore misunderstand Scripture

“And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ **for** the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” **Acts 2:38**

Does this passage teach baptismal regeneration?



“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,” Phil 2:12

Does this passage teach that we have the freedom to “invent” our own version of salvation?



So, how do we keep from
misinterpreting/misunderstanding Scripture?



2. Scripture says we must use our minds when studying Scripture



“And he said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your **mind**.’” **Mt 22:37**

“Brothers, do not be children in your **thinking**. Be infants in evil, but in your **thinking** be mature.” **1 Cor 14:20**

Rom 11:25, 1 Cor 12:1, 1 Thess 4:13: “I do not want you to be ignorant”



3. Intellect alone will not enable us to understand Scripture



“these things God has **revealed to us** through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. ¹¹ ... So also **no one comprehends** the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. ¹² Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might **understand** the things freely given us by God. ¹³ And we impart this in words **not taught by human wisdom** but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. ¹⁴ The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is **not able to understand** them because they are **spiritually discerned**. ... ¹⁶ “For who has **understood** the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.” **1 Cor 2:10-16**



4. Pragmatism is one of this culture's biggest obstacles to understanding truth



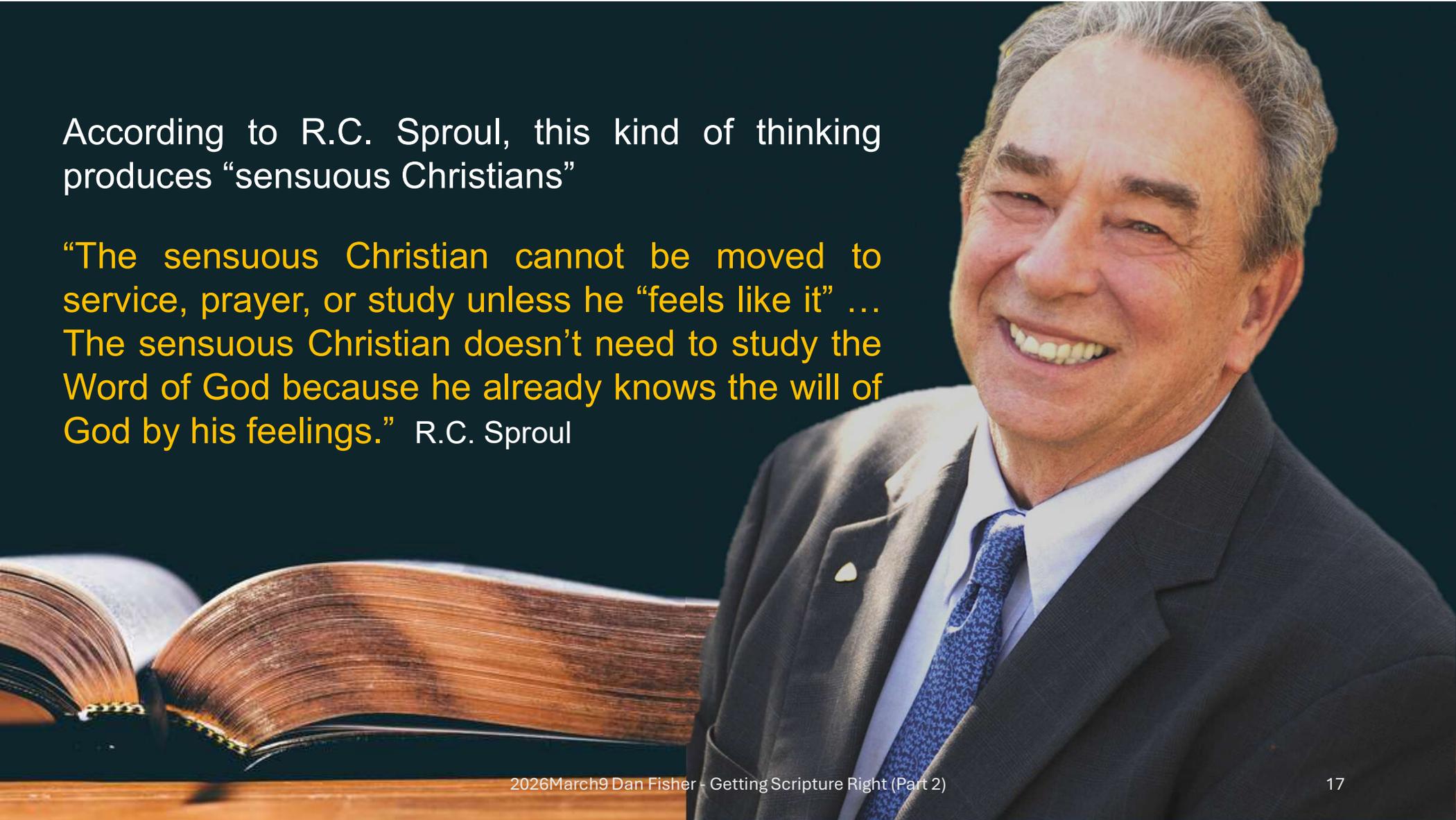
Pragmatism: defining truth by that which works or meets our desires/goals

Left unchecked by the eternal perspective, pragmatic thinking judges things in terms of humanistic understanding and short-range plans/goals



According to R.C. Sproul, this kind of thinking produces “sensuous Christians”

“The sensuous Christian cannot be moved to service, prayer, or study unless he “feels like it” ... The sensuous Christian doesn’t need to study the Word of God because he already knows the will of God by his feelings.” R.C. Sproul



5. To properly understand Scripture, we must understand subjectivity from subjectivism



Subjectivity: evaluating one's life by Scripture

Subjectivism: evaluating Scripture by one's life



6. A particular biblical statement may have numerous possible personal applications, but it can only have one correct meaning



7. There are two ways people approach Scripture – one is correct the other is incorrect



Exegesis: from the Greek word meaning “to guide out of” (prefix “ex” means “from” or “out of”) egesis = to lead or to draw

“to explain what Scripture says by allowing Scripture to speak”

To exegete Scripture is to get “out of” the words the meaning that is *there*, no more and no less



Eisegesis: from the Greek word meaning “to go into” (prefix “eis” means “into”) “egesis” = to lead or to draw

“to postulate on what we ‘think’ or ‘want’ Scripture to say”

Eisegesis involves reading “into” the text something that is “not there” (reading from the white part of the Bible)



8. Private views must be evaluated by the biblical text and historical evidence – not opinion; we tend to bring excess baggage to Scripture



- This requires proper interpretational techniques — Hermeneutics
- This emphasizes the importance of the role of God-gifted teachers



“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; ⁷ if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching;” **Rom 12:6-7**

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,” **Eph 4:11-12**

“Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.” **Js 3:1**

