

**WHAT  
EVERY  
CHRISTIAN  
OUGHT TO KNOW**



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with **STEVE ROGERS**



**PUBLISHING GROUP**

Nashville, Tennessee

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Printed in the United States of America

978-1-4336-7785-4

Published by B&H Publishing Group  
Nashville, Tennessee

Dewey Decimal Classification: 230  
Subject Heading: CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

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WHAT EVERY CHRISTIAN OUGHT TO KNOW

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## *Preface*

### What You Don't Know Can Hurt You

#### **Wiped Out!**

The waves were enormous, much bigger than those in my native state of Florida. We were in Maui, Hawaii, and I was excited. I love to bodysurf. Catch a wave just right, and you can ride without a board all the way to the beach.

I worked my way out to where the waves were breaking. I saw my wave building up. This would be a great ride. I knew I had to catch it just right. At the special moment I put my head down and gave a kick. The action really began.

The monster wave didn't take me to the beach. It picked me up like a rag doll and "body slammed" me on the ocean floor. The lights went out. I was numb. "Let me check. Can I move my legs, my arms?" Nothing was broken. I made my way carefully to the shore.

When I got back on solid ground, I turned to see the big sign posted:

**NO BODYSURFING.  
Serious Spinal Injury May Result.**

There was the warning in plain sight, but I was saturated with ignorance. So much for the old proverb, *What you don't know can't hurt you.*

Education is costly, but ignorance may be devastating. There are some basic truths that every Christian ought to know. Many founder in a sea of moral relativism and vague religious opinions. Some may be body slammed, like I was, because they do not know.

Our society boasts about pluralism (there is room for every idea) but really practices syncretism by blending all religious thought into a bland mixture of spiritual pabulum. Americans love to prate about values but are quickly intimidated when the question is asked, "Whose values?" It is more morality by majority than biblical virtues.

Some speak of education as the answer to most everything, and yet the more we know, the deeper we sink. We are "always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim. 3:7). Our generation has substituted facts for truth. We don't ask, "Is it true?" We just want to know, "Does it work?" Many Christians don't grow because they don't know. Facts are like a recipe, but truth is like a meal. Digest a truth and it will change your life.

"Buy the truth, and do not sell it" (Prov. 23:23).

- We must *prize* the truth.  
There is no way to be a happy, victorious Christian without a firm conviction based on foundational truth.



WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW CAN HURT YOU

- We must *purchase* the truth.  
“Buy the truth.” Salvation is free, but the quest for truth is costly. Yet while discipleship is costly, ignorance is far more costly. The quest for truth will cost precious time, discipline, and obedience, but it is worth it.
- We must *preserve* the truth.  
“Do not sell it.” Some will tempt us to “sell out.” Don’t do it. Get a bulldog grip on the truth and never let go.

*When the child of God  
Loves the Word of God  
And sees the Son of God,  
He is changed by the Spirit of God  
Into the image of God  
For the glory of God  
Because he has found the truth of God.*

This book deals with the fundamental truth that *Every Christian Ought to Know*. It is written to be clear but not simplistic. It is for the new believer but also for those who seem bogged down in their Christian walk.



# *Introduction*

by Steve Rogers

Many years ago my father, Adrian Rogers, shared this sobering assessment with me: “Most believers would be hard-pressed to articulate or defend any of their core beliefs about the Bible and the basics of their faith. I believe that every Christian—whether a new believer or seasoned saint—needs a resource to help them confidently communicate *what* they believe and *why* they believe it.”

*What Every Christian Ought To Know* had its origin in the new believers/new members class my dad taught for years on Wednesday evening at Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. This course was ostensibly for the brand new Christian, but we found that over the years, most of those who attended the classes were those who had been a Christian for five, ten, fifteen years or more. Invariably, after several weeks, these long-time believers would excitedly come up and share something like this: “I have given lip-service to these truths for years, but this is the first time I have ever really understood why I believe them.”

## WHAT EVERY CHRISTIAN OUGHT TO KNOW

To that end, in 1999, my father and I decided to turn the lessons that he had preached and taught over the years into a video-based Bible study that could be used by other churches for discipleship training, as well as for individual study. We did the videotaping for the *What Every Christian Ought to Know* video series with a “studio audience” to recreate the feel of the discipleship class my dad taught at Bellevue. This DVD study has since been used by thousands of churches to help equip their members—new Christians and mature believers alike—with the basic doctrines of the faith.

To create the *What Every Christian Ought to Know* book, I had the joy to work hand-in-hand with my father as we combined the transcripts of the video sessions with his personal notes and sermon manuscripts on these essential topics—the sum of what he had preached and taught for more than fifty years. The culmination of that effort is the book you hold in your hand, *What Every Christian Ought To Know*. Notice that the title is not “Everything a Christian Ought To Know.” As the Father’s riches are limitless and unsearchable, you will never learn *everything* there is to know about God, His Word, and His kingdom. Instead, this book contains what we felt are the bare essentials of the faith that *every* believer should have firmly under his or her belt—how to know the Bible is the Word of God, how to be sure you are eternally secure, why baptism by immersion is not just an optional method of baptism, but essential to a biblical understanding of what baptism symbolizes, as well as to obedience.

These basic, essential truths, preached consistently throughout my father’s ministry, served to ground me in my own faith. I made

## INTRODUCTION

a profession of faith at Parkview Baptist Church in Ft. Pierce, Florida, when I was only five. With no church nursery or children's church, for five years I had already sat under my father's preaching every Sunday. I remember having a deep conviction that I was a sinner and that I needed a savior at that early age. Not long after that, I remember soaking up every word as my father preached "How to Know the Bible Is the Word of God." Even back in 1959 the points of the sermon were the same ones that are found in Chapter 1 of this book: You can trust the Bible because of its scientific accuracy, its historical truthfulness, its wonderful unity, and its fulfilled prophecy.

In 2002 my father and I founded the Adrian Rogers Pastor Training Institute, sharing practical and biblical wisdom on shepherding God's flock with pastors and church planters. The Pastor Training Institute—through the video training of Adrian Rogers—continues to train and equip pastors and leaders around the world. We have found that the best thing we can do to help a church planter to establish his flock is to take them through the lessons contained in *What Every Christian Ought To Know*. That's why I'm excited to have these essentials of the faith, taught by Adrian Rogers, available as a resource that will be able to help undergird and ground the thousands of new believers that are being added to the global church each day.

In 1 Peter 3:15 every believer is exhorted to "always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you." *What Every Christian Ought To Know* has been designed to do just that—to help you "give a defense" for the basic doctrines of the Christian faith. It gives the rank and file

believer a practical, hands-on, easy-to-understand course in basic Christian apologetics.

I recommend that you read each chapter of this book over and over until the truths contained therein become ingrained in your heart and in your mind. Get to the point where you can confidently say, “I believe this doctrine, not because I heard someone say it, but because I have studied what the Bible says about it and am convinced that this is an unalterable bedrock principle of my Christian faith.”

Since its initial release in 2005, God continues to use this book to equip and encourage believers—new and old—and I’m thrilled to be able to introduce this new edition of *What Every Christian Ought To Know* to you. As the truths are timeless, we have kept the original content but added additional questions to each chapter to help further the enrichment for the reader. I challenge you to instill these truths into your heart. Like the tens of thousands who have already read this book, I want you to be able to confidently say, “I know *what* I believe and *why* I believe it!”

# 1

## ***Every Christian Ought to Know*** the Bible Is the Word of God

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*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,  
and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for  
instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be  
complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

2 TIMOTHY 3:16–17

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The starting place in Christian growth is to have a firm conviction about the inspiration and authority of the Bible. In this chapter I want to give some solid reasons to have this assurance. Believe me when I tell you this is the starting place. You will not make solid progress without it.

*Man Has Only Three Problems*

While on an airplane, I was browsing the magazine selection looking for a newspaper. I met a man there who asked what kind of newspaper I was looking for. I responded frankly that I was looking for a conservative newspaper.

He looked me up and down and said, "I'm looking for a liberal newspaper." He was wearing a dark pin-striped suit, and I asked him what he did. He responded that he was a lawyer and in return asked me what I did. I told him I was a Baptist preacher.

He was interested in what I read, and I told him that I read books, journals, and newspapers, but that I primarily read the Bible.

"You don't read any wider than that?" he asked.

"No, not really."

"Do you speak to people?"

"All the time."

He said, "Well then, how do you know what people's needs and what their problems are if you don't read any more widely than that?"

I said to this lawyer, "Man has only three problems: sin, sorrow, and death."

He said, "No, there are more problems than that."

I said, "All right, think about it and tell me a fourth problem."

He thought for a while, and then he said, "Man has only three problems."

Every other problem in the world is indeed just a subset of sin, sorrow, death, and the Bible is the *only book on earth* that has the



answer to all three conditions. For this reason it is important that you understand and have a rock-ribbed assurance that the Bible is the Word of God. It is not the Book of the Month; it is the Book of the Ages.

*There Is a War on the Bible*

The devil hates this book and would like to destroy it. Some despise the Bible; others just deny it; still others distort it and have warped, misused, and abused it. But I believe the greatest enemy of the Bible is the so-called Christian who simply ignores the Bible or disregards it. He gives only lip service to it.

*“These hath God married and no man shall part:  
Dust in the Bible and drought in the heart.”*

I have been serving Jesus for a long time, and the thing that keeps me going is truth and conviction. This conviction is not based on my feelings but on what I know is truth. Feelings come and go, but God’s Word never wavers.

Why is this so important?

- Your salvation depends on understanding the gospel message of the Bible.
- Your assurance depends on resting in the truth of the Bible.
- Your spiritual growth depends on living by the principles of the Bible.
- Your power in witness depends on the confidence you have in the Word of God.

Therefore, you must be absolutely certain that the Bible is the Word of God. I want to give you some principles that have confirmed this certainty for me. Let me say that beyond these objective arguments, there is the sweet affirmation of the Holy Spirit to my heart concerning the Word of God. Jesus said, “My sheep hear My voice” (John 10:27). Think with me about the following confirmations of the inspiration of the Bible.

### **The Bible Is Shown to Be the Word of God Because of Its Scientific Accuracy**

Scientific accuracy confirms the Bible is the Word of God. This first concept is the same one most often used to dispute the validity of the Bible by those who deny it. It is commonly assumed that, of course, there must be scientific errors in the Bible. Before you say that, however, make certain you know two things: *science* and *the Bible*. Most often those who claim scientific errors in the Bible do not clearly understand either subject. And those who do understand science must admit that it is in a continual state of flux, constantly changing. The accepted science of yesterday is not necessarily the science of today. It has been estimated that the library in the Louvre in Paris has three and a half miles of books on science. Most every one of them is obsolete.<sup>1</sup>

In 1861 the French Academy of Science wrote a pamphlet stating there were fifty-one incontrovertible scientific facts that proved the Bible not true. Today there is not a reputable scientist on Earth that believes one of those fifty-one so-called facts.<sup>2</sup> The

point is, science is changing. God's Word does not change! Let me give a few examples:

### **The Earth Is Suspended in Space**

One of the most fundamental scientific facts that you and I agree is true today is that our Earth is suspended in space. Ancient cultures did not always know this. The ancient Egyptians used to believe the Earth was supported by pillars. The Greeks believed the world was carried on the back of a giant whose name was Atlas. And the Hindus believed something even more ridiculous—that the Earth was resting on the backs of gigantic elephants. Then somebody said, “But wait a minute, what are the elephants standing on?” The answer was, “The elephants are standing on the back of a huge tortoise—a giant turtle.” Then somebody asked, “What is the turtle resting on?” The answer, “Well, that turtle is on the back of a huge coiled serpent.” And somebody said, “What is the serpent on?” The conclusion was that the serpent was swimming in a great cosmic sea. This was the science of that day!

When you and I pick up the Word of God, we do not find any such mythology. Job spoke of the Lord in chapter 26 verse 7: “He stretches out the north over the *empty* space; he hangs *the earth on nothing*.” Job is perhaps the oldest piece of literature known to man. How did Job know the Earth is suspended in space? Job could only know through divine inspiration. The Bible says in 2 Timothy 3:16 that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God.”

## The Earth Is Round, Not Flat

We also take for granted that the Earth is round. Do we know this by natural observation? Not at all. You've seen pictures from outer space, and perhaps you have traveled around the world, so you take it for granted. But people didn't always know that the Earth was round. Remember that little saying from when you were in school, "In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue"? They warned, "Columbus, you had better be careful; you might sail off the edge of the Earth."

Even as late as 1492, people did not know that the Earth is round. Yet Isaiah, in 750 BC, said, "It is He [God] who sits above the circle of the earth" (Isa. 40:22). The word for *circle* in the Hebrew is *chuwg*, which means "globe or sphere."<sup>3</sup>

How did Job know that God hung the Earth upon nothing? How did Isaiah know 750 years before Christ that the Earth is round? "Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Pet. 1:21).

The Bible teaches that when Jesus comes again, it will be both daylight and dark. For example, "There will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. Two men will be in the field; the one will be taken and the other left" (Luke 17:34–36). That seems contradictory. But while it will be light on one side of the globe, it will be dark on the other side when Jesus Christ comes again. Of course, all of this did not take the one who created the world by surprise; He knew all of it.