

# SOLA FIDE

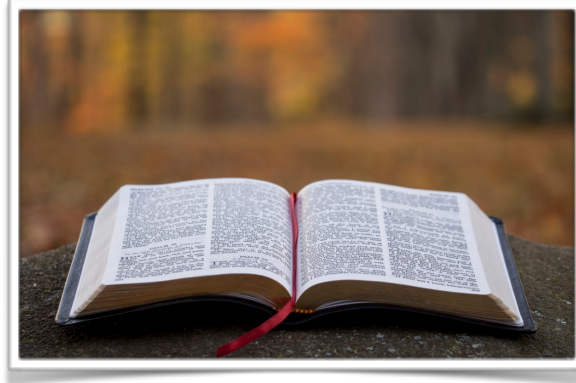
## Jonathan Edward's Conversion

Jonathan Edwards, conceded to be America's most important and original philosophical theologian, became a Christian while reading one verse in the Bible that he happened to come across one day.

He was at home, not able to attend church one Sunday, aimlessly wandering around the home library. He came upon a book that was in black leather, and had no title on it. Curious he opened the book to a random page, to find it was a Bible, and he read a verse that caught his eyes. It was 1 Tim 1:17 - "To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be glory forever and ever. Amen."

This seemingly simple and obscure verse, brought Jonathan Edwards face to face with a Holy God. This in turn led to him feeling

## Word.



"Jesus loves me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so." These are the first lines for the song "Jesus Loves Me," that anyone who grew up attending any Sunday school as a child sang. It's so widely known, and so basic, that the profound truths of these first lines are often glazed over without being given much thought when sung. Yet all Christians would be served well to pause and think on these simple yet profound lyrics. How do I know that Jesus loves me? Because the Bible tells me so! Pretty simple and clear right? Yet I have asked myself and have also heard other Christians who grew up in the church ask, "How do I know that Jesus loves me?" I think the reason why we still ask that question (and other questions such as "How do I know I'm saved?", "What is God's will in my life?" and etc.) is because we have obstacles in engaging with the Word of God. Though there are many obstacles, I would like to only address two of the most common ones, which I, myself, have often struggled with and had to correct.

The first is viewing and engaging with the Word of God as merely an intellectual exercise. When we read the Bible, we view it more as information to be taken and analyzed and critiqued through the lens of our own philosophies, biases, experiences and even according to our own theological standards. Thus, whatever is not to our liking, we discard in our mind. I have often done this, with passages that are offensive and seem to infringe upon my comforts, and have stunted my own growth during those times! We need to recognize that all scripture is God

guilt for not serving and resisting this great King, which in turn led to his repentance!

Thus Jonathan Edwards the great theologian and pastor was saved, from that one verse!



**"Let us learn, therefore, in great and horrible terrors, when our conscience feels nothing but sin and judges that God is angry with us, and that Christ has turned His face from us, not to follow the sense and feeling of our own heart, but to stick to the Word of God."**

**-Martin Luther**

breathed (2 Tim 3:16), and it is active and living (Heb 4:12)! Reading the Bible is way more than taking in some information to be analyzed and cherry picked according to our own liking! When the Word of God gets whittled down to just information, we ignore its power and affect in our lives. So when trouble and doubt comes our way, we look to other things to sustain us, instead of the unchanging truths of God (Matt 24:35). What has helped me to overcome this struggle is by reminding myself of who God is. He is God! He is the creator and sustainer of this universe, who spoke all things in to being, and all creation exists for His good pleasure! This amazing God spoke to us, and we have His spoken words written in our Bible! When we begin to consider who the author of the Bible is, the view of scripture just being information will fade, and our view will rightly turn to it being an authoritative decree from our King, a love letter from our Father, a message of hope from our Savior, and wise instructions from our Counselor.

The second is viewing God's Word as a mere elementary of Christian life. Straight up, sometimes, we view it as boring, dry, uninteresting and not as the source of a dynamic exciting Christian life on fire for God! As a high school student, I used to look forward to the singing of praise songs with passion and emotion, but tolerated sitting through sermons. If we want to grow to be those Christians on fire for God, then we must not merely tolerate the Word of God as an elementary aspect of Christian life. Christians must constantly and consistently engage in His Word as it is our spiritual food (Deut 8:3)! It is the Bible that will help in our sanctification (John 17:17), light our path (Ps 119:105), equip us for every good work (2 Tim 3:16), and much much more! The way I overcame this obstacle is by actually studying and engaging with faithful older Christians. Every faithful Christian that I've encountered has had a great depth of knowledge of the Word of God, able to recite, explain and apply numerous Bible verses accurately. Being around such faithful saints had/has been a challenge and rebuke to my lack of biblical literacy, especially since I grew up in the church! Their quiet yet undeniable passion for the Word has slowly rubbed off on me as I engaged with them more and more!

I have found in my short spiritual pilgrimage, that the simple act of reading the Bible, has kept me in many times of trouble and doubt, the simple truths have acted as an anchor and guardrail to my troubled heart and mind. So dear brothers and sisters, are you going through hardships? Are you questioning His goodness and love? Jesus loves you! But you don't have to take my word for it! Just take a look! It's in His book!

- Jay Kee