

"READ BY TITLE ONLY"

In his book, *"Implications of Evolution,"* G. A. Kerkut, in commenting on books which are often quoted by individuals to "prove" their position, said, "interesting to note that many of these widely quoted books are read by title only." Two of the books he referred to were Darwin's *"Origin of Species"* and The Bible. I am convinced that his observation, especially in regards to the Bible, is correct. Just what does it mean to read a book "by title only?"

To read a book "by title only" means that one may appeal to that book as "proof" of what he is contending but what the book really says does not support his position at all. Many who claim to believe the Bible do not really study the Bible and do not know what is really taught therein. They read it "by title only."

For example, many, when talking to someone about what they believe on some subject or practice, will begin by saying, "The Bible says..." If you ask them where the Bible says what they have just quoted they will usually say they are not sure just where it can be found but they know it's there because, "I have read it." Many times the thing they are so sure of and "have read" is not even in the Bible.

Many statements have been repeated so often by those who claim to believe the Bible that many have been led to believe that these statements can actually be found in the Bible. For example, we constantly hear men saying that it doesn't really matter what you believe as long as you are sincere in that belief and truly love the Lord. Others will say that one church is as good as another and that it doesn't make any difference as to which church you are a member. These positions cannot be found in the Bible but those who set forth these positions claim to believe the Bible and will "use" it to give credibility to their statements. By them the Bible is "read by title only."

We frequently hear statements made by individuals concerning the times in which we live, especially when we are in a time of war or various natural calamities have taken place. Some will comment about these "bad times" and then continue, "But the Bible does say..." and will then proceed to "quote" some reference to the conditions that will exist "before the end of time." When you examine these "quotes" you often learn that there is nothing in the Bible that even resembles their "quote" and if you do find some statement which does resemble their "quote" you find that it has no reference at all to the times in which we are living or to any sign that the end of time is near. Again, the Bible is "read by title only."

Peter tells us that we are to *"be ready to give any answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear"* (1 Peter 3:15). To do this we must read the Bible and study it diligently. We must know what the Bible says. This cannot be done by just making reference to the Bible as a book and making a pious claim of believing the Bible. Much damage has been done by those who "quote" something "the Bible says" when in reality they are only quoting their own opinion or something they have received from some man. Simply because some man states that "the Bible says..." does not make it so. It is only true if you can open the Bible and find it written therein. Let us not be guilty of reading the Bible "by title only."

✍ James Hahn