

Why Knowing the Bible Well Doesn't Make You a Good Christian

He brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge concerning you, to preserve you,' and 'In their hands they shall hold you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" (Luke 4:9-11)

In college, Grace and I had an eccentric professor. Disheveled with a wild-eyed look, unkempt beard, and a large knife in his belt holster, he was quite a character. His lectures were electric. He had a razor-sharp mind, quick wit and larger-than-life personality.

He also liked to quote Bible verses—a lot. He would sprinkle in random Scriptures from memory, including entire chapters of the Bible. One time after class we asked him if he was a Christian. He laughed loudly and said something like, "Of course not. I don't believe any of that foolishness about Jesus!" Shocked, we asked why he knew so much Bible if he hated Christ and Christianity. He went on to explain to us that his brother was a pastor, and he memorized the Bible so he could mock his brother and win Bible arguments with him even though he was an atheist.

I learned an important lesson that day: just because you know the Bible that does not mean you know the Lord. In fact, Satan and demons know the Bible very well. The Bible is a spiritual sword. Like any weapon, you'd better know how to use it so that when you are attacked, you can defend yourself. In this battle with the devil Jesus repeatedly quotes from memory the Book of Deuteronomy. Jesus models a vital principle: we must

combat sinful temptation with biblical meditation.

In every age there are people who want to say yes to sin and temptation, so they search for what sounds like a biblical justification for inexcusable behavior. Many times this is in relation to sexual sin with demonically empowered arguments supporting such behavior, often with a philosophically compelling case.

Why? Because when new cultural norms disagree with the Bible, they tell us it's OK to change the Bible rather than change our behavior. That's demonic. As a general rule, when anyone's interpretation of the Bible concludes with them getting naked with someone other than their spouse of the opposite gender, you know that they studied at Satan's seminary. Most theological debates are just fancy ways for people not to exercise dominion over their drawers.

Jesus modeled for us how to combat sinful temptation with biblical meditation. He so filled His mind with the Scriptures that when tempted He could quote the exact Scripture correctly. This allowed Him, and allows us, to defeat the enemy. {eoa}

Mark Driscoll is a Jesus-following, mission-leading, church-serving, people-loving, Bible-preaching pastor and the author of many books, including *Spirit-Filled Jesus*, which you can order [here](#). He currently pastors *The Trinity Church* in Scottsdale, Arizona, with his family. For all of pastor Mark Driscoll's Bible teaching, please visit or download the app. You can download a free devotional e-book from pastor Mark [here](#).

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