

The Middle Verse Of The Bible

By
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In the thirteenth century Stephen Langton divided the Bible into chapters. Three centuries later Robert Estienne divided those chapters into verses. Those divisions, therefore, are human constructs designed to make the scriptures easier to navigate. Furthermore, the arrangement of the books of the Old Testament is different in modern Bibles than the Jewish arrangement of Law, Prophets, and Writings. Therefore, establishing the middle verse of the Bible is both somewhat random and dependent on the time in which Old and New Testaments are considered. However, of the 31,174 verses in our Bibles, the 15,587th verse, thus the middle verse of the Bible, is Psalm 118:8, "It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in man."

As was mentioned above, there is nothing inspired about the chapter and verse divisions of the Bible. It is, however, an amazing coincidence, perhaps even providential, that the middle verse of our Bibles proclaims a truth so persistently voiced in Scripture. In fact, the major dilemma of every human being is to determine whether they will take refuge in God or trust in man.

Of all the possible choices that human beings can make for their lives, they all boil down to whether they will trust in God and His Word for their direction in life and their eternal security or in human wisdom. As Jesus says when he questions the chief priests, scribes, and elders who questioned his authority, "Was the baptism of John from heaven, or

from men?" (Mark 11:30). There were no other possibilities available. The same choices lie before us. Will each of us heed the biblical injunction to "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding." (Proverbs 3:5) or rely on "words taught by human wisdom" (1 Corinthians 2:13). Again, those are the only two alternatives for our life's path. This central challenge of the scriptures in the Bible's middle verse is worth our daily consideration. In the things that we believe we either trust in God's Word or human judgment. In the things that we do we either rely on the Lord or on human culture or philosophy. Let us all determine to live our lives recognizing the limited choices before us and make our choice refuge in God rather than the folly of man. As the psalmist says, it is not only better to make God our refuge in this life, but it is the only reasonable choice for eternity.