

The Yellow[®] Pages

and the



By Joseph Tkach

The *Yellow Pages* have been a familiar feature of homes and businesses for well over a hundred years. Even in this age of online directories, you have probably got one of them around somewhere.

We all know how to use them. They provide an alphabetical listing of businesses and services by subject. So, if I want to find a plumber, someone to fix my computer, or make a reservation at a certain kind of restaurant, all I have to do is look in my *Yellow Pages*.

But suppose I want to know—for example—the favourite colour of my city Mayor. Well, I just look up the Mayor's office in the section on local government, and check under 'favourite colour' and...well, of course, I don't find it.

Have the *Yellow Pages* failed me? Of course not—it would be ridiculous to think that. We all know that kind of information isn't in the *Yellow Pages*.

So why, then, don't we have the same approach to another old book you most likely have in your home? The *Bible* has been around a lot longer than the *Yellow Pages*.

And yet, it is surprising how many people do not really know what the *Bible* is for. It's brought out for weddings and funerals and for 'swearing in' ceremonies. But many of us don't touch it at other times. It is known as the 'good book', but we don't seem to know exactly what it's good for.

Some believers seem to think they can find the answer to any question imaginable somewhere within its pages. They regard it as the final authority on matters of diet, what to wear, what entertainment is appropriate, what hobbies to have, and so on. Some claim it gives us advance information about the major world events of our time. Some even claim that embedded in the text of the *Bible* is coded information that allows them to predict when the world will end.

And even though their end-time predictions are always wrong, it doesn't deter them. They plunge back in, searching the Scriptures carefully until they come up with another secret, scripture-based interpretation.

The second letter to Timothy tells us that the Scriptures are 'able to make

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you wise for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ'.¹ It also says: 'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness'.²

That, then, is what the *Bible* is for. And that is how we should use it—as a reliable guide to salvation. It

teaches us about Jesus, and how we can look to him and always rely on him.

The *Bible* answers the really important questions of life. But we shouldn't expect it to answer every question. That's not what it's for, and to use it that way makes about as much sense as, well, looking in the

Yellow Pages to find out the Mayor's favourite colour.

Notes

¹ 2 Timothy 3:15 (NIV)

² 2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV)

This is a transcript of the weekly 'Speaking of Life' radio programme by Joseph Tkach, president of Grace Communion International. For more information visit www.gci.org.