

More people are turned away from Christianity through ridicule than through factual arguments. None of us like to have people look on us as a little bit stupid. Someone says, If you want to believe that way, that's alright; that's up to you, that will turn a person away more than a big argument possibly could. So we have this attitude that comes so much from a twisting of words.

Words are constantly changing their meaning. Words are a difficult thing to use for making progress in understanding. There was a book written not long ago called The Two Horizons that caused much attention among theological students. This book tells how there was a man back in the Roman empire. He saw certain things and had certain observations. He had a whole horizon. His wording and his method of thinking. But that's from that horizon. And we read it and we read it from our horizon. How can we with our horizon, our background, and culture understand what he expressed with his culture. When you get through reading the book you wonder, How can we understand what somebody meant. who wrote back then?

If you carry this to its conclusion you would get the idea none of us can communicate anything to anybody else because our horizons are all different. But the fact is we do. We often have difficulty in making ourselves clear but we do succeed in making ourselves clear. It is a miracle. It is wonderful, this strange thing about language.

I was thinking a few days ago, here was a man who was pointing his house and an artist was sitting here painting some flowers. We don't have any difficulty understanding those two statements. One man ~~pointing~~ painting his house; the other man painting some flowers. But when you think of it they are very similar words with very different meaning. If the one man tried to color the flowers and the other man made a picture it would be the exact opposite of what we saw. But with all the difficulty of using words we do use them. If we can communicate surely the God who created the universe can communicate through we recognize it's a much harder thing to communicate with people of many different cultures, many different backgrounds, many different situations as He has done in the Word.

So that brings up this question of hermeneutics, of interpretation. It was felt that at the end of the meeting in Chicago that we made progress on this matter of hermeneutics. So another big meeting was held last fall, with this subject of hermeneutics. I want to look at that but I want to make a break of about ten minutes if you will excuse me for that length of time and then I will be back.