

Good Books for God's People

by Dr. John R.W. Stott

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How can we come to know God? Without His help we would be still in spiritual darkness. God reveals Himself through creation (natural revelation). "Just as human artists reveal themselves in their painting, sculpture or music, so the divine Artist has revealed Himself in the beauty, balance, intricacy and order of His creation. From it we learn, therefore, something of His wisdom, power and faithfulness." He also makes Himself known through His actions and spoken word. Human authors, inspired by the Holy Spirit, wrote down God's message. We confess, therefore, that the Bible is verbally inspired. "Verbal inspiration means that what the Holy Spirit has spoken and still speaks through the human authors, understood according to the plain, natural meaning of the words used, is true and without error."

Dr. Stott is concerned with the Bible's "yesterday," its historical origins, and its "today," its contemporary relevance. In expounding the doctrine of Scripture the Trinitarian approach is used. The Scripture is a message which comes from God, focuses on Christ, and is articulated by the Holy Spirit. How should we respond to this message? "The true function of the mind is not to stand in judgment on God's Word but to sit in humility under it, eager to hear it, grasp it, apply it and obey it in the practicalities of daily living."

Since this little book is based on a series of five sermons preached in All Souls Church, London, England, the style is colloquial rather than literary; it is not a scholarly exposition. Therefore, it does not deal with questions such as the meaning of language or the influence of culture. It is a basic book about the historic Christian attitude to Scripture and what the Bible says of itself.

Does it matter what we think of the Bible? "I, for one," says Dr. Stott, "am deeply disturbed by the cavalier attitude to the Bible adopted by many, and I long to see it reinstated in the hearts and homes of Christian people and enthroned in the pulpits of the world. Only then can the church again hear and heed God's Word. Only then will God's people learn to integrate their faith and their lives, as they seek to apply the teaching of Scripture to their moral standards, economic lifestyle, marriage and family, work and citizenship. Only then can Christians hope to be the world's salt and light, as Jesus said they were to be, and influence their countries' culture, institutions and laws, values and ideals."

God's Book for God's People makes a fine gift for those who make profession of faith. A timely and much needed work!

Johan D. Tangelder,

Dr. John R. W. Stott, rector emeritus of All Souls Church, is a well-known lecturer, church leader and author of many books.