

many people do wish to know, and these are of the salt of the Church. They read; they think; they puzzle over problems of Scriptures, of dogma, of the relations of the churches, of the reason for this or that. They are not sheep to be led. They are so comparatively few in each church, and are so often misunderstood, that the pastors, with their regular work, and for other reasons, pay little attention to them. The only way to get this remnant, larger than it seems to be, these our people—young men and women especially—who are puzzling and wondering and thinking, focussed for the best work, is by taking them seriously.

It is to reach this class of people, this large class, large in the aggregate, who will be found among our brightest workers or among those who might be such, that we should bend our energies.

*Let us Take the People Seriously.*

Let us take them seriously. Do we believe in the intrinsic merit of the Scriptures? Surely we do, and look upon it as the Church's first business to open them to the people. The historical and literary work that has been applied to the Scriptures in the last quarter century, together with the archaeological investigations, have combined to give the Church an opportunity to this end which she has never before possessed.

As I have said, so far as the study of the Scriptures and the history of the Church is concerned, I would pay little direct attention to those who manifestly have no desire to know more or whose desire is simply for varnish. There is surely a large enough number who do not desire superficial but real knowledge. I would have the Church reach to even the humblest and most ignorant of these. I would take him seriously. If he reject or neglect it, the responsibility is upon him, not upon the Church (where it rests now), whose business is to publish and teach the good tidings to all.

*To Sum Up.*

If it be desirable that all read the Bible, it is just as desirable that all read it intelligently.

The incorrect interpretation and the misunderstanding of the Bible are a great hindrance to the advance of the Kingdom of God in the world to-day. They make many earnest people fanatics. They make many intelligent people put the Bible aside, the more devout revering but not reading it, the less devout doubting and not reading it.