

Introduction:

1. There are an amazing number of things that people think are true but are not.
  - a. I am not thinking about things in our world generally, but things from the Bible.
  - b. Oh, to be sure, there are plenty of things in our world that people think are true but aren't. As an example, most folks think warts come from touching toads or frogs. They actually come from a virus. But that is a matter of little consequence and not the topic for our lesson.
2. There are a number of things that people think are true relative to the Bible, but are not.
  - a. Before we look at any of those things let me pose a question to you: *If what you thought to be true turned out not to be true, when would you want to know about it?*
  - b. You might respond by saying, "That depends on what it is?" I would agree that if it is something like toads and warts, it is of little consequence one way or the other.
  - c. But what if it is something about the Bible? What if there is something you think is true relative to the Bible, but it turns out that you were wrong, and what you believed was true is not true, when would you want to know about it? It might still depend on what it is, right?

The Lesson:**I. Trouble with Trivia.**

- A. Can you identify the kind of fruit Adam and Eve ate in the Garden of Eden?
  1. Everybody knows it was an apple, right? Most folks believe that because that's what they have heard. But they never heard anyone say that in the Bible.
  2. The fruit is only identified as coming from "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," Genesis 2:17. But, someone says, "I have read Bible verses that say it was an apple." You may have thought you did because this misconception is so widely believed, but there are no such verses in the Bible.
  3. This misconception has even become part of an anatomical myth—the Adam's apple.
    - a. An old wives tale says Adam tried to swallow the apple core and it got stuck in his throat, hence the Adam's apple. And since all men came from Adam all men have it.
    - b. "If there isn't some truth to it, then why don't women have an Adam's apple?" Actually, what is called the Adam's apple is the larynx, the voice box—and women do have it. Men tend to have the larger, more muscular larynx as their voices are deeper. At puberty, when a boy's voice begins to change, the larynx grows quickly and becomes much more pronounced and produces the deeper, manly voice.
  4. There is no help in anatomy for the misconception that Adam and Eve ate an apple. But I suspect some people will make it to heaven who never got this straight.
- B. Can you name the three kings who came to the manger at Jesus' birth?
  1. Most folks don't know the names, and for good reason. Their names are not in the Bible. Tradition says their names were Balthazar, Gaspar, and Melchior. But that's just tradition.
  2. But everybody knows that it was three kings who visited Jesus at His birth, right?
    - a. Actually the Bible never calls them "kings." Maybe we got that from the song "We Three Kings." The Bible calls them "wise men," Matthew 2:1.
    - b. Second, we don't know how many there were. Maybe it was three—or two, or twenty. The fact that three kinds of gifts were brought to Jesus does not argue for three men, Matthew 2:11. For Christmas I got socks, ties, and shirts—from ten people. Five gave me socks; four gave me ties; one gave me a shirt. Socks, ties and shirts do not argue for three givers. Three kinds of gifts for Jesus don't tell us how many wise men came.
    - c. Third, there is no indication that the wise men ever saw the infant Jesus at His birth. Jesus may have been as much as two years old when they came, Matthew 2:7, 16.
    - d. Finally, the wise men never saw Jesus in the stable or manger where He was born. By the time they came, Jesus and His family were living in a house, Matthew 2:11.
    - e. I suspect there will be people in heaven who didn't get these facts straight. These facts, for the most part, are small matters. But they show us something critically important: There are some things people believe relative to the Bible that are not true!
- C. Some of the things folks believe have powerful consequences. Again, we ask the question: *If what you thought to be true turned out not to be true, when would you want to know about it?*

## II. Difficulty with Doctrine.

- A. Let us leave trivial matters and look at crucial issues. The fun is over; this is the serious stuff!
  1. Again, we want to identify some things people believe about the Bible that are not true.
  2. These are things that have powerful consequences. The question is, if you are wrong on these things, when do you want to know about it? Now, or on the Judgment Day?
- B. Here are some things people think are true, but are not.
  1. "The Bible says we are all born as sinners. We can't help but to sin. So it's not our fault."
    - a. Multitudes believe that is in the Bible. But it is not true. Plain statements of the Bible clarify that, Ezekiel 18:20. Guilt of sin is not transferred from one person to another.
    - b. If you are wrong on this, when do you want to know about it? Now, or later? This lie has shackled people into thinking that they cannot break loose from sin. It has been used to justify every sin under the sun. "After all, I was born a sinner and can't help it." You may be a sinner, but you were not born that way and you *can* help it!
  2. "The Bible teaches that some people are just too bad and too wicked to be saved."
    - a. Some folks never try to get right with God because they think He won't forgive them. But it is not true, 1 Timothy 1:15. If the chief sinner can be saved, then everyone can.
    - b. If you are wrong on this, when do you want to know about it? Now? If you wait until the Judgment Day to learn about it, you will say, "You mean I could have been saved? You would have forgiven me?" That's right, God *would have* forgiven.
  3. "The Bible says that really good people don't need to be saved."
    - a. This argues that just being a good person will get you into heaven. But we are not good, Romans 3:9-12, 23. When we violate God's law we become sinners. We are guilty and come under condemnation because we have sinned, Romans 6:23.
    - b. If you are wrong on this, when do you want to know about it? Now, or on the Judgment Day? "You can't tell me that a person who lived a good moral life is not going to make it to heaven!" Who do you know that actually lived a sinless life—other than the Lord Jesus? If one person can be saved by just "being good," then everyone could be saved in that way—and nobody needs Jesus! Scripture says no one is good! When people think they can be saved by just being good, it says they have no understanding of sin and no concept of the grace of God. They need to learn it *now*!
  4. "Sure we are all sinners; but God loves us too much to let us be lost."
    - a. This delusion sees God as a doting grandpa who just sort of overlooks sin. But it is not true, Romans 11:22; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9. God is a God of judgment who does not overlook sin, Romans 1:18. God sent His Son to die to save us, John 3:16. Why?
    - b. If you are wrong on this, when do you want to know about it? Will you wait until the judgment? Matthew 25:41. Multitudes will face God on that day and learn that God is not a sleepy old grandfather type, but a God of wrath. They need to learn it *now*!
  5. "We can't understand the Bible, so God can't really judge us by it."
    - a. How many people believe this myth? You hear things like, "God didn't really intend for us to understand" or "The Bible itself says it is all a mystery and we can't know..." But that is not true, Ephesians 3:3-5. This text says you can know, you can understand, and that the mystery has been revealed. God will judge us by this word, John 12:48.
    - b. If you are wrong on this, when do you want to know about it? The answer is clear.
  6. "All we have to do to be saved is just believe—saved by faith only."
    - a. The popular doctrine of salvation by faith alone is believed by millions. But it is not true, James 2:24; Mark 16:16. Dozens more passages could be offered.
    - b. If you are wrong on this, when do you want to know about it? Don't wait until too late.
- C. These are all critical issues, crucial concerns. But who will heed? It's only about our souls!

### Conclusion:

1. Let me point to the talented Mr. Madoff. His story is one of the biggest of the century. The talented Bernie Madoff made off with \$50,000,000,000 of investor's money. He cheated, lied, cooked the books and ran a Ponzi scheme that stole from the likes of Kevin Bacon, NY Governor Eliot Spitzer, Steven Spielberg, numerous charities, insurance companies, banks, etc. If you had *all* your money (savings, retirement, etc.) tied up in him, when would you want to know something was wrong? Would you want to wait until today or would you have wished someone told you about it earlier?
2. Our lesson is not about money, but about souls. We have seen the truth. What will we do with it?