

# **“That’s Not in the Bible!”**

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from multiple sources)

Introduction: Matt. 4:4, 7, 10

A. There are number of sayings, proverbs, and clichés in our daily conversations that many are convinced are in the Bible, but when we look they simply aren't.

B. What is the background of the phrase “Chimney Corner Scriptures”? In older times, folks would sit around the fire places near the warmth of the chimney and discuss sayings they thought were in the Bible. Few could read and even fewer had a copy of the Bible, and many verses were handed down verbally. Often wise sayings and quotes from secular authors, like Benjamin Franklin, et al, were assumed to be in the Bible because they seemed to make sense. These sayings made their way into daily conversation as if they were actually Proverbs from the Bible. Since then, with increased literacy and ease of access to the written scriptures, folks have discovered that those chimney corner scriptures were not in the scriptures at all.

1. Discerning between which of these are in the Bible and which are not is not merely an exercise in accuracy, but because many of the chimney corner scriptures are contradictory or misleading, a believer who uses them and lives by them could easily fall into error.

C. What do the real scriptures say?

1. 1Thes. 5:21; 2Tim. 3:14-15, 4:2

2. Bobby Thompson tells this story: “A good old lady was telling of some of her problems and how she managed them. She said, “Well, you know the Bible says ‘grin and bear it.’” Someone asked her just where the Bible said such a thing, and she replied, “I don’t rightly know, but I think it is in Hezekiah’s letter to the Deuteronomites!”

3. Some chimney corner scriptures are unique to churches of Christ

a. “Book, chapter, and verse” (chapters and verses began with Robert Estienne Stephanus in 1551 (New Testament) and 1571 (Old Testament).

b. “Speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent.” (Thomas Campbell in 1808; The Search for the Ancient Order: Volume 1, p. 47)

D. Which of the following statements are in the Bible and which are just chimney corner scriptures?

1. “By the skin of my teeth.”

a. In the Bible - Job 19:20

2. “All men are created equal.”

a. The quotation "All men are created equal" has been called an "immortal declaration," and "perhaps the single phrase" of the American Revolutionary period with the greatest "continuing importance." Thomas Jefferson first used the phrase in the U.S. Declaration of Independence, second paragraph, which he penned in 1776 during the beginning of the American Revolution. Jefferson is believed to have borrowed the expression from an Italian friend and neighbor, Philip Mazzei.

3. “An idle mind is the devil's workshop.”

a. A commentary on Prov. 16:27.

4. "Cleanliness is next to godliness."
  - a. This phrase was first recorded in a sermon by John Wesley in 1778, but the idea is ancient, found in Babylonian religious scrolls.
5. "As the apple of my eye."
  - a. In the Bible - Prov. 7:2.
6. "Spare the rod and spoil the child."
  - a. 17th century poem by Samuel Butler titled Hudibras.
  - b. Many want this to be from the book of Proverbs, but the closest thing to it is Prov. 13:24.
7. "Give the devil his due."
  - a. From Shakespeare's Henry V Part 1, 1597: ORLÉANS: And I will take up that with "Give the devil his due."
8. "Cast your bread upon the waters".
  - a. In the Bible - Ecc. 11:1.
9. "The ax is laid at the root."
  - a. In the Bible - Matt. 3:10.
10. "A fool speaks his mind."
  - a. In the Bible - Prov. 29:11.
11. "Blood is thicker than water."
  - a. German proverb (originally: Blut ist dicker als Wasser), first appeared in a in the medieval German beast epic Reinhart Fochs (1180 AD; Reynard the Fox) by Heinrich der Glîchezære.
12. "Bread is the staff of life."
  - a. "Familiar Quotations" by John Bartlett, Matthew Henry (1662-1714), Commentary on Psalm 104.
13. "Lord, what fools these mortals be."
  - a. A line from the play A Midsummer Night's Dream, by William Shakespeare.
14. "Familiarity breeds contempt."
  - a. The first recorded use of this was in Chaucer's Tale of Melibee (AD 1386).
15. "The Lord moves in mysterious ways."
  - a. "God Moves in a Mysterious Way: is a hymn, written in 1773 by William Cowper of England.
16. "God helps those who help themselves."
  - a. English political theorist Algernon Sidney originated the saying. Benjamin Franklin later used it in Poor Richard's Almanack (1736).
17. "Out of the mouth of babes."
  - a. In the Bible - Psalm 8:2.
18. "A fly in the ointment."
  - a. In the Bible - Ecc. 10:1.
19. "To err is human, to forgive is divine."
  - a. "An Essay on Criticism, Part II" by Alexander Pope (1711).
20. "Early to bed, early to rise, makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise."
  - a. Benjamin Franklin in Poor Richard's Almanac.
21. "All that glitters is not gold."
  - a. William Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice," 1596.

22. "Sow in tears but reap in joy."
  - a. In the Bible - Psalm 126:5.
23. "A friend in need is a friend in deed."
  - a. Euripides in his book "Hecuba" (424 BC).
24. "Practice what you preach."
  - a. Is loosely based on Matt. 23:3, but did not appear in this form until in a commentary on Matthew in 1783.
25. "A soft answer turns away wrath."
  - a. In the Bible - Prov. 15:1.
26. "The way of the transgressor is hard."
  - a. In the Bible - Prov. 13:15.
27. "All's well that ends well."
  - a. All's Well That Ends Well is a play by William Shakespeare published in the First Folio in 1623.
28. "The early bird catches the worm."
  - a. First recorded in John Ray's "A Collection of English Proverbs" (1670).
29. "Don't count your chickens before they hatch."
  - a. Aesop, the Greek fable writer (620 to 560 BC).
30. "Weighed in the balances and found wanting."
  - a. In the Bible - Dan. 5:27.
31. "Honesty is the best policy."
  - a. English proverb first recorded in Thomas Jefferson's letter to Nathaniel Macon.
32. "Don't judge others by yourself."
  - a. Dwight Morrow, American diplomat, in "The New York Times" in 1930.
33. "A rolling stone gathers no moss."
  - a. Publilius Syrus, in his book "Sententiae" (BC 85).
34. "Stolen waters are sweet."
  - a. In the Bible - Prov. 9:17.
35. "Every tub shall stand on its own bottom."
  - a. John Bunyan in his 1678 allegory Pilgrim's Progress.
36. "Look before you leap."
  - a. Originally in Aesop's Fable of the fox and the goat; later written in English in John Heywood's "Proverbs in the English Tongue," 1546.
37. "Speech is silver, but silence is golden."
  - a. Originated in ancient Egypt. In 1831, Thomas Carlyle translated it into English
38. "If at first you don't succeed try, try again."
  - a. William Edward Hickson in The Westminster Review (1860).
39. "Sow the wind, reap the whirlwind."
  - a. In the Bible - Hosea 8:7.
40. "An honest confession is good for the soul."
  - a. A Scottish Proverb loosely based on Psalm 119:26.
41. "Money is the root of all evil."
  - a. A miss-quote of 1Tim. 6:10.
42. "Let your conscience be your guide."
  - a. Caliph Umar (640 AD) after defeating Jerusalem and returning to Medina.

43. "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."
  - a. John Heywood's 1546 glossary of English Proverbs.
44. "Charity begins at home."
  - a. Thomas Browne in Religio Medici, 1642.
45. "There is no rest for the wicked."
  - a. Harold Gray used the phrase as a title for one of his Little Orphan Annie comics in 1933.
  - b. Loosely based on Isa. 48:22.
46. "That's just sour grapes."
  - a. In the Bible - Jer. 31:30.
47. "Jesus loves me this I know."
  - a. "A hymn written by Anna Bartlett Warner (1859).
48. "The way of a man with a maiden."
  - a. In the Bible - Prov. 30:18-19.
49. "Just accept Jesus as your personal Savior."
  - a. Not in the Bible!
  - b. Billy Graham in his Peace with God Tract 1950.
  - c. Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16
50. "God does not want fanatics!"
  - a. Not in the Bible!
  - b. Micaiah Hill 1857 in The Sabbath Made for Man.
  - c. Rev. 2:10; 1Cor. 15:58; 2Tim. 4:7-8