

## ***Open Bible, Open Minds (1)***

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**August 1996**

**W**hile door-knocking in London, England, we occasionally encountered a bitter person who would reject our overtures to study the Bible. A common response was, "Religion is what is wrong with the world! Religion is the cause of every war that's ever been fought!" **SLAM!!!**

While this view is obviously imbalanced, remember that it comes from a country that is regularly bombed by terrorists in the name of religion (viz., the Catholic IRA). But the sad truth is that wars *have* been fought in the name of religion. In such cases, however, religion is a thin veil worn to morally beautify the act of murder. "Religious" people with closed minds and callous hearts can be extremely antagonistic. They respond unkindly to those who differ with them, sometimes in defense of the honor of their ancestry, sometimes out of insecurity of not being able to defend their conviction.

True Christianity *is* warfare, for the Bible so calls it: "*Fight the good fight of faith ...*" (1 Tim 6:12); "*Therefore, take up the whole armor of God ...*" (Eph 6:13). But the warfare is not one of fists, swords or guns but rather a spiritual battle to uphold God's truth in the midst of a hostile environment: "*... we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments ... bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ*" (2 Cor 10:3-5).

In this battle for the soul, it is crucial for Christians themselves to keep their minds open and receptive to the truth of God. A Christian who has closed his mind to careful study and consideration of differing points of view adopts an indefensible position: "I already know all truth; I cannot be taught anything; I cannot be wrong in what I believe." Such a person believes what he believes for the wrong reasons and has become stagnant in his thinking.

To be open-minded is not being wishy-washy or to lack conviction. It is to enthrone *truth* in our hearts and make its pursuit the greatest goal in life. If Christians are not willing to be so open-minded and receptive to yet unlearned truths, they have no right to ask others to study the Bible or rebuke them for rejecting the truth.

If you are visiting with us today, we invite you to open your Bible and your mind and study with us the things God has to say. We believe that those who do so can understand God's will alike.