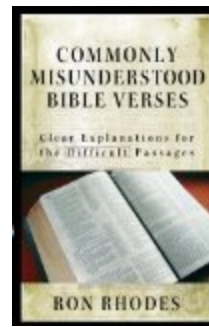


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I wanted to extend my sincerest thanks to Dave Bartlett at Harvest House Publishers for giving me the opportunity to review Ron Rhode's *Commonly Misunderstood Bible Verses: Clear Explanations for the Difficult Passages*.

When we study our Bibles, we often come across passages that are peculiar when taken at literal face value. Perhaps there is a historic cultural context that will shed light on that particular passage. Maybe there is a broader meaning to the Hebrew or Greek words than how they are rendered in our English translations. When we are faced with these types of questions and concerns, it is wise for us to consult our study Bible notes, commentaries, and Bible handbooks. *Commonly Misunderstood Bible Verses* by Ron Rhodes falls somewhere in between a selective commentary and Bible handbook. This new resource that may be just what you've been looking for to help you better understand those difficult passages in the Bible.

In *Commonly Misunderstood Bible Verses*, Ron brings together his many years of experience sharing and interacting with his audiences. During his travels and speaking engagements, it was not uncommon for someone in attendance to ask for further explanation of a Bible verse that they found difficult or troubling. It's the many questions Ron answered over the years that became the basis for this book.

The book begins with a section titled *Understanding Hard Sayings*. While I know some of you may be inclined to skip introductory material, I'd encourage you to read this section first. Here Ron lays the groundwork for the rest of the book by explaining eleven principles for interpreting scripture that have served him well over the years. The eleven principles are as follows:

1. When the plain sense makes good sense, seek no other sense.
2. Submit all "preunderstandings" to Scripture.
3. Pay close attention to the context.
4. Make a correct genre judgment.
5. Consult history and culture.
6. Interpret the difficult verses in light of the clear verses.
7. Interpret the Old Testament in light of the New Testament.
8. Distinguish between the descriptive and the prescriptive.
9. Realize that some Biblical truths are explicit; others are implicit.
10. Distinguish between promises and principles.
11. Affirm the benefit of proper interpretation.

Following the introductory chapter, the book is broken up into brief chapters, beginning with Genesis and in the canonical order of our English protestant Bibles running all the way through Revelation. Each chapter has a select number of questions related to a difficult scripture passage or passages in that particular book of the Bible and it's

explanation. Here are a few examples of the types of questions Ron answers throughout the book:

- Deuteronomy 29:29 – What are the secret things that belong to the Lord?
- Daniel 4:13 – What kind of angel is a “watcher” (KJV)?
- Malachi 2:11 – What is meant by “the daughter of a foreign god”?
- Luke 6:24 – Did Jesus teach that a rich person cannot be saved?
- Romans 8:14 – What does it mean to say believers become sons of God?
- Revelation 13:18 – Why are the numbers 666 used in reference to the antichrist?

Following the chapter on Revelation, there is a select bibliography and a very useful topical index.

I’ve enjoyed working my way through *Commonly Misunderstood Bible Verses*. There are a number of ways one could choose to work through this sort of a book. I chose to read the book straight through. Others may want to keep it at hand as they are doing Bible study and consult the appropriate chapter to see the explanations given for difficult passages. You could also use this book as a reference work for difficult topics in scripture. The topical index allows the reader to selectively browse the material by subject matter rather than book, chapter, and verse. Regardless of how you choose to work through this book, it would make a great addition to your personal library.

Ron Rhodes is the president of Reasoning from the Scriptures Ministries. He holds a Th.M. and Th.D. from Dallas Theological Seminary. Some of Ron’s other publications include Christianity According to the Bible and What Does the Bible Say About...? You can learn more about Ron’s ministry and other books at www.ronrhodes.org.