

## WORD OF GOD SPEAK

### What we must believe about the Bible

Pastor Jon Beck



#### Colossians 1:9-14

<sup>9</sup> And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, <sup>10</sup> so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. <sup>11</sup> May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy, <sup>12</sup> giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. <sup>13</sup> He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, <sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

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## **What we must believe about the Bible**

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- We have to believe it is the absolute Word of God.
  
- We have to believe it is supernatural and will change us from the inside out.
  
- We have to believe it is crucial to living out the Christian life.
  - Read it
  - Believe it
  - Meditate on it
  - Obey it
  - Live it out

## The Importance of the Word of God – The Bible

Pastor Jon Beck

**2 Timothy 3:16** “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, **17** that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.”

Keys words in this passage:

- Teaching: What should I believe?
- Reproof: What should I not believe?
- Correction: How should I not behave?
- Training in righteousness: How should I behave?

We are to do more than just read the Bible. As believers we are to read and apply the Word to our life. It is when we begin to apply the Word of God into our life that we see true Biblical change begin to be manifested in our life.

Use the following acrostic as a guide to utilize each day as your read, study, and apply the Word.

### The Application Acrostic

- Is there an Attitude to adjust?
- Is there a Promise to claim?
- Is there a Priority to change?
- Is there a Lesson to learn?
- Is there an Issue to resolve?
- Is there a Command to obey?
- Is there an Activity to avoid or stop?
- Is there a Truth to believe?
- Is there an Idol to tear down?
- Is there an Offense to forgive?
- Is there a New direction to take?
- Is there a Sin to confess?

## SCRIPTURE: THE KEY TO GROWTH

By John MacArthur

Distributed by – Pastor Jon Beck

One of the sad realities in the contemporary church is that more and more often the careful, thoughtful, precise interpretation of God's Word is being depreciated in favor of subjective and mystical "spiritual experiences." As a result, many professed believers are not growing at all. It's as if a group of people ate nothing but junk food. Those who get caught up in empty and superficial experiences are pursuing a path that leads to error and that cannot produce real spiritual change and growth. In effect, they're missing the genuine path to maturity, which comes by means of God's Word. They are content to remain at a basic level of immaturity, accompanied by all sorts of problems and deceptions, rather than progressing in the levels of maturity.

The classic text on the Word's power, value, and importance in the believer's maturing process is 2 Timothy 3:15–17, which says, "From childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." This passage, more succinctly than any other in the New Testament, outlines the spiritually transforming power of the Word.

### ***Scripture's Role in Salvation***

Timothy was privileged to first hear the Word at an early age (2 Tim. 3:15), because "from childhood" his grandmother Lois and his mother Eunice had taught him "the sacred writings"—the Old Testament (see 2 Tim. 1:5). They built their faith and devotion on those writings and helped Timothy do the same. As they all became exposed to New Testament truth, the Old Testament's anticipation of salvation turned into a firm realization. They had repented under the grace and mercy of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; when they heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ, they knew God's promise of the Messiah—Redeemer had been fulfilled, and they trusted Him as Lord and Savior.

Paul exhorted Timothy, who was more easily intimidated and discouraged than the apostle, to hold on and stand firm in what he had learned. Both in his family and under Paul's leadership, Timothy became sound in his knowledge of Scripture. Paul did not need to admonish him about faulty doctrine or sin but urged him to persevere in the truth and the sound doctrine he already knew.

Paul, like our Lord before him (John 5:39), clarifies the fact that the words of Scripture themselves—or an intellectual knowledge thereof—do not grant salvation, but rather "the wisdom" they impart "leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Thus, the first work the Word does is bring believers to salvation (cf. Ps. 19:7; Mark 4:14–20; John 5:24, 39; Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23). The truth of Scripture, when mixed with faith in Christ and energized by the Holy Spirit, leads to spiritual life. The apostle Paul asked the Romans, “How shall they [unbelievers] hear without a preacher?” (Rom. 10:14) and later explained that “faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ” (v. 17).

### ***Scripture’s Role in Teaching***

Second Timothy 3:16 delineates how the Word works in maturing believers, beginning with its teaching role. Paul says it is “profitable for teaching.” “Profitable” (the Greek word can be translated “beneficial” or “productive”) focuses on the sufficiency of Scripture. This means Scripture is comprehensive, absolutely able to meet believers’ every spiritual need (cf. Josh. 1:8; Ps. 119).

“Teaching” simply means that the Word conveys doctrine, not dogmatism, by which believers come to understand God’s mind, which encompasses His truth, His principles, His law, His requirements, and His commands. All are foundational for every facet of Christian living.

The important point regarding Scripture’s essential role in teaching is that apart from it there are certain truths we could never know about God. Everyone can know something about God through His general revelation, by which He reveals His wisdom and the power, variety, and magnificence in His creation and that He is a personal God. But God’s saving love cannot be known apart from special revelation. Paul explains it this way:

*Just as it is written, “Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him.” For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.... But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no man. For who has known the mind of the Lord, that he should instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ.—1 Cor. 2:9–10, 14–16*

The truths that pertain to genuine spiritual life and Christian maturity are simply unavailable to and cannot be understood by unbelievers. Such matters can’t be grasped empirically or philosophically; they’re not available internally or externally by human wisdom. The only way anyone will ever know the things of God is by the Holy Spirit’s instruction through the revealed Word (John 14:16–17; 16:13; 1 John 2:20, 24, 27). That is what Jesus said sanctifies all believers: “Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth” (John 17:17).

### ***Scripture’s Role in Reproof***

Once God’s Word begins to teach believers the truth, it will eventually and inevitably reprove certain ideas and behaviors. The word “reproof” in 2 Timothy 3:16 means “to rebuke, refute, or convict” misbehavior or false doctrine. Scripture confronts two areas: it exposes sin and refutes error.

God's Word has the negative ministry of destroying and eliminating whatever is sinful and false, just as much as it has the positive ministry of edifying and enhancing whatever is righteous and true. This reproofing ministry is how Paul continually used the Word: "I testify to you this day, that I am innocent of the blood of all men.... Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears" (Acts 20:26, 31).

Mature believers who preach or teach the Word will use it to rebuke what is wrong as well as to emphasize what is right. Jesus referred to such a process when He told the disciples, "Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit" (John 15:2).

Spiritual growth can blossom as we allow the Word to confront our sin and error and lead us to walk in the Spirit. That is why Scripture's reproof is so profitable. And it is why we should be grateful for its discipline, just like the writer of Proverbs: "For the commandment is a lamp, and the teaching is light; and reproofs for discipline are the way of life" (6:23).

### ***Scripture's Role in Correction***

When I was in school, I appreciated those teachers who marked wrong answers on my papers and then wrote in the correct ones. But those who only marked wrong answers without indicating what was correct frustrated me. Scripture is not like those schoolteachers who would merely mark wrong answers. It actually corrects us. The Greek word for "correction" in 2 Timothy 3:16 literally means "to straighten up." God's Word doesn't just rebuke, convict, and refute. It goes further and pulls us back into line, mending, rebuilding, and fixing what is broken.

Not unlike the relationship parents have with their children, spiritual mothers and fathers reprove their children regarding sins and areas that need improvement. If they are good parents, they will then set their children on the correct path by teaching them appropriate behaviors and attitudes.

Scriptural correction therefore is the positive provision for believers who accept the Word's negative reproof. The process sometimes "for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness" (Heb. 12:11).

### ***Scripture's Role in Training in Righteousness***

If we're allowing God's Word to have an authentic role in our spiritual growth, it will not just leave us with the bare elements of truth. Instead, the Word will apply to our lives what it has taught us so that it might continually build us up in righteousness. In 2 Timothy 3:16 this process is denoted by the Greek word *paideia*, which is rendered "training" and originally meant training a child (*paidion*) but came to have a broader meaning of any sort of training, as it does in this verse.

But how does training in righteousness express itself practically? The process begins when we hear Scripture preached during the worship service or taught in a Sunday school class or Bible study. That's when we store doctrinal and biblical truth in our hearts and minds.

The next practical phase of our training in righteousness comes in our daily lives as we interact with people and ideas of the world and occasionally need to confront error. You might find yourself in a group discussion when someone interjects an obvious doctrinal error. At that point you can draw on Scripture to refute the error and allow the truth to shape the thinking of the other people in the group. In that way you will be obeying the apostle Paul's command to present yourselves "approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling

On a more personal level you can be trained in righteousness when you encounter a temptation. When you think you may be on the verge of losing a battle with temptation, you can draw on your knowledge of Scripture to help you respond in a righteous and godly way. Similarly, you may face a major trial in which your understanding of the Word will take over, guide you through the crisis, and thereby further train you in righteousness. Following the example of the Lord Jesus (see Matt. 4:3–10), we need to carefully and accurately use Scripture to deal with each and every temptation or trial from the world (cf. Ps. 119:9–11; Col. 3:16).

No matter how deep our understanding of Scripture is, God still trains us in ways we don't always comprehend. However, that should not keep us from affirming with the psalmist, "As the deer pants for the water brooks, so my soul pants for Thee, O God" (Ps. 42:1).

## DESIRING SCRIPTURE

If we are going to experience genuine growth, it must occur according to the pattern of 1 Peter 2:1–2: "Therefore, putting aside all malice [evil] and all guile [deceit] and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation."

Verse 1 simply means we must deal with all the sin in our lives by constantly confessing and forsaking it. Then we can get to the heart of the matter in verse 2 and have an unencumbered desire for the richness and purity of Scripture. As David wrote in Psalm 19:10, the Word is "more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb." David also wrote in Psalm 1:2 that the righteous person's "delight is in the law [Word] of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night." And he stated over and over in Psalm 119 that he delighted in the Word. Such a strong, joyful longing for Scripture is also our foundational key for growing more and more Christlike.

The analogy in 1 Peter 2:2 is very plain. The apostle Peter is simply saying that believers should long for the Word the way a baby longs for milk. In the Greek, the term translated "long for" means an intense, recurring craving, and that's how babies will express their desire for milk. They don't care if it's from a bottle or directly from Mom, what color their room is, or even what time of day it is—they want milk, and if they don't get it soon enough, they scream and cry. Believers should have that same kind of single-minded craving for the Word of God.



Peter doesn't say read the Bible, or study it, or meditate on it—he says *desire* it. It's what Paul calls "the love of the truth" (2 Thess. 2:10). In effect, this produces an attitude in the believer's heart that says, "I want the Word more than I want anything else."

We need that kind of strong desire if we are going to know Scripture well enough so it can train us in righteousness. Consider the passion for truth that the writer of Proverbs outlines:

*My son, if you will receive my sayings, and treasure my commandments within you, make your ear attentive to wisdom, incline your heart to understanding; for if you cry for discernment, lift your voice for understanding; if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; then you will discern the fear of the LORD, and discover the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding.*

—2:1–6

If we seek divine truth as earnestly as some people go after material riches, we will find it, because God has made it available (cf. Job 28).

Supposedly a young man once came to the ancient Greek philosopher and teacher Socrates and asked him, "O master Socrates, will you be my teacher?"

Socrates replied, "Follow me," and turned and walked into the sea. He kept walking and walking, and the young man kept following and following. He wanted very much to have the master Socrates as his mentor.

They eventually reached the depth at which the water was just touching their lips. Socrates then turned around and put both hands on the young man's head and pushed him under. The man, wanting to be a compliant student, stayed underwater for a while.

But soon the young man began to spit and sputter and flail around as he gasped for air. All the while Socrates, who apparently was quite strong, held him under the water. Soon the man began blowing large bubbles and thrashing more madly. Finally, Socrates took his hands off his would-be student, who popped to the surface of the water.

Gasping for air and spewing water out of his mouth, the young man frantically asked the philosopher, "Why did you do that? Why?"

Socrates answered him, "When you want to learn as much as you wanted to breathe, I will be your teacher."

When believers want to find and know the truth the way some people look for natural treasures, when believers crave the Word as passionately as an infant craves milk, they will grow and mature and become like Jesus Christ.

Joshua 1:8 provides a fitting summary to our study of spiritual growth: "This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way

prosperous, and then you will have [spiritual] success.” The key is to absorb God’s Word and live it out.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>MacArthur, John: *The Pillars of Christian Character : The Basic Essentials of a Living Faith*. Wheaton, Ill. : Crossway Books, 1998, S. 74

## How has God spoken?

Pastor Jon Beck

### God's Word in the form of His Words through decrees

A decree of God is a word of God that causes something to happen.

Gen. 1:3 – “And God said, let there be light.”

Gen. 1:24 – “And God said, let the earth bring forth living creatures.”

Psalms 33:6 – “By the word of God the heavens were made.....”

### God's Word in the form of the spoken word through men...The prophets

God actually spoke to man through the lips of prophets. To disbelieve or disobey any of the words of the prophets was to disbelieve and disobey God. Anyone who claimed to be speaking for Him, but was not was severely punished. (Ezek. 13:1-7, Deut. 10:20-22.)

Deut. 18:18-20 – “I will put my words in his mouth....”

Jer. 1:9 – “I have put my word in your mouth.”

### God's Word in the form of a person...Jesus Christ...His Son

Rev. 19:13 & John 1:1&14

Jesus communicated by his actions and words:

God's character

God's truth

God's will

## **God's Word in written form...The Bible**

There is a progressive nature of how God has spoken in redemptive history

1. Decrees
2. Prophets
3. Jesus
4. The Bible

### God's Written Word

Ex. 31:18 "Written with the finger of God"

John 14:26, 16:12-13 - In the new Testament Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit would bring to their remembrance the words which, He had spoken.

### **2 Tim. 3:14-17**

The Word Of God Is Profitable 3:16

- 1) It Is Beneficial For Doctrine (Teaching).
- 2) It Is Beneficial For Discernment (Rebuking).
- 3) It Is Beneficial For Direction (Correcting).
- 4) It Is Beneficial For Discipline (Training).

**Are there any errors in the Bible? Can I really understand the Bible?**

**Is the Bible enough for knowing what God wants us to think or do?**

**The truthfulness of God's Word – God's Word is absolutely true.**

John 17:17 "Sanctify them in the truth, Your word is truth"

We are to think of the Bible as the ultimate standard of truth. It is the reference point by which every other claim to truthfulness is to be measured. Ideas and concepts that conform to Scripture are true while those that do not conform to Scripture are not true.

**The clarity of God's Word – We can understand the Bible.**

Duet. 6:6-7 – "teach them, talk of them."

Psalm 19:7 – "Making wise the simple" Ps. 119:30 – "it imparts understanding to the simple"

The simple person is one who lacks sound judgment and prone to making mistakes. God's Word is so understandable, so clear, that even the *simple* are made wise by it. This is of great encouragement to all believers...we all can read, study, and understand the Word of God.

"The clarity of Scripture means that the Bible is written in such a way that its teachings are able to be understood by all who will read it seeking God's help and being willing to follow it."

*Wayne Grudem*

**The necessity of God's Word – The Bible is necessary for salvation and spiritual growth.**

Rom. 10:13-17

1. One must call upon the Lord to be saved
2. One can only call upon Him if they believe in Him
3. One cannot believe in Him unless they hear the Gospel
4. One cannot hear the Gospel unless someone tells them
5. Saving faith comes by an individual that has responded in faith to the proclamation of the Gospel.

**The sufficiency of God's Word – God has given us all we need to live an obedient life**

"The Bible contains everything we need God to tell us for salvation, for trusting Him perfectly, and for obeying Him perfectly." *Wayne Grudem*

- We need to search scripture for answers – What does God want us to know about doctrinal issues and life? Depending on the Bible for our answers not men and ministries.
- We are not to add to scripture – We are not to add anything to the Word of God nor are we to search for additional writings of equal value. (Example - The Book of Mormon)
- We are not to count outside guidance equal to scripture – An inner impression, peace, or feeling is never to be more authoritative than the Bible.
- We should remember that God has given us all He intended us to have in His Word – Duet. 29:29 – "the secret things belong to God." We need to be content with what God has revealed of Himself and His ways. We too often look to the others sources for the life questions that we have. Be satisfied with what the Bible teaches about all of life and begin to live it out.

## **The Authority of the Bible**

Basic Christian Doctrines

Pastor Curt Daniels of Faith Bible Church

4850 Old Jacksonville Road, Springfield, IL 62711

### **1. The Bible is Absolutely True.**

The Bible is true. It is also truth itself, for Jesus said, "Thy Word is truth" (John 17:17). Some other books may be true, in that their contents are correct; but only the Bible is truth itself. It is "the Word of truth" (Eph. 1:13). It is the only reliable guide to ultimate truth. Many editions of the Bible title it "Holy Bible", which is quite right, for 2 Tim. 3:15 refers to it as "the Holy Scriptures". Being holy, it is free of all impurity of error. It is "pure" (Psa. 12:6, 19:8). Indeed, "Thy word is very pure" (Psa. 119:140). "Every word of God is pure" (Pro. 30:5).

### **2. The Bible is Inerrant.**

The Bible is inerrant; it contains no errors. Truth and error are incompatible, like light and darkness. It is also infallible; it cannot fail to speak the truth. It does not and cannot err. Jesus said it "cannot be broken" (John 10:35), for even all of its individual words are true. Thus, Scripture has no contradictions between its parts, such as the four Gospels. They are complementary, not contradictory. The Bible also contains no myths. Scripture itself warns against myths (1 Tim. 1:4, 4:7, Tit. 1:14). Parables are not myths. It contains deep mysteries and paradoxes, but no errors. Nor does the Bible contain any forgeries or frauds (cf. 2 Thess. 2:2).

### **3. The Bible is Inerrant in All Areas.**

The Bible is completely true, in whole and in part, in all details as well as in the general content. It is true whenever it speaks of things we could otherwise study or observe, such as history and science. It is true in all areas, not just the spiritual, religious and theological. If we do not believe God in the areas we could verify, how could we believe Him in the areas that we cannot verify? (John 3:12). Man can err; God cannot. But it is not true that to be human one must necessarily err. Adam did not err before the Fall, nor did Christ ever err, and they were fully human. The divine side of Scripture guarantees purity from error in the human side, just as the divine nature of Christ protected the purity of His human side. Yes, the Bible uses round numbers, hyperbole, figures of speech, symbols, and phenomenological language. But these are usual for human language and are not errors.

### **4. The Bible is True Because God Cannot Lie.**

God is truth and cannot lie (Tit. 1:2). The Bible is God's Word. What Scripture says, God says. Each sentence of the Bible could be prefaced with the phrase, "Thus saith the Lord." The Bible receives its essence and nature from God Himself. This is not to deify the Bible, as we are falsely accused of teaching. Rather, it is but to recognize what God says about His Word. To believe the Bible is to believe God. To believe God is to agree that God is and speaks truth (John 3:33). To charge the Bible with even one error is to disbelieve God and call Him a liar (1 John 5:10). But let God be true and every man a liar (Rom. 3:4). It is dangerous and blasphemous to question the truth of God's Word. To judge it is to condemn oneself.

## **5. The Bible is Our Final Authority.**

God tells us to test all things (1 Thess. 5:21). By what? By the Word of God, as the noble Bereans did in Acts 17:11. Anything that contradicts the Bible is automatically wrong (Isa. 8:20). We err if we do not know the Bible or if we contradict it (Matt. 22:29). God tells us "not to go beyond that which is written" (1 Cor. 4:6). God curses those who preach false gospels contrary to the one true Gospel (Gal. 1:8). Sola Scriptura - Scripture alone is our final authority in all areas, such as faith and practice. It carries with it the very authority of God Almighty Himself.

## **6. The Bible is over Church Tradition.**

In Matt. 15, the Lord Jesus confronted the Jewish religious leaders over the question of authority. They appealed to their tradition; Jesus rebuked them by appealing to Scripture. Church tradition must be subject to the Bible, otherwise it nullifies Scripture. Roman Catholicism repeats the same error as the Pharisees with their tradition. They say that the Church gave us the Bible, therefore the Church is in authority. But this is wrong. The Church is built on God's Words, not vice-versa (Matt. 7:24). All churches are under the authority of God's Word. That includes all creeds, confessions of faith, catechisms and church constitutions.

## **7. The Bible is Over All People.**

Men can and do err, but God cannot err. The Bible is therefore over the authority (even the delegated authority) of people who exercise some degree of influence and authority. While Scripture tells us to obey parents, preachers and politicians, we must obey God and not them if they ever go against the Bible (Acts 5:29). The words and books of theologians must be weighed by Scripture, as well as all sermons and Sunday School lessons. Any preacher, priest, pope or rabbi who sets himself up as an equal authority to God is automatically a false prophet, for the true prophets themselves were under the authority of the Word of God. No exceptions.

## **8. The Bible is over Human Thought.**

2 Cor. 10:5 tells us to submit all to God and take captive every human thought to the obedience of Christ. Thus, all philosophy, psychology, logic, reason, science and opinion are subject to the truth and authority of the Bible. Because of common grace, Man may learn and teach some truths. But if they contradict Scripture - whether implicitly or explicitly, whether in doctrine or in method - then they thereby condemn themselves as false. This applies to our own thoughts as well. Even Adam before the Fall was subject to the spoken Word of God. He fell into sin when he rebelled against that authority. The mind of fallen Man is still under the authority of God's Word. We dare not trust our fallen minds, which are prone to err.

## **9. The Bible is over All Spirituality.**

The Bible is inspired by the Holy Spirit. He never contradicts Himself, for that would be contrary to His nature as the Spirit of Truth. Some groups need to remember this in their zeal for the work of the Spirit. All spiritual feelings, impressions and intuitions must be subject to the Word. We dare not invent exceptions because we feel that the Spirit is leading us - otherwise we are no different from the fanatic who murders his neighbor with an axe because he said that God told him to. Nor can any pretended "new revelations" of the Spirit contradict or equal Scripture.

Scripture is the authority over our whole being, including experience. Peter himself had heard the divine voice from Heaven, but stated that we have a "more sure word of prophecy" in the written Word of God (2 Pet. 1:19-21). We must "test the spirits", because there are many false prophets in the world (I John 4:1). The Holy Spirit never contradicts what He says in the Bible. For example, He never says "Jesus is accursed" (I Cor. 12:3). "If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord" (I Cor. 14:37). The Bible alone is our source of all spiritual authority.

#### **10. We Must Follow Scripture in All Things.**

We must trust in God and His Word, even when we do not understand it. We must not lean on our own understanding or inclinations (Pro. 3:5). We ought to read it, study it, believe it and obey it. Our attitude to the Bible is to be the same as our attitude to God, for it is His Word. This means we are to love it, even as we love God. Love God, love His Word.



## How to Have a Quiet Time

Pastor Jon Beck

When you commit your life to Jesus Christ, you begin a new relationship with Him. You become one of His children. You enter into a permanent relationship with God. This relationship with God enables you to have fellowship with Him. Although your relationship with God is constant, your fellowship with Him will vary with your availability to His leadership and Lordship. A Quiet Time is a way of maintaining fellowship with God and evaluating your lifestyle. A Quiet Time is a way of building spiritual strength, becoming more sensitive to God's leadership, and applying His Word to your actions.

### Two Essential Steps for Getting Started

#### 1. Make a Commitment to Observe a Daily Quiet Time

- Decide that your Quiet Time will be your first priority each day.
- Decide that each morning or evening you will avoid thoughts like, "After a while, I will have my quiet time. But first, I must ..."

#### 2. Develop a Plan for Observing Your Daily Quiet Time.

It is suggested that you schedule your Quiet Time in the morning. Beginning your day with God can and will make a real difference in your life (Mark 1:35). Decide where you will have your quiet time. You may choose a particular place in your room. When weather permits, you may want to go outdoors. Your quiet time place should be as free from distractions as possible. Choose a place where you can read your Bible and make notes.

My Quiet Time place will be: \_\_\_\_\_

One thing you must do if your Quiet Time is to succeed ... Keep on keeping on! If you miss lunch, do you quit eating altogether? Of course not! If you miss your Quiet Time one day, start again the next day.

If you have trouble getting up on time, analyze the problem. Are you going to bed early enough? Should you change some things about your daily schedule? If you don't feel like getting out of bed, put one foot on the floor and go from there. Ask yourself, "If I stay in bed and miss my Quiet Time, how will I feel about it this afternoon? Tonight? Tomorrow?"

Realize that some Quiet Times will be more meaningful than others. Don't expect every Quiet Time to be a spiritual high. If possible, have one or two prayer partners to encourage you. Be

honest with one another. Confess to one another when you miss a day. Support one another in prayer and discuss ways you can each be more consistent in having a Quiet Time.

Jesus spent time with His Heavenly Father, seeking fellowship, strength, and guidance. If God's Son needed to spend time with Him, how much more do you need to spend time with Him? Having a Quiet Time, you will become more like Christ as you follow His example and as you receive His power through prayer and the Word.

### **Part 1: Getting in His Word – Bible Study**

Begin your Quiet Time by reading a passage of Scripture. Select and read a daily passage prayerfully, asking God to speak to you as you read it.

As you read ask the Lord to call to your attention any:

- examples to follow
- attitudes to change
- commands to obey
- errors to confess
- sins to quit
- promises to claim
- truths to embrace

Remember to **Read** the Word, **Mediate** on the Word, and then **Apply** the Word into your life. Use a notebook to make a record of the insights you gain as God speaks to you through His Word.

### **Part 2: Talking to God - Prayer**

As you talk to God each day, be sure your conversation covers these five areas:

#### **1. Praise**

Praise is closely related to thanksgiving, but there is a difference. Praise is adoring God for who He is. Thanksgiving is thanking God for what He has done. Praise is showing love to God; thanksgiving is expressing gratitude. God is to be praised for His character. He is to be thanked for His actions.

Begin your prayer by praising God. For example, "I love You, God. I praise You for being who You are."

## **2. Confession**

- Ask the Lord to make you aware of any sins that are hurting your fellowship with Him.
- Confess each sin individually to the Lord.
- Agree with God that the sin is wrong.
- Express your desire to avoid these sins in the future.
- Claim by faith His forgiveness.
- Right the wrong to whatever extent you can.
- Accept by faith the fact that you are totally cleansed (1 John 1:9)

## **3. Thanksgiving**

Express your thankfulness for specific things. Cultivate a general attitude of thankfulness whatever the circumstance (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

## **4. Intercession – Praying for Others**

Pray for the needs of other people. In your mind draw together God and the person in need. God's grace will meet the needs of that person.

## **5. Petition – Praying for Yourself**

- Pray for spiritual growth.
- Pray for your material needs.
- Share with God the desires of your heart and trust Him to respond in the best possible way.

Be willing to act on your prayers. For example, if you pray that a friend will recover from grief over a relative who has died, be willing to share words of encouragement and deeds of love with that friend.

*Majority of the material is from Lifeway Christian Resources. Excerpted from "Disciple Helps." With additional content and material provided by Pastor Jon Beck of First Baptist Church Avon Park.*