

DOCTRINE OF THE BIBLE

PART ONE: Revelation

Definition of Revelation:	God communicating to man.
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A. Through Scripture:

- 1, 1 John 2:1 – God has given us His word so that we will not sin.
2. 1 John 5:13 – God has given us His word so that those who place their trust in Christ may know that they currently possess eternal life.

B. Through Nature: Psalm 19:1-4

- Genesis 1:28 – People have benefited from God’s command to subdue the earth through science and technology which make our lives more comfortable and has even extended our lives and made them more productive.

C. Through Providence: i.e. events which happen to us by God’s activity or by God’s permission - Romans 8:28

1. We are promised that God causes all things – good or bad - to work together for the benefit of those who are His called, i.e. those who have trusted Christ as Savior.
2. We are not promised that everything that God causes or permits is good from the standpoint of our lives.

D. Through Preservation of the Universe: Colossians 1:17

- Through Christ God upholds or sustains everything in the universe. This makes life more predictable and enables us to make plans.

E. Through Miracles: John 2:1-11

1. This passage shows that Jesus is the creator and therefore God. He changed water into wine that appeared to have passed through all the natural stages of plant growth and fermentation, yet in reality was only minutes old.
2. This miracle demonstrates to use that Christ can meet even our most insignificant concerns if we act in obedience to Him.
3. This passage also shows us the futility of limiting ourselves to a naturalistic world view. Here we something, that requires time and natural processes to be made, created in an instant.
4. As to our response, one of the central purposes of miracles is to promote faith in Christ.

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F. Direct Communication: Acts 22:17-21

1. Luke 16:27-31 – God affirms that if people will not believe scripture, then they would not be persuaded by direct communication
2. Deuteronomy 5:24-27 – When the people of Israel experienced hearing the voice of God, they asked that Moses receive future communications from God and tell them. This shows that when people have a choice, they prefer indirect communication such as in scripture.
3. Modern man does not need direct communication because we have the complete scripture.

G. Christ Himself: Hebrews 1:1-2

1. John 20:30; 21:25 – All that Christ revealed was not written in the scripture.
2. This revelation of Christ apart from scripture so impacted His disciples that their radical transformation continues to touch our lives today. Christ reveals Himself by answering our prayers and by ministering to us through other believers.

H. Through Those in Authority:

1. Governmental leaders – Romans 13:1-2
2. Workplace bosses – Ephesians 6:5-8
3. Husbands for wives – Ephesians 5:22
4. Parents for children who are not of age – Ephesians 6:1
5. Spiritual leaders in the church – Hebrews 13:7, 17

I. Through Conscience

1. Defined as man's inner sense of right and wrong.
2. Romans 2:14-15 – Even the unsaved Gentiles have a sense of right and wrong concerning which their conscience accuses or defends them concerning their behavior. It is said to be God's law written on their hearts.
3. Hebrews 10:22 – Our conscience is said to be part of our heart and is also said to be evil at least before salvation. This would mean that it is a fallible witness of an infallible God.
4. Hebrews 9:14; 10:22 – When a person trusts Christ, his conscience is cleansed from dead works.
5. 1 Corinthians 8:9-13; 14:1-6, 22-23 – Conscience becomes a valuable guide when God's word does not give us a definite command or prohibition. We are never to judge or look down on believers who differ with us on these matters nor should we do anything that would lead them to sin against their conscience.
6. Acts 24:16 – The believer must maintain a good conscience before God (the reality of our behavior in God's sight) and before men (how it is perceived by people – see Romans 14:16). Maintaining a good conscience is important because we can lose it (not salvation) according to 1 Timothy 1:19.

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J. Through the leading of the Holy Spirit – Romans 8:14; Galatians 5:18

1. The leading of the Holy Spirit will be consistent with scripture since He is Himself truth (1 John 5:6-7) and Jesus defined Himself and God's word as truth (John 14:6; 17:17).
2. Since God is unchanging (Malachi 3:6), His word is unchanging (Psalm 119:89). For this reason the leading of the Holy Spirit will be consistent and unchanging impressions in His guidance rather than come-and-go impressions. Also the leading of the Holy Spirit will never go against scripture since scripture is the weapon that He uses to penetrate the hearts of people (Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12). The leading of the Holy Spirit is a means that God reveals what He wants us to do (egs. Acts 8:29; 16:6-7). This will obviously consist of things that are not revealed in scripture. For example, "I want you to check on Mary Jones tonight" or "I want you to share the gospel with John Doe." Neither of these leadings are contrary to scripture but neither are they recorded in scripture. Yet they are very much something that God wants and expects us to do.

K. Through the spiritual gift of prophecy

1. The aspect of the spiritual gift of prophecy that produced the New Testament scriptures is no longer needed because Jesus promised the apostolic circle in John 16:12-14 that the many more things He had to say to them would be communicated to them by the Holy Spirit so that they would be guided into all the truth. One must keep in mind that this aspect of the spiritual gift functioned as the guide for churches prior to the completion of the scriptures much like the New Testament functions for the church in today's world.
2. One must also keep in mind that the spiritual gift of prophecy is a sign gift (1 Corinthians 14:22). One of the noticeable functions of the sign gifts was to confirm the message of those who had physically encountered Jesus during His earthly ministry to those who had not physically encountered Jesus during His earthly ministry (Hebrew 2:3-4 cp. Mark 16:17-20). Since this confirmation has already taken place, the need for this sign is greatly reduced. For this reason the gift of prophecy is a foundational gift for the church much like the gift of apostle (Ephesians 2:20). Therefore, since we who are living some 1900 years or more later we would be well above the foundation as living stones in the church (Ephesians 2:20-22 cp. 1 Peter 2:5).
3. The gift of prophecy functions in one of three ways to guide believers:
 - a. It gives guidance to the local church in ways that may not only impact that local church but other local churches as well (Acts 11:27-30).
 - b. It gives warning and guidance to other individuals (Acts 21:10-14).
 - c. It may expose some secret in an unbeliever's heart that brings him into submission to God (1 Corinthians 14:24-25).
 - d. This differs from the leading of the Holy Spirit in that the leading of the Holy Spirit is usually highly individualistic whereas prophecy is for another believer or group of believers. However, its function as revelation from God would be similar to the leading of the Holy Spirit with some very definite criteria and tests mentioned below.

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4. Tests for true prophecy
 - a. It must come true 100% of the time in 100% of the details (Deuteronomy 18:20-22). Otherwise, the so-called prophet is not ever be taken seriously on any pronouncements.
 - b. It must be in agreement with the scriptures, and if it is not, it is to be disregarded even if it comes true. (Deuteronomy 13:1-5 cp. Isaiah 8:20).
 - c. The life of the prophet must produce good fruit or character and if it does not, he is to be considered a false prophet (Matthew 7:15-20).
 - d. What he communicates must meet the test of being consistent with what the scripture teaches concerning Christ (1 John 4:1-6 cp. 2 John 1:9-10). The teaching or doctrine of Christ is the teaching about Him. He is the only way of salvation. He is both God and man. He was virgin born, lived a sinless life, died for our sins, and was bodily raised from the dead. He is bodily coming to judge both the living and the dead.
 - e. Acceptance of a prophecy especially one that has large implications would be based on one of two considerations:
 - (1) An established history such as someone with a reputation and character above reproach on all previous prophecies.
 - (2) If he lacks an established history, there would be definite signs or miracles of a verifiable nature (Exodus 4:1-9 cp. 4:29-31).
5. To keep everything in balance, 1 Thessalonians 5:20-21 is excellent counsel. We are not to despise prophecies but to examine or test everything and hold fast to that which is honorable.

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PART TWO: Inspiration

Definition of Inspiration:	God choosing and guiding human authors so that using their own individual personality and style, they wrote without error what God had revealed.
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A. 2 Timothy 3:16-17

1. The extent of inspiration is expressly stated to be “all Scripture.
2. Scripture is said to be given its inspiration by God or literally to be “God-breathed.”
3. Because all scripture is inspired by God, we are to make the following four uses of it:

Ltr.	Word used	Explanation
a.	Doctrine or teaching	Shows us how we should believe and live
b.	Reproof or rebuking	Shows us where our living and beliefs are wrong.
c.	Correction	Shows us how to correct wrong beliefs and living
d.	Training or instruction in righteousness	Shows us how to discipline ourselves to believe and live as God expects.

4. If we make these four uses of God’s word, we will be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

B. 2 Peter 1:21

1. Note how this verse shows both divine and human involvement in the recording of scripture:

God as Source	God’s Working	Man’s Working
From God	Moved or carried along by the Holy Spirit	Men spoke

2. cp. 2 Peter 1:19 – We are commanded in response to this to pay attention or take heed to this word from God.

C. Union of God’s Working and Man’s Working

#	Scripture Reference	God’s Working	Man’s Working
1.	2 Samuel 23:2	The Spirit of the Lord spoke	By me
2.	Isaiah 59:21	My word which I have put	in your mouth
3.	Jeremiah 1:9	I have put my words	in your mouth

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D. Psalm 19:7

1. The fact that an adequate concept of inspiration includes inerrancy is shown by use of the words “perfect” and “sure” (or “trustworthy) to describe God’s word.
2. The practical outworking of this concept in our lives
 - a. Helps to revitalize our inner being.
 - b. Helps those who do not know its truths to not only know them but to obey them.

E. John 17:17

1. Christ obviously believed that God’s word or scripture is truth. He did not state that scripture merely contained truth but that it is truth. This clearly shows that He understood scripture as being without error.
2. The practical outcome of this is that God uses His word to sanctify the believer, i.e. set the believer apart for God’s purpose.

F. Deuteronomy 29:29

1. Inspiration does mean that all of God’s word is true. However, inspiration does not require that all truth be recorded in God’s word. For example the truths about automotive technology, medicine, and science are not in scripture. However, any aspect of these to which God’s word might speak is without error.
2. While God’s revelation of truth in the scripture is not exhaustive, He calls for us to live in obedience to what He has revealed.

G. Matthew 4:4

1. Jesus stated that we are to live not just by the concepts of God’s word but by the very words of scripture.
2. Jesus did not say we are to live without bread, i.e. our needs, but that we are not to live by bread alone, i.e. by basing our behavior only on meeting our needs. Any behavior to meet our needs must always be in obedience to God’s word.

H. Matthew 5:17-19

1. The fact that Jesus stated that the very smallest part of any letter of any word in scripture would not pass away shows that He believed inspiration extended to the very words of scripture and not just the concepts.
2. We are therefore not to break even the smallest of commandments nor to teach others that it would be right to do so.

I. Galatians 3:16 – Paul’s argument was based on the fact that a singular form of the word, “seed” was used rather than “seeds.” This shows that Paul viewed scripture as being so accurate that one could rely on the very words themselves and not just the concepts.

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J. Matthew 22:32

1. Jesus argued from the standpoint that God had declared to Moses I am the God of Abraham rather I was the God of Abraham to show that God is a God of the living not the dead. This shows that Jesus considered the tense of the verb as being inspired.
2. cp. Matthew 22:29 – This shows that when one lacks a proper of view of the inspiration of scripture, he will be in error because he does not know them nor will he understand God’s power as a miracle-working God.

K. Psalm 119:89; 1 Peter 1:23-25

1. By stating that God’s word is eternal or forever, these passages refute the teaching that God’s word was true in its time but now contains errors and is out-of-date or old-fashioned.
2. Because God’s word is relevant and eternal, it is to change our lives
 - a. 1 Peter 1:22 – By promoting a deepness in loving one another from the heart.
 - b. 1 Peter 2:1-2 – We are to put away the sins of malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy and speaking evil or slanderously of others. At the same time we need to strongly desire the basics of God’s word to grow spiritually.

L. Psalm 138:2

1. This answers those who believe that obedience to God is not the same as obedience to His word. Notice, depending on your Bible version, God’s word is greater than or equal to His name. This shows we cannot say we are disobeying scripture but are obeying God.
2. Our response to this truth is to praise God for His lovingkindness or love and for His truth or faithfulness.

M. John 10:35 – There some teachers who have incorrectly taught that authority is in Christ and not in scripture. Jesus’ statement that “The scripture cannot be broken” shows that He based His authority and teaching on scripture. To reinforce this point reconsider the following scriptures: Matthew 4:4; 5:17-18; 22:29-32; John 17:17.

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N. The proof of Biblical inspiration

#	Statement of Evidence	Support of Evidence
1.	Fulfilled prophecy	One chance out of 5 with 60 zeros behind it for these prophecies to be fulfilled.
	a. Tyre	Ezekiel 26:3-5,7,12,14,16
	b. Samaria	Micah 1:6
	c. Gaza and Ashkelon	Zechariah 2:4-6; Amos 1:8; Jeremiah 47:5
	d. Jericho	Joshua 6:26
	e. Jerusalem	Micah 3:12
	f. Palestine	Leviticus 26:31,33; Ezekiel 36:33-35
	g. Moab and Ammon	Ezekiel 25:3,4,9,10; Jeremiah 48:47; 49:6
	h. Edom	Jeremiah 49:16-19
	i. Babylon	Isaiah 13:19-21; Jeremiah 51:26,43
2.	Changed lives	The divorce rate in 1970 was about 2 out of 5 marriages. However, in homes where both professed to be Christians, read the Bible together daily and prayed together daily, the divorce rate was 1 out of 1015
3.	The miraculous preservation of the Jews as a distinct entity for 1000's of years	Both secular history and scripture support this in Genesis 12:1-3 and Jeremiah 31:36,37
4.	The scripture itself claims to be God's word	2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Samuel 23:2; Isaiah 59:21; Jeremiah 1:9
5.	The authority of Christ Himself	John 10:35; 17:17; Matthew 4:4; 5:17-18; 22:29,32
6.	Of all ancient documents written in the New Testament era and immediately before and after, the New Testament wins hands down on the number of existing copies and on the closeness of the copied document to the original.	The science of writing history (historiography) supports this. Look at section O., entitled "Further evidence of Biblical inspiration."

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O. Further evidence of Biblical inspiration

TIME SPAN FOR SECULAR WRITINGS AND FOR THE NEW TESTAMENT

Author	When Written	Earliest Copy	Time Span	Number of Copies
Caesar	100-44 B.C.	900 A.D.	1000 years	10
Livy	59 B.C.	1100 A.D.		20
Plato (Tetralogies)	427-347 B.C.	900 A.D.	1200 years	7
Tacitus (Annals)	100 A.D.	1100 A.D.	1000 years	20
Tacitus (minor works)	100 A.D.	1000 A.D.	900 years	1
Pliny the Younger (History)	61-113 A.D.	850 A.D.	750 years	7
Thucydides (History)	460-400 B.C.	900 A.D.	1300 years	8
Suetonius (De Vita Caesarum)	75-160 A.D.	950 A.D.	800 years	8
Herodotus (History)	480-425 B.C.	900 A.D.	1300 years	8
Horace			900 years	
Sophocles	490-406 B.C.	1000 A.D.	1400 years	100
Lucretius	Died 53 or 55 B.C.		1100 years	2
Catullus	54 B.C.	1550 A.D.	1600 years	3
Euripedes	480-406 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1500 years	9
Demosthenes	383-322 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1300 years	200
Aristotle	384-322 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1400 years	5
Aristophanes	450-385 B.C.	900 A.D.	1200 years	10
<i>New Testament</i>	45-90 A.D.	*	**	5366

* The earliest copies of the New Testament: We have 2 copies dated about 300 A.D and 1 copy dated 400 A.D. The other manuscripts are generally 500 A.D. to 700 A.D. In addition there are 86,000 quotes from the church fathers during the first 350 years of the church from which we can almost reconstruct the New Testament. There are also 2000 church service books containing scripture portions from the first 500 years of the church. There are the old Latin, Syriac and Egyptian translations of the New Testament dating from the 200's. There are 75 papyri fragments dating as early as 135 A.D.

** 135 to 700 years

Actual variations in readings of the Greek New Testament are documented in the New King James version. I suggest you purchase one if you do not already have one in your possession. No doctrine or teaching about the Christian life is in question as a result of these variations.

This chart was adapted from Josh McDowell's book entitled, "Evidence that Demands a Verdict"

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PART Three: Illumination

Definition of Illumination:	The act of God, the Holy Spirit, to help the human mind to understand the scriptures
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- A. John 14:26 - The two ministries of the Holy Spirit in relation to God's word:
1. To teach us all things, i.e. all the things Christ has spoken cp. John 14:25, the preceding verse.
 2. He helps us to recall God's word.
- B. John 16:12-15 – Measure of whether the Holy Spirit is really teaching us:
1. 16:13 - He will guide us into all truth.
 2. 16:14 – He will glorify Christ. The focus will not be Himself but the Lord Jesus Christ.
- C. 1 Corinthians 2:12
1. “The things freely given to us by God” has reference to the special revelation of the scriptures.
 2. The Holy Spirit helps us to know (better “understand”) the things God has revealed in scripture.
 3. cp. 1 Corinthians 2:13 – This teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit is important to us because it is His work and not that of human wisdom.
- D. 1 John 2:20,26-27
1. The anointing refers to the Holy Spirit whom God gave us when we trusted Christ (cp. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Acts 10:38).
 2. In 2:20 the manuscripts read 3 different ways. The table below will help you to sort out what this verse is saying in its context:

Bible Version	What the text says:	What the text means:
King James/New King James	“You know all things”	i.e. all these things about Jesus being the Christ and co-equal with the Father – see vv. 23-24 specifically.
New American Standard	“You all know”	i.e. You all know about Jesus being the Christ. and co-equal with the Father – see vv. 23-24 specifically.
New International	“You all know the truth”	i.e. You all know the truth about Jesus being the Christ and co-equal with the Father – see vv. 23-24 specifically..

As you can see this verse is showing that as a result of having the Holy Spirit, we know that Jesus is the Christ and co-equal with the Father.

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3. 1 John 2:26-27 continues with that same theme. We do not need anyone to teach us the truth of the facts that Jesus is the Christ and that He is co-equal with the Father. When we are told that “His anointing (i.e. the Holy Spirit) teaches us about all things” meaning “all these things” that John was discussing in the previous verse.
4. cp. 1 Corinthians 12:28 – This does not mean that we do not need teachers in the church. Even if “all things” meant all things of the Bible, we must remember that the Holy Spirit can teach us directly from God’s word or through the spoken or written material of gifted Bible teachers whom He gave to the church.

E. 1 Corinthians 2:14

1. “The things of the Spirit of God” have to do with the things He has revealed in scripture.
2. The natural man (or as the NIV states, “The man without the Spirit”) in relation to God’s word:
 - (1) He lacks the will to receive God’s word.
 - (2) He lacks the capacity to understand God’s word because it is spiritually discerned, i.e. discerned with the help of the Holy Spirit.

F. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 – What greatly hinders the ability of the unsaved to believe and receive the Holy Spirit so they will have understanding of spiritual things?

- Satan as the god of this age has blinded their minds so they do not see or understand the gospel.

G. John 16:8-11 – The Holy Spirit convicts the world, i.e. the unsaved of their sin of unbelief in Christ. The word translated “convict”, “reprove” or “convince” simply means to expose to the light.

H. Ephesians 6:17 – In order for the Holy Spirit to illumine the mind of an unsaved person, we must use God’s word because this is the weapon the Holy Spirit uses to penetrate every part of the total being of people. Notice how God’s word works:

1. Hebrews 4:12 – It works like a sword and penetrates every part of the person.
2. Jeremiah 23:29 – God’s word works like fire that burns and a hammer that breaks a rock.
3. Psalm 119:130 – The use of God’s word is like turning on a light.

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I. The problem of the carnal believer

1. A carnal believer is one who has not grown because of his failure to obey God's word in certain areas of his walk. Sin is not dominant in his life, but it is prominent.
2. 1 Corinthians 3:1-3
 - a. Carnal believers are only able to handle the basics of God's word and not more advanced teaching.
 - b. In order to start growing, we must confess and forsake sins (1 John 1:9; Proverbs 28:13).
 - c. The carnal believer is marked by envy, strife and divisions.
3. Hebrews 5:11-14
 - a. cp. Matthew 28:19-20 and Mark 16:15 – To correctly understand this passage in Hebrews we must understand that the Great Commission which commands us to share the gospel with everyone, to baptize those who believe and to teach those who believe to obey all things taught by Christ, i.e. the entire New Testament. These believers needed to be able to teach obedience to the New Testament but were not yet able. Just as all believers are to share the gospel even if they lack the gift of evangelism so all believers are to be teaching new believers to obey all that Christ commanded even if they lack the gift of teaching (1 Corinthians 12:28-30 cp. James 3:1) and cannot teach in a classroom sense..
 - b. They understood the work of Christ for their salvation and for their future (Hebrews 6:1-2) but not for their present walk as it related to Christ's priesthood. For this reason they are said to be "dull of hearing" (v.11)
 - c. As a result they were unskilled in God's word.
 - d. They had not been using what they knew from God's word and as a result were not mature (v.14).

J. Our responsibilities in order to appropriate the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit.

1. Psalm 119:34, 73 – We must pray for God's help to learn and to obey His word.
2. Acts 17:11 – We must study God's word daily to check the accuracy of what we are being taught.
3. John 8:31-32 – We must abide in God's word. James 1:25 makes it clear that this means not only to look intently into it to study it but to make sure we are a doer of God's word. Then we know the truth in a way that frees us from sin's power.

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PART FOUR: Interpretation

Definition of: Interpretation	Analysis of scripture to see what it means – <u>not</u> what you want it to mean or have been taught that it means.
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- A. 2 Timothy 2:15 commands accurate interpretation of God’s word. The Modern Language version of the Bible translates the last part of this verse, “correctly interpreting the message of truth.” In light of this verse the following quotes are answered:
1. “It can mean a number of things. It’s all a matter of interpretation.” This is frequently heard. Yet it makes little sense if God commands us to accurately interpret God’s word. If God commands us to accurately interpret His word, it follows that it is a command that we are able to obey.
 2. “It does not matter how you interpret the Bible as long as you are sincere.” Again the verse does not discuss the sincerity of the interpretation. It emphasizes the rightness or accuracy of the interpretation.
- B. 2 Peter 3:15-18
1. Verse 16 tells us that some things in God’s word are hard or difficult to understand.
 2. Verse 16 goes on to warn believers not to twist or distort the scriptures.
 3. Verse 16 states that two kinds of people distort God’s word:
 - a. The ignorant or untaught – This speaks of believers who have not been taught the truths of God’s word.
 - b. The unstable – These people understand the truths of God’s word but fail to respond in faith and obedience to them.
 4. Verse 16 speaks of the results of twisting or distorting God’s word as destruction. This has a two-fold application.
 - a. To the unsaved the word “destruction” refers to the eternal ruin of the person in the torments of hell.
 - b. To the saved person the word “destruction” refers to the spiritual ruin of a believer in terms of lost blessings (Jeremiah 5:25) in this life and lost rewards in the next life (1 Corinthians 3:14-15; 2 John 1:8). Remember salvation is not something that the believer can lose (John 5:24; 10:28; Romans 8:1,34).
 5. Verse 17 emphasizes that one particular danger of distorting or twisting God’s word is to fall from our own steadfastness or stability (not salvation).
 6. Verses 17-18 tell us that to remedy this problem, we must know this information, be on guard against those who distort God’s word and finally we must be growing in the grace and knowledge of God.

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C. Matthew 23:23

1. The translation “weightier” or “more important” shows that some parts of God’s word have greater importance than other parts.
2. Our response to the less important things is still to be obedience.
3. Our response to the more important things is to be sure that we do not omit them while doing the less important things.

D. Principles for Interpretation

1. Text – What do the words in the scripture text say and mean? It is always very important to read what the words are saying before we try to decide what they mean.
 - a. Some good tools to use:
 - (1) Other translations, expanded translations and paraphrases of the scripture. See the end of the study for a listing of these.
 - (2) Use of an exhaustive concordance to see how the Hebrew or Greek word is used elsewhere in the scripture. You do not have to know any Greek or Hebrew to use one of these.
 - (3) Study Bibles with notes or commentaries can also help.
However, do not be lazy. Do the other steps of interpretation below before you go to any commentary.
 - b. In 2 Corinthians 6:7 the phrase “with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left” is confusing to many. A paraphrase such as the Living Bible can be very helpful where this is translated, “All of the godly man’s arsenal – weapons of defense, weapons of attack – have been ours.” This way we understand that parts of our spiritual armor listed in Ephesians 6:14-18 is useful for defending ourselves in spiritual warfare while part of that spiritual armor is useful for attacking the spiritual enemy.
2. Context – Immediate – What does the paragraph, in which the passage or phrase is located, talk about or discuss? It considers what the verses which precede and/or follow have to say. It is also important to look at words which are used repeatedly in a passage. Another important point is to look at the words such as “therefore” and “wherefore” because they refer back to the previous verse or verses as the reason for what is being said in the verse you are studying. Some examples are given below:
 - a. In Luke 18:8 we read in the last part of the verse, “When the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”
 - (1) The first explanation is given in the New Scofield Reference Bible. The note reads, “The reference is not to personal faith but belief in the whole body of revealed truth” The Ryrie Study Bible supports this explanation.
 - (2) The second explanation comes from the Wuest Expanded Translation of the New Testament. It reads, “Yet, the Son of Man having come, will He find the aforementioned kind of faith on the earth (a faith which keeps on pleading in prayer

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such as that exemplified by the persistence of the widow with regard to the judge)?”

(3) A reading of Luke 18:1-8 clearly supports the second explanation.

- b. Ephesians 5:1 states that we are to be imitators of God as dear children and also has the word “therefore.” This refer the reader back to verse 32 of the fourth chapter which tells us to forgive as we have been forgiven by God in Christ. The way in which we are to imitate God is in showing forgiveness and compassion to fellow-believers.
- c. In 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 we are easily able to determine what is discussed because the word “love” is repeated used throughout the passage.

- 3. Context – Intermediate – What does the chapter or group of chapters, in which the passage or phrase occurs, talk about or discuss? For example, in 1 Corinthians 13:8, we understand that it is the spiritual gift of knowledge which is discussed. In reading 1 Corinthians 12:1 we see that this section is speaking about spiritual gifts. It continued in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 to list several spiritual gifts of which are knowledge, prophecy, and tongues. These are discussed in 1 Corinthians 13:8. In 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 spiritual gifts are shown to be ineffective without love. The 3 gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13:8 are some of the examples given in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. 1 Corinthians 14 goes on to contrast the spiritual gift of tongues and prophecy. By understanding this you will know that it not knowledge itself being discussed in 1 Corinthians 13:8 but rather the spiritual gift of knowledge.
- 4. Context – Book – It is helpful to know what a particular book of the Bible is discussing in which a passage or phrase is found. Many Christians believe that the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit is the road to deeper spiritual living. However, if one reads the book of 1 Corinthians where this is discussed, he notices that 1 Corinthians 12:13 makes it clear that all of the Corinthian believers had been baptized by the Holy Spirit. Since all of them experienced it, then it is obvious that this work of the Holy Spirit occurs at the moment of salvation when one trusts Christ. In addition when one reads 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 it is very obvious that a good number of these believers were fleshly or carnal. One concludes that the baptizing work of the Holy Spirit is not a solution to deeper spiritual living.

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5. Cross – Reference – This uses other references in scripture to clarify the meaning of a verse, phrase or passage. Many study Bibles of various types list a number of cross references. The book entitled, “The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge,” has a list of over 600,000 cross references. There are two examples below of this principle:
 - a. Jesus Christ does an excellent job of showing us the importance of this principle when he was tempted by Satan in the wilderness:
 - (1) Satan used, or rather misused, God’s word to try to tempt Jesus to sin by using Psalm 91:11-12. Satan stated that this promised that God would keep any of His own from harming themselves.
 - (2) Jesus replied by using a scripture in Deuteronomy 6:16 which showed that the believer is never to test God by placing himself in danger by indulging in high risk behavior just to show off.
 - b. Another prime example is found in Matthew 7:1-5
 - (1) Many people misuse this passage to teach that we are never to judge anyone for any reason under any circumstances.
 - (2) To be sure we are not to judge people who are unsaved (1 Corinthians 5:11-13); people’s motives (1 Corinthians 4:5); other believers regarding their convictions or applications of principles in matters which God’s word does not command nor forbid (Romans 14:1-6; Colossians 2:16,17); and finally we are not to judge fellow believers by our own personal standards rather than God’s word (James 4:11-12).
 - (3) However, it is clear that we are to judge fellow-believers regarding conduct that does not obey God’s word (1 Corinthians 5:11-13).
6. Negative analysis – Ask yourself, “what is the verse being studied not saying?”
 - a. For example, Romans 8:29 is not saying that we are predestined to trust Christ or to not trust Christ. Many people read that into this verse. It is simply stating that those whom God foreknew would trust Christ, would be predestined to be conformed at some time to the likeness of Christ. This time according to 1 John 3:2 is when Jesus returns.
 - b. Psalm 51:12 does not say we can lose our salvation. Rather it states that we can lose the joy of God’s salvation.

E. Interpreting the Old Testament

1. Old Testament scriptures being applicable contrasted to their being profitable:
 - a. Romans 7:1-7 – Because we are baptized into Christ who suffered death, we share His death and are therefore dead or separated to the Old Testament law. We are said to be released from it. That this includes the moral law is very clear from v. 7 where one of the ten commandments is mentioned.
 - b. 2 Timothy 3:16 – However, it is equally clear that all scripture, which would include the Old Testament is profitable or helpful.

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2. How are the Old Testament scriptures profitable?
 - a. John 5:38-40
 - (1) Notice that they testify of Christ.
 - (2) This is profitable only if one places their trust in Christ. No amount of study will correct this deficiency.
 - b. 1 Corinthians 10:1-12
 - (1) 10:11 – They serve as examples and warnings to instruct us.
 - (2) Notice the specific sins to be avoided that are listed in this passage:
 - (a) 10:5 – failure to please God.
 - (b) 10:6 – setting our hearts on craving evil things.
 - (c) 10:7 – idolatry
 - (d) 10:8 – sexual immorality
 - (e) 10:9 – putting God to the test
 - (f) 10:10 – grumbling
 - (g) 10:12 – overconfidence
 - c. Romans 15:4
 - (1) To instruct and encourage us.
 - (2) However, to benefit perseverance is needed on our part.
 - (3) The result of letting God's word instruct and encourage us and of persevering is that we would have hope or expectancy regarding the future God has planned for us.
3. Why is a command like Exodus 20:15 which prohibits stealing still applicable under the New Covenant?
 - Because it is clearly repeated in the teachings of the New Covenant in scriptures such as Ephesians 4:28; Matthew 15:18-19.
4. Why would a command like Deuteronomy 22:8 which requires a parapet around the roof of the house not be required under the New Covenant?
 - Because there is no direct teaching under the New Covenant that commands this. However, the principle behind any command of loving your neighbor as yourself would require that we never knowingly have or build anything that would endanger our fellow-man unless we take measures to keep them from the danger.

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F. Recommended List of Tools for Bible Interpretation for Bible Teachers

1. Ryrie Study Bible – New American Standard Version
2. The Scofield Reference Bible – New International Version
3. Unger’s Bible Dictionary
4. The New American Standard Exhaustive Concordance
5. The McArthur Study Bible – New King James Version
6. The Christian Counselors New Testament by Jay Adams
7. The Amplified Bible
8. Balancing the Christian Life by Charles Ryrie – may be out of print
9. Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth by C.I. Scofield – free off the internet
10. The Life Application Bible – Living or New Living Translation
11. The Good News Bible
12. The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge
13. The Defender’s Study Bible -The King James Version – very helpful to determine whether the word “you” in modern translations is singular or plural. It also has notes dealing with issues of Scripture and modern science.
14. The Bible Knowledge Commentary - 2 volumes – edited by Walvoord and Zuck
15. The Bible Exposition Commentary – 6 volumes - by Warren Wiersbe

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PART FIVE: Canonicity

Definition of: Canonicity	The means for deciding what is scripture and what is not scripture
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A. Jewish Catalogs of Scripture (also confirmed by the historian Josephus)

1. Law of Moses – Genesis through Deuteronomy
2. Prophets
 - a. Joshua through Esther
 - b. Isaiah through Malachi (except Lamentations and Daniel).
3. Psalms (or Writings) – Job through Song of Solomon plus Lamentations and Daniel

B. Luke 24:27,44-45

1. Jesus stated that three divisions of scripture were:
 - a. The Law of Moses
 - b. The Psalms
 - c. The Prophets
2. Notice that these Old Testament scriptures are stated to testify of Christ as He Himself states.
3. cp. Luke 24:32-35 – When the scriptures are explained in a Christ-centered way, it excites our hearts, impresses on us the reality of His resurrection and moves us to share them with other believers.

C. John 16:12-15

1. 16:12 - Jesus made it very clear to the Apostles that He had more information to tell them but that they were not able to bear it or handle it at that time, i.e. the time of His earthly ministry.
2. 16:13 – Jesus told them that this new information would be given to them or revealed to them by the Holy Spirit when He came. Jesus was referring to the Holy Spirit's special and unique coming at Pentecost (see also John 16:7 and 7:39).
3. John 16:13 – Jesus made it very clear that the new revelation would be all truth and not just partial truth. Jesus continued to affirm the inerrancy of scripture. This included future things.

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4. John 16:14-15 – These verses tell us that the words being revealed by the Holy Spirit to the Apostles were Christ’s words (and ultimately the Father’s) and not the words of the Apostles.
5. In reading this whole passage in 16:12-15 it is obvious that the canon of scripture was not yet closed at the time Christ spoke as He made it clear that there would be more revelation to follow and that the Apostles would be the recipients of this revelation.
6. 16:14 – One point is very clear and that is that the Holy Spirit’s work is not to point us to Himself but rather to point us to Christ by glorifying Him. We must read the New Testament at all times with Christ in view.

D. Matthew 16:18-19

1. An expanded translation of verse 19 is given by Kenneth Wuest: “I shall give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth {forbid to be done} shall have been already bound {forbidden to be done} in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth {permit to be done}, shall have already been loosed in heaven {permitted to be done}.”
2. Jesus shows that Peter’s words were to be treated as God’s word. Please understand that the word translated “you” in the text is singular and not plural which limits this passage to Peter.

E. 2 Peter 3:15-16

1. Peter clearly referred to Paul’s writings as scripture.
2. This would make all the epistles or letters of Paul part of God’s word.

F. 1 Timothy 5:18 cp. Luke 10:7

1. Paul refers to Luke’s writings as scripture.
2. This clearly defines the books of Luke and Acts as scripture since Luke is the human author of both books and Acts is a continuation of the book of Luke (Luke 1:1-4 cp. Acts 1:1,2).

G. The basic assumption

1. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John as accounts of Christ’s earthly ministry are authoritative.
2. This would make the letters of John authoritative also.

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H. The book of Hebrews

1. Paul and Barnabas are considered the two most likely candidates for the human authorship of this book.
2. Acts 14:14 – Both of these men were said to be Apostles.

I. Galatians 1:19 and the book of James

1. James is said to be an Apostle.
2. This James is the brother of the Lord Jesus (Matthew 13:55-56). He was not a believer during at least part if not all of Christ's earthly ministry prior to His death. (John 7:3-5). However, Jesus appeared to James after being raised from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:7) and James was with the group that met in the upper room after Christ's ascension but prior to Pentecost (Acts 1:13-14).

J. Matthew 13:55; Jude 1:1

- Jude was the brother of James and is listed by the name Judas in the list of Jesus' brothers.

K. Principles for Canonicity

1. Was the book written by an apostle or a close associate of an apostle?
2. Was the content spiritual in nature?
3. Was the book widely accepted among the churches?
4. Did the book give internal evidence of inspiration?

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L. The closing of the canon of scripture

1. Revelation 22:18-19 – There are three ways of understanding this passage:
 - a. If anyone adds to the words of scripture, they will face judgment.
 - b. If anyone adds to the word of the book of Revelation, they will face judgment.
 - c. If anyone adds anything beyond or after the words of the book of Revelation, they will face judgment.
2. Jude 1:3 speaks of “the faith.” This is the body of scriptural truth once and for all delivered to believers.
3. No scripture seems to definitely prove the closing of the canon. However, John 16:12-13 gave no authorization to write scripture to anyone beyond those whom Christ personally taught.

M. The Apocrypha

The Apocrypha are not regarded as part of the Bible for the following reasons:

1. Neither Jesus nor the New Testament writers ever quoted from it.
2. All catalogs of the Hebrew scriptures listed only the books in the sections recognized by Christ.
3. The historian Josephus noted that the Jews did not regard them as scripture.
4. These books nowhere within themselves claim to be divinely inspired.
5. These books contain many historical and geographical errors.
6. They teach these false doctrines:
 - a. Prayer and offerings for the dead to free them from sin (2 Maccabees 12:41-46 cp. John 3:18; Hebrews 9:27).
 - b. Atonement and sacrifice by almsgiving (cp. Ecclesiasticus, **not** Ecclesiastes, 3:33; Tobit 4:11 with Ephesians 2:8,9; Titus 3:5).

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PART SIX: Errors in Relation to God's Word

A. Matthew 15:3-9 – The problem of tradition and man-made commandments

1. 15:3-6 - We are not to use tradition to nullify any part of God's word.
 - a. cp. 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 3:6 – Not all tradition is unscriptural, i.e. contrary to scripture nor is all tradition non-scriptural, i.e. simply not mentioned in scripture. Here in these verses are traditions which are part of scripture.
 - b. There are some traditions which are contrary to scripture: being baptized in water to be saved, speaking in tongues as a evidence of salvation or of Holy Spirit baptism, praying to dead believers for them to intercede for you.
2. 15:7-9 – We are warned against moving man-made commandments to the same level of authority as God's word.
 - a. Colossians 2:20-23 – When man-made commandments are moved to the same level as God's word there is:
 - (1) An appearance but not a reality of wisdom
 - (2) Self-made religion or devotion to God
 - (3) False humility
 - (4) Severe treatment of the body
 - (5) No real value in restraining the sinful nature
 - b. Some reasons for man-made commandments include self-glorification, measuring spirituality by how much pleasure people give up, trying to make sure that believers come to the same conclusions on issues where the word of God does not give a command or a prohibition.
 - c. The exception to this is that certain man-made commandments from God-appointed authority (Romans 13:1-7; Ephesians 5:22-33; 6:1-9; Hebrews 13:7,17) do carry the same weight as scripture unless they require us to disobey commands in God's word (Acts 5:29).

B. The problem of adding to and subtracting from God's word.

1. Deuteronomy 4:2 – We are commanded not to add to or subtract from God's word.
2. Practical effects of these errors:
 - a. Deuteronomy 4:2 – It makes it impossible to obey God's word.
 - b. Proverbs 30:6 – Adding to God's word makes us misrepresent God and makes us a liar because of it.

C. What happens when we learn God's word and fail to obey it?

1. James 1:22 – We deceive no one but ourselves.
2. Psalm 119:67 – God brings affliction or suffering into our life to discipline us.

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D. Interaction with some issues people raise:

1. "I have heard God is not so interested that we try to obey His word in every detail. He wants us to simply recognize that He is a God of love and to love Him in return."
- Answer from John 14:23 – If anyone loves Christ He is going to obey His word. Therefore, the extent of our love is measured by the extent of our obedience. If we aim for less than perfect obedience we do not love Him as we should. While none of us will attain sinless perfection this side of eternity (cp. 1 John 1:8,10 with 3:2), we are still to make obedience our aim. This is the basis for our fellowship with Christ and with the Father.
2. "The more I know of God's word, the more God expects of me. Therefore, I will not learn so much of God's word."
- Answer from Psalm 119:71 – If we fail to learn God's word as we should, God will bring discipline into our life in the form of affliction or suffering.

E. The Problem of Incomplete Obedience (1 Samuel 15:1-3,9-24)

1. 15:1-3, 9 -Saul showed incomplete obedience to the word of God through Samuel the prophet. He was commanded to punish Amalek by putting to death every person without exception, all their animals without exception and destroy everything that these people owned.. Instead he spared their ruler Agag and the best of the sheep, oxen, fat calves, lambs and everything that was good.
2. 15:15.20-21 – He showed good intentions by sparing the best animals to sacrifice.
3. Believers today have often substituted sacrificial service to God for obedience. They do such things as participate in praising God while holding a grudge against another believer, many times even their spouse. They give great sums to God's work while failing to obey the command to share the gospel and to disciple those who have trusted Christ. They are so busy in the work of the church that they fail to bring their children to Christ and to disciple them.
4. 15:24 – The fear of people's disapproval and the desire to be popular worked to pressure Saul into incomplete obedience.
5. 15:23
 - a. To rebel is like committing the sin of divination or counterfeit prophecy. It is behaving against God's word to get what you want, in the case of divination to get information that God has not revealed.
 - b. Insubordination in an arrogant and stubborn manner is like the sin of idolatry in which we think our choice is better than God and become our own god or authority rather than submitting ourselves to the authority of God.

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PART SEVEN: Getting God's Word into your Life

A. Hearing God's Word

1. Romans 10:17 – Hearing God's word helps to increase our faith.
2. Luke 8:18 – We must be careful how we listen to God's word. Are we listening simply to know more but without obeying?
3. Ways we can hear God's word: Attending church and Bible classes, radio, TV recordings such as tapes or CD's.

B. Reading God's Word

1. Revelation 1:3 – Our response to reading or hearing God's word must be to obey or we will miss God's blessing.
2. Deuteronomy 17:19
 - a. Frequency of reading: daily reading
 - b. Type of obedience: total and careful obedience
 - c. Result of obedience: fear God, i.e. have supreme respect for Him
3. Plans or schemes for daily Bible reading:
 - a. 3 chapters a day Monday through Saturday and 5 chapters on Sunday
 - b. Each day: 1 chapter of an Old Testament book other than Psalms and Proverbs, 1 chapter of Psalms or Proverbs and 1 New Testament book
 - c. Read a book of the Bible repeatedly for one month, then do another book
 - d. For new believers especially: Read Romans through Jude repeatedly for several months. This will familiarize you with a great deal of the teachings of God's word.

C. Studying God's Word

1. Acts 17:11
 - a. Attitude toward the authority of God's word: Received it with all readiness and eagerness
 - b. Frequency of study: daily
 - c. Purpose of Personal study: To see if what they were being taught was true.
Note: If these people believed it needful to check out Paul, how much more should we carefully study what we are taught at church to be sure it is true.

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2. Methods of studying God's word

- a. Using a good study Bible such as the Scofield or Ryrie, read one chapter each day and look up all the cross references and notes on one verse in that chapter. If a cross reference helps you understand the verse better, underline it with blue pencil. If the cross reference has a note (either printed in the Bible or one that you have written) that is helpful in understanding the verse you are carefully examining, underline it with a red pencil.
- b. By all means mark your Bible with red and blue pencil (rather than pen so it won't bleed through and discolor the other side of the page) with your own notes in the margin or top or bottom of the page. If the note is so extensive that it won't fit on the page, make a simple note referring you to the page number and the note number and put it on a page with a large amount of blank space.
- c. You might want to study a series of verses as a paragraph and write your own paraphrase of the verse (no more than double the number of words in the paragraph you are studying) or write a summary of the paragraph (no more than half the number of the words in the paragraph you are studying).
- d. When you read a book on a biblical topic, look up every scripture reference in the book.
- e. Studying the notes and looking up every scripture reference in that note in the Scofield or Ryrie Bibles or other study Bibles is very profitable.

D. Memorizing God's Word

1. Psalm 119:11 – The concept of memorizing God's word is expressed by the idea of hiding God's word as a treasure in our heart and the purpose is to prevent sin.
2. Matthew 12:34-35 – Memorizing God's word gives us good treasure for our heart which will be reflected in the things we speak.
3. Matthew 4:1-11
 - a. Jesus used the simple tool of memorizing scripture to defeat Satan. Three times Jesus responded, "It is written" (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10).
 - b. 4: 5-7 - To keep Satan or His servants from misusing God's word, we must know the context of the verses we memorize and we must memorize topically so that we will not be misled by failing to get the whole truth.
 - c. Memorization alone did not defeat Satan. We must choose not to sin in the face of temptation (Hebrews 4:15). We must be committed to doing God's will not our own will(Matthew 26:39). Finally before resisting the devil, we must first of all submit to God (James 4:7).

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E. Meditating on God's Word

1. Psalm 1:1-3

- a. Attitude toward God's word – Delight in God's word.
- b. Three things that must be avoided for successful meditation:
 - (1) Not to live our life by the counsel or advice of the ungodly. This would include anyone unsaved or who is not committed to God.
 - (2) Not to stand in the path of sinners: This simply means, we will not use the unsaved person or the carnal believer as a model for our Christian life.
 - (3) Not to sit in the seat of scoffers: This simply means we must not keep company with and spend a lot of time with unsaved people or carnal believers. A scoffer makes comments that put down godly people and godly values.
- c. Frequency of meditation is day and night which would imply thinking over problems and choices in terms of what God's word says.
- d. Notice that God's blessing is conditioned on the proper attitude toward God's word, avoiding certain types of interaction with others and ongoing meditation on God's word.
- e. The fact that he will be like a tree planted by the waters is a picture of stability resulting from complete dependence on God's provision.
- f. The fruit or results of the life built on the meditation on God's word will be timely, i.e. in season and lasting, i.e. its leaf will not wither.
- g. He prospers in whatever he does: When our activity is built on the meditation on God's word, then we will experience spiritual increase or growth.

2. Joshua 1:8

- a. Frequency of meditation is to be day and night.
- b. Purpose of meditation: Careful and total obedience to God's word
- c. Results of meditation
 - (1) Prosperity or increase, i.e. spiritual growth
 - (2) Success, i.e. laying hold of that for which Christ laid hold of us (Philippians 3:12).
 - (3) God's word will not depart from your mouth: This simply means that what you say will be governed by and permeated with the views and thoughts expressed by God in His word.

3. Psalm 119:99 – Meditation on God's word can help us to have more insight than those who teach us.

4. Psalm 119:148 – When we have to be up late or cannot sleep, this is a good time to meditate on God's word.

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PART EIGHT: Promises and Observations concerning God's Word

A. John 8:31-32, 34 – Steps to salvation from sin's power

1. 8:31 – Believe or trust Christ for salvation from sin's penalty.
2. 8:31 – We must abide in God's word. James 1:25 explains that this means to know and obey it consistently.
3. 8:31 – Then we become true disciples (students or pupils) of Christ. Luke 6:40 tells us that this involves being like our teacher Jesus Christ.
4. 8:32 – Next we know the truth. This obviously involves knowing it to the degree that it becomes a part of us. This is far deeper than knowing the facts of scripture and understanding it. Hebrews 5:14 speaks of the mature who have their senses trained to discern good and evil because of practice, i.e. persevering obedience.
5. 8:32 – Then we find ourselves experiencing freedom from sin's power in our daily life. This is not sinless perfection (1 John 1:8, 10).

B. Four components of obedience to God's word

1. Psalm 119:60 – Prompt or quick obedience
2. Psalm 119:2 – Wholehearted obedience
3. Psalm 119:44 – Consistent obedience
4. Matthew 28:20 – Total obedience

C. Key promises and principles regarding God's word

1. Isaiah 55:11 – Promises regarding using God's word for witnessing to unbelievers and for instructing and exhorting believers.
 - a. When we use God's word, He promises it will not come back to Him empty. It may appear to have come back empty but God says it did not.
 - b. It accomplishes what God desires not necessarily what we desire. When it accomplishes what we desire, then we know that God's desire was also accomplished.
 - c. God's word will succeed in the matter for which He sent it. This is to say that it will achieve His intended purpose which is not necessarily our intended purpose.
2. John 15:11 – The things Jesus spoke, i.e. God's word were given for two purposes:
 - a. That Christ's joy may be in us.
 - b. That Christ's joy may possibly be full or complete in our lives

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3. John 16:33 - The things Jesus spoke, i.e. God's word, was also given to us so that we may have peace even in the midst of the sufferings we have in this world.
4. Psalm 119:100 – We can understand more than those who are older or more experienced than we are if we obey God's word.
5. Psalm 119:104 – As we understand God's word, we will hate every false way.
6. Micah 2:7 – God's word does good to those who walk uprightly.
7. Zechariah 1:6 – God's word will overtake God's people in disciplinary judgment if they persist in disobeying it. The solution is to repent and acknowledge that God has given us according to what we have done.
8. John 20:31; 2 Timothy 3:15
 - a. These verses are significant to the unbeliever because they clearly explain that one of the reasons that God gave us His word is that we might place our faith or trust in Christ.
 - b. These verses are significant to the believer is that it reminds us that we need to use God's word when we talk to the unbeliever about trusting Christ for salvation.
9. Psalm 119:24 – When we counsel people we should use God's word and we should show them how to use it to be their counselors. Also whenever we are having problems, the different passages of God's word will act like counselors to us.