

**Devotional Thoughts :: "Are you so dull?" by J.C. Ryle**

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"Are you so dull?"

(J. C. Ryle, "The Gospel of Mark" 1857)

"Are you so dull?" Jesus asked. Mark 7:18

We see here--how slow of understanding men are in spiritual things.

The corruption of human nature is a universal disease. It affects not only a man's heart, will, and conscience--but his mind, memory, and understanding.

The very same person who is quick and clever in worldly things--will often utterly fail to comprehend the simplest truths of Christianity. He will often be unable to grasp the plainest reasonings of the Gospel. He will see no meaning in the clearest statements of evangelical doctrine. They will sound to him--either foolish or mysterious. He will listen to them like one listening to a foreign language, catching a word here and there, but not seeing the drift of the whole. He hears, but does not understand.

We must pray daily for the teaching of the Holy Spirit, if we would make progress in the knowledge of divine things. Without Him, the mightiest intellect and the strongest reasoning powers will carry us but a little way.

In reading the Bible and hearing sermons, everything depends on the spirit in which we read and hear. A humble, teachable, childlike frame of mind is the grand secret of success. Happy is he who often says with David, "Teach me Your statutes." Such a one will understand as well as hear.