

The Bible: The Word of God

Why is the Word of God so important to the Men? In Gen 1:1, it was the word of God that created everything He made and God made mankind in His Image.(v.27) We learn from creation that there is a God and He has great power. But God has revealed Himself even more extensively.(ROM1:18-20) God spoke His Word through prophets. But his final revelation of Himself is in His Son.(HEB1:1-2) Jesus reveals what God is like. God has preserved record for us in the Bible. The Bible is the source for what we believe about God, humanity, salvation, heaven! Word of God is a manifestation of the mind and will of God. Bible is a book that can be found almost anywhere on earth.

The word "Bible" means "the books" as a title for all of the written Word of God. The Bible is one volume which consists of 66 separate books. The word "Scripture" is used to refer God's Word. This word comes from a Latin word which means "sacred writing" of the one true and living God. God inspired the words in the Bible and used approximately 40 different men to write down His words. They wrote in 3 languages; Hebrew; Aramaic; Greek. It was written from various countries includes Israel. These men wrote over a period of 1500 years. It has an amazing continuity and unity from Genesis to Revelation. They were acting under the direction of God, all guided by a single author, who was God. God said: *Take a scroll of a book and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel, against Judah, and against all the nations.*(JER36:2;REV1:19) All of the writers wrote under God's inspiration the words of His message for us. *"knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any individual's interpretation, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*(2PE1:20-21) It is through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, God spoke to holy men to write His message. Bible itself records its purpose:(2TI3:16-17) All Scripture was breathed out by God, divinely inspired to be used to teach doctrine, reprove, correct from evil, training, discipline in righteousness. They will help you live right and equip you to work for God.

The Bible is divided into two major sections called the Old Testament and New Testament. The word "testament" means covenant. A covenant is an agreement. The new covenant made by God through His Son, Jesus Christ. Under God's covenant in the OT, blood sacrifices of animals were made by man to obtain forgiveness for sin. This was a symbol of blood sacrifice Jesus Christ would provide under the new covenant. Through the birth, life, death, resurrection of Jesus, a final sacrifice for sin was made:(HEB9:11-15) Jesus came in fulfilment of OT.(MAT5:17-20)

Perhaps at some time you have said, "Nobody's perfect." You said it because you made a mistake other were aware of. You felt you needed to justify yourself but had no other explanation to offer. The Bible makes similar statements about every human being: *The Lord has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. All have turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one.*(PSA14:3) Anything you do, or fail to do, that displeases God is called "sin." Whenever you sin, you drive a block between yourself and God. *But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear.*(ISA59:1-2) Unless something is done to erase your sins, you will remain separated from God forever. The Bible is very much concerned with sin--not just with your sin but with everyone's sin. The Bible reveals God's great plan for bringing about the forgiveness of our sins. When we follow the plan, God forgives our sins and will reward us with everlasting life: the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.(ROM6:23) The Bible is about changing from death to life, from destruction to salvation.

From the Bible we learn how the human race began and how sin first entered the world and continued to be practiced. We learn about God's response to those who were wicked and to those who were righteous. God's response involved miracles. As we read, we begin to realize that we like men/women of the Bible, are guilty of displeasing God. We begin to realize that God loves us, disobedient though we are, that He has devised a way for us to be forgiven and saved. Bible concerned about restoring sinful man to right relationship with God.

Bible records different ways in which God dealt with people. Bible includes different types of writing. It contains history, poetry, prophecy, letters, adventure, parables, miracles and love stories. *"Let my cry come before You, O Lord; Give me understanding according to Your word.* (PSA119:169) Bible gives us God's perspective on how we should live. If offers His pardon for our sins, reveals His purpose for our lives, shows us how to live peacefully in a world of turmoil and laws us to appropriate. Bible tells of God's great compassion for us and of His desire to have fellowship with us. The central feature of God's plan is Jesus Christ. There are four gospels, about the story when Jesus came from heaven down to earth and walked among us. He experienced temptations in every way that we are in world as lust of eyes (materialism), lust of body (pleasure-seeking), pride of life (egoism). But He overcome sin!(HEB4:15) Then in John 3:16 summarizes depth of God's love for us that God sacrificed His son for salvation of humanity. He died for us as a perfect sacrifice for sin. *God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, so that whosoever would believe in Him, might not perish, but have everlasting life*

The Bible reveals God's attributes. It tells us that He is holy, sovereign, righteous; that He is loving, merciful, and kind; that He is gracious, patient, faithful. God is described as being possesses: omniscience (all-knowing), omnipotence (all-powerful), Omnipresence (presence of God everywhere at the same time). omnibenevolence (supremely good). In other words, God knows everything, has the power to do anything, and is perfectly good. We have no trouble trusting Him if we really understand who He is and how holy, loving, His purposes are for us. God's Word teaches us how to live holy lives and to be fruitful witnesses for our Lord. The more we read and meditate on His precious Word-and let His Holy Spirit control our lives-the more fruitful we become.

How can we meditate on God's Word so that it produces in us fruitful and holy lives before God? Scriptures teach meditation that actively engages the mind for the purpose of understanding God's Word and putting it into practice. *"Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night."*(PSA:1-2) A blessed, fruitful, righteous person delights in the Word of the Lord and meditates on his law day and night. The meditation God talks about is pondering over His word(his law) and filling your mind with it. Are you spending time meditating on God's Word daily? Meditation involved exercising and engaging the mind, whereby we bring the truths of God to remembrance, and consider upon them, and apply them to ourselves. we can meditate on God's Word by bringing to memory His truths. Remembering requires active, intellectual recall of what we know about God from His Word: *"On my bed I remember you; I meditate on You in the night watches."*(PSA63:6) Meditation involves deep reflection and study of God's Word. *"I will study your commandments and reflect on your ways"*(PSA119:15) When we read the Bible, are we reading it slowly and intentionally? Are we thinking about the significance of the words and how they relate to our lives and the lives of others? If so, we are meditating on God's Word. God called Joshua to be strong and continual meditation: *"Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful"*(JOS1:8) Meditate on the word of God day and night will help you to success in life. To be successful in the Bible has to do with having lived the good life, that you've been a good person to those around you. Love is the essential value of the Bible. Meditation requires time and effort. It can't be rushed. It involves withdrawing from the distractions of this life so that we can fix our thoughts on God and His Word. *"I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your statutes"*(PSA119:99) Finally, biblical meditation seeks to apply God's Word to our lives. *"May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer."*(PSA19:14) Meditating on God's Word becomes pleasing in God's sight because it results in the transformation of our lives. As we read and speak God's truth and actively ponder it, the Holy Spirit enables us to put that truth into practice. Meditation is a way of internalizing God's Word—taking it deep into our hearts—so that the Holy Spirit can work through it to guide, teach, purify, and transform us from within. We can listen to the Bible, read it, and memorize Scripture to get it into our minds, but then we must ponder it continually in our hearts so that we gain a deeper understanding of it and how it applies to our lives.

Meditation means the act of focusing one's thoughts: think on, ponders and studies. It is important to meditate on God's word, to really let it sink in our hearts "watering" it every day like the farmers water their seeds and wait for the plant to grow. However the "soils" of the hearts can differ. A man's reception of God's Word is determined by the condition of his heart. To this sowing there will be varied responses, depending on the attitude of hearers. God says that Satan will always try to steal the seed of the Word of God from your heart whenever he has the chance to.(MAT13:18-23) Believing the word of God is a powerful weapon, it is the sword of the Spirit.(EPH6:17) So as to understand God's plan in your life.(JER29:11) Pray: Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Your Law.(PSA119:18) Jesus promised: *If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you shall ask whatever you will and it shall be done unto you.*(JOH15:7) To remain in Jesus means we must be connected to Him as a branch is connected to its vine. We achieve this connection by using His word to guide our thoughts and actions.

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.(HEB4:12) Reading the Bible is knowing God intimately and entering into conversation with Him. We find truths in the word that take us beyond the discipline to help us build a relationship with God through His Word. Word of God reveals what's inside of us so that He can heal, redeem, and restore. God's Word is living and active; it is revealing and life-giving. As we read God's Word, He will speak to our hearts. The Word is God's chosen tool to facilitate change in His children. God's will is revealed in God's Word. God equips believers for every good work through His Word. Therefore we should use the Bible as our source of truth, learn to receive God's word trustfully, continue to meditate upon it and study as long as you live. You can read a great deal about God's plans, desires and His will in the Holy Bible. And they work their way into your spirit, where they give life and hope and where they build faith and obedience. It has a living power in it; it will glorify itself. It will bring joy in your heart, light to your eyes and physical health too. Take it, and hold it fast; it will accomplish its work with divine power. Meditating on God's Word and obeying its teachings will bring success in life. When God does this, it's so that, through the process of transformation, we might come to know abundant life in Him. *"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good report, if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—meditate on these things.*(PHI4:8-9) The Word of God is like this truth-mirror that not only reveals real person of the heart but points us to the truth of the God-image we are to emulate. The more you read the Bible, more you absorb it, more the Bible will change you into a better person. So, as you read the Bible, the words on the page will jump out at you and suggest things you can improve. Draw near to Him through His Word, and you will discover the "way, and the truth, and the life"

How do you meditate on the word of God?

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Jesus said, *“Man shall not live on bread alone but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.”* (MAT4:4) Jesus told us just as we live on physical bread, we are to live on God’s words, our spiritual bread. Spiritual eating is to take in something of the divine life and inwardly satisfies us. We’re strengthened to live a spiritual life. As we take in spiritual food, we grow in the life of God. *“the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.”* (JOH6:63) The Word of God is spirit and life; because His words are life, they can give life to us. Reading the Bible is like eating spiritual food, heavenly manna, just as we receive our daily food. It is like honey, like bread. Take time to read a verse or passage and you think about what you're read, you chew over it. To meditate on God’s Word is to be like a cow chewing it’s cud. The cow savors the grass in its mouth before filling its stomach. Then it sits down in the pasture, re-working it in its mouth before swallowing it. It sounds gross, but the process transforms grass into rich, creamy milk! In the same way the Word of God is meant to become pure, sweet milk for us. *“as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,”* (1PE2:2) When we meditate on God’s Word we take it from our mind down into our heart for prayer. Just like a cow eats grass and chews it, we should slowly, repeatedly, chew on God’s Word throughout the day, recognizing that being with God gives us life. Scripture needs to be gone over-and-over so we can fully savor it and be spiritually fed by it.

Open the Bible and read the verse or verses you plan to meditate over. Spend as much time as you need to gain a basic understanding of the words, bookmark the verse for later; you'll need to refer to it continually throughout your meditation. After you read through the passage, try reading through it again. Begin to memorize/understand all of it. And it will bring fruit. Listen; quiet your heart to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you through His Word. Move from meditation to application-connect your thoughts into action. Consider how the truth and power of the Word of God should affect your faith life. *“May my meditation be pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the Lord”* (PSA104:34) Rom 10:17 says that *“Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God”*. God is command us to teach ourselves and our children His Word, and write them upon doorposts of house and on gates.(DEU6:6-9)

As you read the Bible you may want to ask yourself these questions. Is there any Sin to (confess)? Promise to (believe)? Attitude to (change)? Command to (obey)? Example to (follow)? Prayer to (pray)? Error to (avoid)? Truth to (receive)? Something to (thank God for)? Anything apply to (my life today)? When we submit ourselves to prayer and studying God’s Word, the Holy Spirit will teach us many things as we walk in Christ. Ask that the Holy Spirit would reveal more of what is yours 'in Christ' and dwell on these things.(1CO2:12) All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, that the man of God may be perfect.(MAT4:4) Teaching involves instruction, showing us truth, points in the right direction.(DEU28:13) Reproof is showing us the sin in our lives, where we are wrong. When we look into the mirror of God's Word, we see ourselves more clearly.(JAM1:23-25) Correction shows us how to get right, righteousness with which we replace the sin.(EPH4:22-24) Training in righteousness develops discipline to live right. Application takes place as you are confronted with the truth and you respond to that truth in obedience. Scripture declares of God’s thoughts,(ISA55:8-9) We must develop, maintain the mind of Christ or God’s thoughts. This is the process of training ourselves to think correctly. God wants to occupy our mind with His Word when we open ourselves up to prayer, study, meditation. Then God’s Word becomes delightful and we want to learn more about God and His grace, so we can begin to experience God’s ways. It is our growth and God’s work in us for His glory. When you learn how to meditate on God’s Word, you grow in your knowledge of Scripture, and in your relationship with Jesus, you are to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”.

As you study God's Word, ask God to reveal Himself to you in a fresh, new way, and let Him speak to your heart of His will for your daily Christian living: Meditating on the Word of God—requires you to concentrate and think deeply on God's truth. Prayerful reflection where you ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your understanding as Jesus did with the disciples on the Emmaus Road (LUK24:32) Meditation includes picturing, speaking, feeling and study. Meditation is the Holy Spirit using all faculties in man’s heart and mind. What must be our response to God's Word? Faith! We must believe it, this is the only way to please God. That’s why it’s imperative that we read it, study it, meditate on it, and memorize it. Our minds must be saturated with the Scripture. Here are four practical tips for meditating on God’s Word: 1. Find out a specific time and place each day when you are least distracted to get alone become still in God’s presence and meditate on God’s Word. 2. Start with prayer and/or praying in tongues and ask God to help you with your meditation. You can ask the Lord to draw you closer to Him, and picturing Jesus with you (I foresaw the Lord always before my face.Acts 2:25) Tune to His flowing thoughts, pictures and emotions 3. Choose a small section of Scripture. Think about what the passage means. Study it in depth so that you can understand it in context. Take notes. Ask questions. speaking it to yourself softly over and over again, allow yourself to see it with the eyes of your heart. Memorize the passage and mutter throughout the day. Ask God what He wants to say to you through this Scripture. Reason together with God (ISA1:18), meaning the Spirit guides reasoning process “Lord, what do You want to show me about the context of verse. Tune to flowing thoughts and flowing pictures (God’s voice and vision) 4. Consider how you can apply the passage to your life in practical ways, ask God to help you follow through in obedience to what He shows you. Accept the revelation, repenting of any sin that is opposite of it and thriving at any obstacle that stands in the way of implementing it, speak it forth and act on it. Apply the truth in your life, and transform you as you meditate on God’s Word. Our hearts burn within as He walks with us opening Scriptures to us.(LUK 24:32)

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.(COL3:16) Bible is source of divine wisdom, encouragement, wisdom about what is good for us and what we shouldn't do. It is also filled with infinite compassion and patience when we fall short. In verses 12-15, describes positive behaviours which Christians are supposed to practice. The "word of Christ" refers to Christ's teachings, lists three specific applications of Christ's word dwelling in the life of a believer. The first two aspects are teaching and admonition. At the same time, Christ's word can also show us where we are wrong. The word of Christ gives us guidance in how to correct mistakes in what we believe and what we do. Third, encourages singing of various types of spiritual songs. This singing was to be done with an attitude of thanksgiving. Let meditation on Scripture will cause the word of God to "dwell in you" and become a source of wisdom in your mind, will, and emotions. When you meditate on God's Word, you think about what each verse, promise, passage, story means. This gives you understanding of what God is saying and how you can apply His word in every situation of your life. We should study the Bible because there is so much false teaching. Bible gives us the measuring stick by which we can distinguish truth from error. All doctrines are to be examined in light of the Bible, and only what conforms to biblical truth should be accepted. Scripture keeps us from being "tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching"(EPH4:14) As the noble Bereans taught us, *they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.*(ACT17:11) Wisdom in a believer is not being tricked by false teaching. They avoid being carried about by every wind of doctrine. In Eph. 6:17 is the sword of the spirit, represents the Word of God. sword is one of spiritual armor served as an offensive weapon against enemies. And you have an enemy who will do anything to keep you from consistency in your time with God's Word. But you have Holy Spirit who inspired the Word and who will make you able to understand it. Word of God is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.(PSA119:89)

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work"(2TI3:16-17) We are to study the Scripture for He has given us His inspired, inerrant, authoritative Word. To the extent that we neglect reading through the Bible we become powerless against satanic deceptions and errors. God gives the reason for Israel's defeat by the Assyrians in Hosea 4:6. *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge:* When God's people are destroyed because His people lack spiritual knowledge. They lack the knowledge of God.(v.1) They know God some – perhaps felt they knew God well enough already. The second kind of knowledge they lack is knowledge of God's Word. They perhaps felt they knew God's Word well enough already. When we know God for who He really is, it affects our conduct. Where there is no knowledge of God, no conviction of His attributes, such as stealing, adulteries, and so forth, will prevail. A proper approach to Bible involves, we are able to understand and is harmonized and is the only accurate source of knowledge about God and faith in Him. While mankind continues to seek love and satisfaction, God our good, gracious will bring us lasting joy. The evidence of prophecies have been fulfilled by Daniel that the first sixty-nine weeks (483 years) when the Messiah was killed. This leaves one week(7yrs) to be fulfilled.(DAN 9:25-26) Therefore we can trust the Bible as our authority for faith, conduct, practice.

The statement "the Bible is our only rule for faith and practice" appears in many doctrinal statements. This is a way for Christians to declare their commitment to the written Word of God. Because God is sovereign, His Word is the absolute authority in our lives, and by it God equips us for His service. Whatever God teaches or commands is of sovereign authority. the Bible, God's Holy Word, to be our ultimate guide for what we believe ("faith") and what we do ("practice") It mean that the Bible supersede man's authority, church tradition, and our own opinions. We will allow nothing that opposes God's Word to dictate our actions or control our thinking. When the Bible clearly reveals a truth, we believe it with all our hearts. When the Bible clearly commands us to do something, we make sure we are doing it. For example, the Bible says that Jesus is coming back again.(JOH14:3;REV19:11-16) Since the Bible is our "only rule for faith," we have no choice but to believe that Jesus is returning someday soon for His church. Bible says that we are to flee from sexual immorality.(1CO6:18) we are bound to abstain from immorality.

The Bible equips us to serve God (2TI3:17;EPH6:17) It helps us know how to be saved from our sin.(2TI3:15) God's Word helps us see sin in our lives and helps us get rid of it.(PSA119:9, 11) It gives us guidance in life.(PSA32:8,119:99). *Inerrancy:* Bible is free from error in all it affirms. *Infallibility:* Bible is unfailing in its purpose. *Sufficiency:* Bible contains all needed information for Christian living. *Authority:* Bible carries the right to advise beliefs and actions. We believe that the Bible to be completely error-free, absolutely sufficient, equally inspired, authoritative word and that it is written Word of God to be our ultimate guide and final authority for faith, conduct, doctrine and life.

Is there an area in your life where you have been taught and corrected by the Scriptures? Is the Scripture equipping and encouraging you to serve the Lord? God's Word should govern our standards of thought and conduct, no matter what the world says. In every circumstance of life, we have the choice to respond according to God's Word or our own feelings and the advice of others. Which do you choose to believe when the culture contradicts the Scripture, e.g., abortion, homosexuality? What choice will you make when tempted to satisfy your sexual longings before marriage or outside of your marriage? How will God's Word help you grow to maturity in Christ? We are the most blessed of all people. We have a guide for life that has proved trustworthy for years. "*the law of the LORD is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple*"(PSA19:7)

Bible remains the only source of divine revelation and power that can sustain you as a Christian in your walk with God. It gives comfort, encouragement and Hope. The Lord comforts us through His words. In times of affliction and disaster, His words and give us hope. Note significant promises in the Scripture. Bible is the source of:

Truth: "Sanctify them by Your truth; Your word is truth" (John 17:17).

Blessing: "But He said, 'More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it'" (Luke 11:28).

Victory: "...the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17).

Growth: "As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby" (1 Pet. 2:2).

Power: For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone.(ROM1:16)

Guidance: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path" (Ps. 119:105)

Sweet: How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!(Ps 119:103)

It keeps us from temptation. Understand will of God. It gives revelation, direction, comfort, encouragement, hope.

God promises to preserve His word: *O Lord, You shall preserve them from this generation forever.* (PSA12:6) Bible offers a wonderful promise that God will preserve his words forever.(MAT5:17-18) Jesus declared that He had not come to abolish the law and the Prophets, but to fulfill them.(HEB8:6-8) Jesus accomplished what the law demanded and fulfilled what the prophets predicted by the power of God. He will finally and fully complete in bringing the kingdom of heaven to earth in the end times.(MAT26:64) Warning: God will curse those who change His word: *For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book;*(REV22:18) This verse gives a warning not to add to words of Revelation; the next verse condemns those who would attempt to edit it. Adding/editing brings God's judgment.

The Word of God will accomplish what it promises. If God told you something will happen, and you wait, it will happen. In Isaiah 55:11 it says, "*So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.*" God compares His Word to the rain and snow because, like the precipitation, God's Word always fulfils His good purposes. When God says that His Word will not return to Him void, we can know that He has an intention for His Word. Every word He gave humanity is purposeful and was given for a reason. Like the rain and snow, God's words bring forth life and produce good fruit in our lives. Through His Word, we know that God loves us and that Jesus died to free us from sin and death; we also learn how to live in light of those truths. God sent His word to accomplish His perfect will in our lives. If God makes a promise to you, He will fulfill it in His own time. There are promises given to us in the Bible reassure us and bring comfort to our lives in our times of trial. God's Word is filled with promises from our Creator to provide and deliver. We know God is sovereign. When God said, "Let there be light," the immediate result was that "there was light"(GEN1:3). When Jesus said, "Peace! Be still!" the wind ceased and the sea calmed.(MAR4:39). God's Word will always prosper; God will succeed, and those who receive His Word will be overcomers as well.(1JO5:4) Bible is the ultimate source for truth and God is faithful to fulfill all His promises. As you read about the promises of God, claim them over your life! Freedom from addictions, deliverance from sin and evil, financial provision, hope for lost and hurting family and friends, overcoming depression, recovering a marriage, good health, healing, being free from fear and anxiety, strength, and many more are the blessings and gifts that God promises to provide for those who believe in Him. In Rev 1:3 says there is blessing for those who read God's word and who keep themselves. "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.(JOH1:14) There are two Greek words translated "word": rhema and logos. Rhema usually means "a spoken word." For example, in Luk 1:38, when the angel told Mary that she would be the mother of God's Son, Mary replied, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word [rhema]." Logos, has a broader meaning used in reference to God's message to mankind. For example, Luke 4:32, when Jesus taught the people, they were amazed at his teaching, because his words [logos] had authority. "The Word" (Logos) in John I is referring to Jesus—everything that God wants to communicate to man. The first chapter gives us a glimpse the Father/Son relationship before Jesus came to earth in human form. He pre-existed with the Father (v.1), He was involved in the creation of everything (v.3), and He is the light of all mankind (v.4). The Word (Jesus) is the full embodiment of all that is God. *For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;*(COL1:19; 2:9) But God the Father is invisible to the human eye. So the *Word* became flesh, took on human form, and came to dwell among us. Jesus told a parable vineyard in Luke 20:9–16 to explain why the Word had to become flesh. "*But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory*"(2CO3:18) The glory of the Old Covenant is fading just as it did on Moses' face after he had been with God. In the new covenant far, greater glory revealed of God's grace through faith in Christ. Those who come to God through faith in Christ are forgiven for their sins and able to look on God's glory. This act of seeing, understanding the nature of Christ begins the process through which God transforms His children into the image of Christ. This change happens "from glory to glory" is a promise begin to become like Christ.. Purpose of God's word by which we come "to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

How to Abide in God's Word

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."(JOH8:31-32) Jesus tells us that abiding in His Word is evidence of true discipleship. By lived His word or abiding in, His word. Abiding in the Word of God is about abiding in God's presence. The presence of God is the only way we're going to stay encouraged in this world. To be still and know God is more than a quantity of reading, it's about quality time in God's Word! Phrase "my word" refers to Jesus's teaching which is sum-up in Himself, all that He is for us as the crucified and risen Son of God.

But what does "abide" mean? The word "abide" (Greek-Menó) means to remain, to stay. to dwell in. We abide by staying. When you read and meditate on scriptures, memorize His Word, fill your ears and heart with praise, you indeed abide throughout your day. "I am the bread of life"(JOH6:35) "I am the light of the world"(JOH8:12) "I am the good shepherd"(JOH10:11) When you take all His words together, they have one great focus—Jesus himself. They all point to Him. *"All these words are written — so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,"*(JOH20:31) If you want to know Jesus, you know him through his word. If you want to see the face of Jesus most clearly, you must look at him through his word.(2CO4:6) *"The Lord revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the Lord."*(ISA3:21) And the same is true for Jesus — He reveals himself to us today "by the word of the Lord." Our ultimate goal in abiding in God's Word is to grow in our love for and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and learn how to walk in His ways. In His Word we seek His face and His will. Then you will be encouraged to strengthen your commitment to abiding in His Word and keeping His Word abiding in you! His word as the life-giving, soul-sustaining bread of heaven, so that when you are "in" the word, you are in the nourishment of the word. You are being fed and strengthened by the word. You are being refreshed by the word.

"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."(JOH6:68) Peter's witness to Jesus' divinity; and response comes after most of Jesus' followers turn and walk away. When confronted with spiritual needs, most people will turn it down, they totally dismissed His spiritual truth. What society wants is spectacle, material things, and a political saviour. The more Jesus insists on being means to eternal life. The twelve disciples, on other hand, seem willing to follow Jesus, though they are struggling to accept His recent claims about bread, flesh, and blood.

"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."(JOH15:7)

During the Last Supper, Jesus used imagery to explain that Jesus is the one and only true vine that produces spiritual fruit. God is the the gardener, who prunes branches on the vine to help them produce fruit and flourish in abundance. The disciples that walked with Jesus were the productive branches. Jesus reassured those who stay faithful to His word and obey it can expect God to answer their prayers. Who are the unproductive branches? They are believers who fail to abide in His word and are then disciplined by God. The presence or absence of fruit in the lives of those who claim to be God's people is an important matter in God's word. *"Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire,"*(MAT3:10) To remain in Jesus means we must be connected to Him as a branch is connected to its vine. We are connected to Jesus when we believe His word, and we obey it. To keep His words in us means that His words are our constant guide for our thoughts and actions. When His word dwells within our spirit, soul, body, it will shape our thoughts, words, so that we bear fruit. If we remain in Jesus and His words remain in us, our prayers will align themselves with God's will and God's desires.

Why should we abide in God's Word? In 2 Timothy 3:1-9, Paul warns about the last days. The church would be full of those who love themselves and love pleasure more than God. They would be unforgiving, abusive, lacking natural love—having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof.(v.1-5) In addition, it would be full of false teachers who take advantage of the flock.(v.6-9) These realities will cause many to become disillusioned with the church and, ultimately, turn away from God. However, Timothy was called to continue to faithful during these dark times.(v.10,14) He also was to "abide" continue in what he had learned in Scripture. Bible described how some teachers were denying the resurrection *"And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is futile and your faith is empty."*(1CO15:14), These types of attacks were not new to early believers: in fact, Satan began these attacks in the Garden of Eden. He said to Eve, "Did God really say...?" Satan knew if he could get her to doubt God's Word, he could get her to disobey it. Through such lies, Satan hinders or overthrows the faith of many.

Jesus said, *"If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love,"*(JOH15:10) In other words, to abide is to be consistently obedient to the Word of God. If you want to experience peace and protection when trouble comes, then you must make the act of abiding in God's Word a lifestyle. Trust God and His Word for your protection. He will cover you with His feathers and under his wings you will find refuge. This is important because angelic security and peace in the midst of trouble depend on it. Psalm 91:1, explains safety of abiding in the presence of God. *"He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty."*

Can you stay in God's Word all day, every day? Can you honestly say you "abide in" His teaching? In Proverbs 1:24-26, warns for those who don't listen to and obey the Word of God in good times may find themselves stranded when hard times come. Prayer: Father, I now realize it is not enough to simply believe your word, but that I must abide in it, where Your Word is truly our 'life' and 'daily bread.' Help me to be a doer of Your will in all areas of my life, every day. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen! Those who demonstrate a Christ-like behavior are 'born of' God. *Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one.*(1JOH2:14)

God's Word: Milk and Meat

What is the milk and meat of the Bible? In two separate verses, contrasts "milk" and "meat" mentioned in order to make a spiritual analogy. *For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.* (HEB5:11-12) The word "milk" means the basic Christian teachings. The word "meat" or solid food, means more advanced Christian teachings. There are two levels of spiritual depth in God's Word. We call these the "milk" level and the "meat" levels. The "milk" of God's Word refers to simple truths, the basic, elemental teachings of Christianity first learned by new believers such as the plan of salvation. The "meat" of God's Word refers to deeper spiritual truths, complete and deeper spiritual doctrines of the Gospel which are not so easy to understand. Some people have received Jesus as their Savior and been filled with the Holy Spirit, but they do not seem to grow in their understanding of God's Word. They are still feeding on the milk of the Word. In the natural world there is nothing wrong with milk for a new-born baby. The same is true in the spiritual world. When you are first born again you should desire the milk of God's Word: "as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby." (1PE2:2) But there comes a time in the natural world that a baby must start to eat solid foods if he is to mature physically. There is a time when you must move on from the milk of God's Word to the meat: "For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (HEB5:13-14)

Why is it that some believers go deep into God's Word while others never get beyond a surface understanding of the Bible? Why are some people always hungering for "deeper things" in God's Word instead of experiencing them? Paul wrote "And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. fed you with milk and not with meat; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal?" (1CO3:1-3) Paul addressed several problems to the Corinthians, that he knew was carnal, and which was evidence of their spiritual immaturity. Some in Corinth had not only aligned themselves to certain teachers (Paul, Apollos, Peter), they were causing disputes and divisions in the church. The apostle felt that trying to teach the deeper truths of God would be a waste of time. They could not move from milk to meat because they were carnal Christians. This means they were spiritually immature. They had envy, strife, division, and other sins in their lives. When a Christian is carnal, he will not be able to understand the deeper truths of God's Word. He will remain on milk level until he repents and grows up enough spiritually that he can digest meat. It is God's desire that you move from the milk to the meat of His Word. This is how you increase your knowledge of God's Word, that you move from the milk to the meat for it is upon spiritually mature believers that God pours out His Spirit.

Substantial growth, however, is expected of Christians. (2PE3:18) Spiritual growth should be "normal" as with human babies. It takes time to become a solid food elder. (1TI 3:6) And it takes time to become a solid food teacher of the gospel. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," (1CO15:58) Spiritually mature consciously and carefully chooses to develop life habits consistent with values such as: love, compassion, empathy, selfless giving, dignified living, etc. You can see that for the "meat-eaters" it is easier to forgive when offended. (MAT6:14f) They always grace-filled as he spoke what is true. Such a person has more confidence in his prayers. (HEB4:16) And they have developed the ability to teach others the gospel. (1PE3:15)

Spiritual growth is expected. The new Christian must progress from milk to solid food! Maturity and activity in the Lord's service show the transition from "milk" to the "meat" (the advanced studies of God's Word and the application of those teachings to one's life) How does a new-born Christian move from the milk to the meat of God's Word? First, you must desire the milk of the Word. You must gain an understanding of the basic principles of the Word of God: You cannot start with spiritual meat. You must first desire and learn to digest spiritual milk. Be obedient to God's: This is the most important step. They do not obey what they learn in the milk God's Word so they are not able to mature on to meat. The Bible teaches that it is not enough to hear His Word. You must be obedient. You must become a doer of the Word and not a hearer only. An increase in spiritual understanding comes through meditation on and obedience to God's Word. This is how we move from milk to meat.

These are the steps to discovering and understanding the knowledge of God: 1. Receive my words: You should approach with an open mind, teachable spirit and heart of love. 2. Hide my commandments with you: You must accept the Word and integrate it into your life and spirit. Do not try to change the Word to agree with your way of living. 3. Incline thine ear unto wisdom: Listen to what God is saying to you through His Word. Listening requires changes in living where indicated. 4. Apply thine heart to understanding: Apply yourself diligently to understanding (interpreting) the Word. 5. Seek her as silver and search for her as for hid treasures: If someone told you there was a hidden treasure in property you own, what would you do? You would start digging. You would conduct a systematic search until you found the treasure. It would become a priority of your life. When you make God's Word a priority and begin to search for His wisdom, you will find it. But it must become a priority of life. You must approach it with excitement and dedication as if you were searching for treasure. The meat of the Word is deal with our character and our walk with Jesus which helps us to go on unto perfection. Let us go on unto Christ-likeness. God's ultimate goal in all of our lives is that we come into the fullness of the image of Christ.

But he who received seed on the good soil is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.(MAT13:1-23) Jesus told this parable to illustrate what happens when a farmer sows seeds on different soil, and the results that unfold. The role of the sower of the seed is important, but the parable's point is twofold: first, to explain why different soils — different people — respond differently to the Gospel, second, to invite us to examine ourselves to think about the kind of soil we hope to be.

A farmer went out to the field to sow seed. He scattered the seed on the ground. As he scattered the seed, he noticed that the seed falls on different types of ground. But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.(LUK8:15)The seed was the same in every place, but the condition of the soil was different. Bible compares our hearts to either good or bad ground (soil), in which the seed of God's word will be planted (sowed). First of all, this parable is talking about when the gospel is preached to the world, the unsaved, and how the word of God will bring forth fruit in some lives and not in others, but it also has a lesson for us as believers. The soils are the hearts of the people who make a choice about the message. The condition of a person's heart can be compared to the different kinds of soils that received the seed. Bible teaches that we are responsible for the condition of our own hearts, or "ground" in which the word of God is planted as we grow and mature in our Christian walk. Now the parable is this: The parable of the sower is about the Kingdom of God. In other words, the Gospel of the Kingdom will be spread by the sowing of the seed of the Word of God. It is a growth parable. The man represents God and the seed is His message, the Word of God. The birds represent Satan. Read Luke 8:4-15 "Let's look at the four different "soils," or hearts:

Wayside: The seed sown by the wayside represents the Word of God as it falls upon the heart of the negligent hearer. Like the hard-beaten path is the heart focused on the world's pleasures and lust. Some of the seed fell on a path, and the birds came and ate it up. The hard ground represents someone who is hardened by sin; he hears but does not understand the Word, keeping the heart dull and Satan plucks the message away. Some people hear the truth, but like hardened paths, they do not let it sink into their hearts. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. If people do not receive and respond to the word with faith, their opportunity will be stolen by the evil one.

Rocky: Next, some of the seed fell onto rocky places. The rocky ground pictures a man who professes delight with the Word. These people hear the message with great joy, but like seeds on rocky soil, these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation (testing) fall away. They seem to be happy to hear about Jesus and His great love, but they do not let it sink into their hearts. However, they have no root in himself, but endures for a while, when tribulation or persecution arises, they quickly forget about God's word eventually falls away. Bible never promises that life will be easy, without any trials. He promises that He will be with us in our problems. He promises, everything will work together for our good - to become godlier and to bring glory to God.

Thorns: Still other seed fell among thorns. The thorny ground shows one who seems to receive the Word, but the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. Some people hear God's Word and start to grow. But soon they become worried about the problems of daily living and are choked with cares, riches, pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. They may think if they only had more money and more things they would be happy. These wrong beliefs take up all the person's talent, spiritual gifts, time and energy. These people do not focus on living for God, so they don't produce any spiritual fruit. The person who hears the Word must trust God to deliver him from his worries and greed so that he can grow in God's Word.

Good Soil: Still other seed fell on good soil. The good ground shows the one who hears, understands, receives the Word and produces much fruit —and then allows the Word to accomplish its result in his life. It produced a crop 100, 60, or 30 times more than what was planted. Isn't it great to know that some of the seed fell on good soil? This represents the people who heard God's word and believed it. They put their trust in Jesus. They received the message of the kingdom with a Noble and Good Heart, the seed will take root and bear fruit with patience.

The parable of the sower shows how the soil affects the growth of the seeds. Just as a planted seed starts to grow, the word of God starts to deepen and grow within a person. All of the first portrayed are ultimately harden in heart, but the hardness is especially clear in the person that individual never shows an interest in the Gospel. His heart is set to the point where it resists all penetration by the seed, which is devoured by the Evil One and his gofers. Those who fall away after professing faith are represented by the second and third soils. Without solid rooting in good soil, plants will wither and die under the sun's heat. Similarly, some people appear to be thriving believers until persecution reveals their true colors just like those who left Jesus when the going got tough(HEB3:12). Others, like vegetation choked by weeds, are strangled by the cares of this world and the love of money. This is an especially dreadful fate, considering himself Christ's follower even though he serves his riches. Yet the fourth soil is notably different. This one understands and bears fruit, he accepts and conforms his life to the Gospel.

Our responses to Jesus' teaching; to awaken the desire to be a person who has ears to hear what Jesus says and who lives a life that is productive and fruitful. Christians should not allow devil to take root in their hearts and take away God's word. Pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" They should hear word of God and live according to it. *Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.*(PSA119:11)

How do you have good soil?

- 9 -

How do you have good soil and an open heart to receive God's word, instead of it falling on rocks, growing and being dry by the sun and scornful? What does it mean to have a "noble and good" heart? It means each of us must work on our own hearts to make sure that they are good ground! Just as a farmer has to plow up the ground in order to allow the seeds to sprout, and water the crop, and later he has to pull the weeds that come up, we must be diligent to keep our hearts in tune with God. The worst thing we can do is to harden our hearts by being stubborn, disobedient and full of pride, so that the seed of the word of God cannot be planted and grow. The following are some things you can do to affect your heart positively, and some things to avoid that will affect you negatively:

Make A Decision to Be Good Ground - Making the decision to be good ground is the first and most important thing you can do. Submit yourself to God, yield your self will, humble yourself, present your body as a living sacrifice, and give up your free will to Him. Read Exodus 35:5,21,29 & 36:2 "Take from among you an offering to the Lord. Whoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it." God wants everyone to follow Him (2PE3:9), but each person has the free choice of whether to accept the truth. But still others received the seed that fell on good soil.

Confess and Turn Away from Sin (Break Up the Old Ground) – All sin begins in the Heart. Jesus taught, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thoughts, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness"(MAR7:21-22) It is sin and carelessness that hardens our hearts, so confession of sin and repentance will break up that hardened ground, and make the heart receptive to God's word again. It is true that we ourselves cannot make our hearts clean, but the blood of Jesus, which we can appropriate by faith, will cleanse us from all sin. A daily list of prayerful self-examination is needed to find the areas of "fallow ground" that need to be broken up. *"Break up your fallow ground, and do not sow among thorns."* *"Wash your heart from wickedness."*(JER4:3-4;14) **Fallow Ground** - A field plowed up and left for seeding, particularly a field left to rest for a year or more. Our hearts, if left to themselves (lying fallow) will become hardened. We must plow up the ground, pull up the weeds, and pluck out the thorns. *"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup."*(1CO11:28,31) *"For if we would judge ourselves (examine ourselves and then repent), we would not be judged."* but God looks on the heart.(1SAM16:7)In James 4:8 *"Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your Hearts, you double-minded"* In Psalm 51:3,10,17 *"For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me."* *"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."* *"....a broken and a contrite Heart, O God, you will not despise."*

Establish Your Heart in God's Word - Allow the seed of God's word to be planted in your heart, and meditate on God's word to water the seed. Do not be double-minded(having a divided heart) by paying attention to philosophies and ideas that are contrary to God's word. *"Keep (guard, watch over) your Heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."*(PRO4:23) This means the harvest that grows out of your heart, from what you have planted in it, is the most important thing in your life, and will shape and direct every "issue" in your life. You must plant, guard, and watch over your Heart to keep it firmly established in God's word, and to keep out any weeds.

A good man out of the good treasure of his Heart brings forth good things. If you deal with your thought life before God, you stop sin at the root. Negligence, Carelessness - Spiritual laziness, failure to pay attention to the word of God, failure to be sober/vigilant. It is neglecting to pull the weeds in the garden of your heart until they choke out the word. It allowing your heart to be overburdened with cares of this world. *"Take care, brethren, lest there should be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving Heart, in falling away from the living God."*(HEB3:12;IPE5:8-9)

Through Hardening Your Heart - This is more deliberate than just negligence. This is when you hear God's word, but deliberately disregard or disobey what it says. If a person continues to be rebellious and disobey God, their Heart gradually becomes more and more hardened. *"as long as it is still called 'Today,' lest anyone of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."*(HEB2:13-19;PSA95:7b-10) To avoid hardness of heart, we must submit our hearts to God's Word and God's ways, ready to obey His will.

Through Inclining Your Heart to Evil - This means to desire and set your affection on wrong things. Satan's original temptation to Eve was that she was missing something by not experiencing evil, and she began to look at the tree and desire it (she inclined her heart toward it). David prays to God *"Do not incline my heart to any evil thing,"* *We must ask God for the strength to turn away from evil.*(PSA144:4) In Genesis 3:6 "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate." In Acts 8:21-23 *"for your Heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. For I see that you are poisoned by bitter envy and in bondage to iniquity(sin)."* Let's look at an example from the life of King Solomon. In the earlier part of his life, Solomon inclined his heart towards God and kept His commandments. Later in life, he disobeyed God by marrying many foreign wives who worshiped heathen idols and false gods.(1KI11:1-9) His desire for all these women, and his relationships with them, began to turn his heart away from the one true God. *"Let your Heart therefore be wholly devoted to the Lord our God, to walk in His statutes and to keep His commandments, as at this day."*(1KI8:54-61)

God is calling us to obedience and relationship with Him. Disobedience leads to sin, death. Choose to follow Christ is obedience. Obedience leads to personal growth. Through obedience, we experience blessings of Holy living.

How can you test the soil of your heart?

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We can look at the "fruit" in our lives. Teachable, faith-filled hearts (like good soil) will produce much spiritual fruit. The spiritual fruit that comes from God's Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, forgiveness, healing, righteousness, glory, grace, compassion, knowledge and truth.(GAL5:22) Another fruit is sharing God's truth with others. So the test for good "heart soil" is checking to see whether there is any of this fruit in your life. If so, you know that God's word has taken root in your heart. You have believed the truth of Jesus, and your beliefs guide your actions. You have trusted Jesus, so His Spirit lives in you. When we're going to bear spiritual fruit. Fruit comes naturally when we remain connected to the Vine. (John 15:5) We must stay connected to Jesus, because without Him, we cannot bear any fruit! We are responsible to keep the soil in good condition. Good soil has sunlight, water, and nutrients. How do you think we can "water" and "cultivate" our hearts? Read God's Word, listen to good teaching, pray, listen to God. Good soil is also free of rocks and weeds. How can we keep rocks and weeds out of the soil of our hearts? We don't plant things in our heart or mind that are against God-bad TV show, movies, books, video games, immoral sexuality etc.

Now, for the "problem soil." that don't bear spiritual fruit. Those who allow pleasures of the world to lead them astray will receive judgement. Instead of good fruit, their lives are full of worry, fear, greed, and frustration. They think more about themselves than about the Lord. If this sounds like your life, there is only one way to make a change! Jesus said, "*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*(JOH14:6) To avoid hardness of heart, we must make sure that our hearts are in proper relationship to God. Confess: Tell the Lord that your heart has not been good soil. Ask Him to plow up the hard places and replace them with a good, soft heart that will be the perfect place for His truth to take root and grow. "*I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit in you. I will take out your stony, stubborn heart and give you a tender, responsive heart.*(EZE36:26)

Before you begin Bible study: Many people try to begin Bible study the same way they study any other book. They take their Bible, open it, and start to read. But often their study does not last long. They find it difficult to understand what they read. They do not recognize how the Bible relates to everyday living. The Bible explains that only certain people will be able to understand God's Word. People fail at Bible study because they are not spiritually prepared to study the Word of God. The Bible is like a door which leads into the presence of God. Behind that door are great spiritual treasures. But you must have the key to unlock the door or you will never be able to enter in and explore these treasures. The Bible reveals how to understand God's Word. It provides the key to unlock the door to spiritual understanding. Jesus often asks if they have read the Word of God.(MAT19:4)

The Bible is not like any other book and you cannot study it as you do other books. There are prerequisites--things you must do before you can begin--if you are to understand the deep spiritual things of God. *He that is of God hears God's words.*(JOH8:47) You cannot understand God's Words without knowing God. How do you come to know God? Jesus told Nicodemus, who was a religious leader of Israel: "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.*(JOH3:3) A man may be educated, learned, cultured, even religious, but the understanding of Scripture will be hidden from him until his spiritual eyes have been opened by the new birth and by God's Spirit. *Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.*(PSA119:18)

Nicodemus asked Jesus, "How can these things be?" He did not understand what Jesus meant. Jesus answered and said: Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?(JOH3:10) Nicodemus was a religious leader of Israel, yet he did not know about being born again. In fact, he asked, How can a man be born when he is old? (v.4) Jesus explained that the new birth of which He was speaking was a spiritual birth. This new birth experience comes through faith in Jesus Christ. You must confess you are a sinner. You must believe Jesus died for your sins, ask forgiveness for your sins, and accept Him as your personal Savior. The person who has not been born again cannot receive the truth of God's Words: "*But the natural man receive not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are discerned only through the Spirit.*(1CO2:14) The unsaved man may admire the Bible for its literary beauty and value. He may study it historically. But spiritual truths of God's Word will remain hidden until he receives forgiveness of sin: *For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.*(1CO1:18) From the moment you experience new spiritual birth, your mind will begin to understand spiritual truths in God's Word. Just as a new born baby in the natural world needs physical nourishment from food, a person who is spiritually reborn needs spiritual nourishment from the word of God. *Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,*(LUK24:45)

I commit you to God and to the word of His Grace which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance (ACT20:32) The Word of God's grace brings us to the inheritance of the kingdom of God. The word of His grace is the revelation of what Jesus did on the cross, who we are in Christ and who Christ is in us. The word of His grace imparts power over sin, strength in weakness and supernatural ability to do the works of Jesus and greater! *So then, those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.*(ACT1:2:41,47) When you receive the Word with gladness, it imparts faith, courage to your spirit. Those who believe, God will add "to their number day by day those who [are] being saved" into the church. Praise the Lord! The Book of Revelation reveals by God to churches the future events. This is to prepare and strengthen faith by giving assurance that deliverance from evil powers, so that they will remain faithful against imminent persecution.

The Bible is God's message to man. The purpose of biblical interpretation is to help us to know how to properly interpret, understand, and apply the Bible. The divine origin of the Bible gives it its unity and the ultimate source of all interpretation is from God. *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*(2TI2:15) "Rightly dividing" as used here is taken from the rules for Old Testament sacrifices and means to "cut straight." When a person brought a sacrifice for sin, the animal was divided into three parts. One part was offered to God. Another part was given to the one who brought the offering. The third part went to the priest. From this practice it means to give to each that which belongs to him. In Bible study it is important to rightly divide the Word of God. This means you must understand what is being said to whom. You must interpret and apply the meaning correctly. in I Cor. 10:32, there are three groups listed: Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks(gentiles) or to the church of God. Some of the Bible portions is directed to the Jews, Gentiles, Church. For example, God instructed Noah to build an ark. You are to learn spiritual truths but it does not mean, you should build an ark. Interpretation must learn how to arrive at the proper meaning for each Scripture. Jesus pointed out to the religious leaders "You are in error because you do not know Scriptures or power of God.(MAT22:29) Spiritual error results from not properly interpret for rightly divide the Word of God.

Every portion of the Bible is inspired, then there is no conflict between the Bible and history or science. When conflicts are apparent, Bible should take as the final authority. First principles that the Bible should be interpreted literally. It means to believe it exactly what it says. We are to understand the Bible in its normal or plain meaning, unless the passage is intended to be symbolic or the context clearly indicates otherwise. For example, when Jesus speaks of having fed "the five thousand" in Mark 8:19, we should understand five thousand literally—who were fed with real bread and fish by a miracle-working Savior. In Mark 14:22 the wine is used as a symbol of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus often used parables when He taught. A parable is a story that is told for the purpose of illustrating a spiritual truth. Every passage of the Bible should be studied in its context when trying to determine meaning of a passage. This means biblical sentences build their meaning as they relate to preceding, succeeding verses, chapter, entire Bible. Many false doctrines/cults have been created because verses or parts of verses were taken out of their context. In Psalm 14:1. says there is no God. But if we read all passage then we have this: *The fool has said in his heart. There is no God*" Religion/scientific/political mind-set drives toward define the word differently. Takes phrases and verses from here and there and makes a point out of resulting false combinations. Jesus said, whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say. Jesus seeks the will of the Father.(JOH5:29-30)

Interpreting passage historically means seek to understand culture, situation that prompt the text for actual meaning. The rule of first mention is as follows: The first time a word, phrase, object, or incident is mentioned in the Bible, it gives the key to its meaning anywhere else it occurs. In Genesis 3 there is the first mention of fig leaves. Here Adam used fig leaves to try to cover his own sin and nakedness by his own efforts. Fig leaves speak of self-righteousness, an attempt to justify one's self before God. This is meaning of fig leaves wherever they are mentioned afterwards in the Bible. All the words in the Bible is divinely inspired and necessary. It means that a truth is of such special importance that it needs to be repeated. John 3 illustrates this rule of repetition. Jesus tells Nicodemus of the necessity of the new birth experience and repeats it three times: Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.(JOH3:3,5,7) The rule of cumulative(total) revelation is all Bible says regarding a truth must be considered: No prophecy of scripture is its own interpretation; It is not isolated from all that the Word has given elsewhere. The full truth of God's Word on any subject must not be gathered from an isolated passage. You cannot base your doctrine, teaching, opinion, beliefs on a few isolated verses about a subject. You must keep studying until your interpretation becomes consistent with whole of the Scriptures. No man shall add to or take away from the Scripture. Use the Bible to help interpret itself. For example, there are passages that teach the doctrine of eternal security, that once a person is saved, cannot lose salvation.(JOH5;ROM8) In Gal 5:4 refer to falling from grace is a warning passages pointed to those who reject eternal security. Those who commit "sin leading to death" have decided deliberately reject God and His ways. *he is guilty of an eternal sin.*(MAR3:29) It is an unpardonable sin. (IJO5:17) Is it sign of falling away.(HEB6:4-6;10:26-29) In the church we should preach the whole counsel of God. *Scripture cannot be broken.*(JOH10:35) Why should we continue to follow mistakes/errors, misinterpret by legalistic bible scholars, dangerous traditional practices? Who will be responsible for us to stumble? What excuses will be given to God on judgment day, or waiting for to shift blame to their leaders/fallible tradition, or deceived by devil? *Jesus said to the devil, "It is also written,*(MAT4:7) Jesus talks to people about the Pharisees, a religious group had negative things, "don't be a Pharisee!"(MAT23) Pharisees were scribes, pride bible experts, Jesus call them hypocrites. Jesus said: Father reveals the hidden truth(mysteries) to "little children." like a child in their innocence.(MAT11:25) Biblical passages must be interpreted according to the intention of the author and in the context in which statement is made. Lev. 11:1-8, scripture must be rightly dividing the hoof. Study bible with a humble, open heart. Be prepared to change your ideas-teachings, if God shows you new truth is revealed. Repent, nobody will ever make perfection unless ready to change every single belief that you currently hold. First, we must seek guidance of the Holy Spirit while interpreting the word of God. We need Holy Spirit to help us to think correctly, lest we misinterpret Scriptures. We are to gain insights into its meaning, application of the Scripture. It is the Spirit of Truth who enlighten upon the Word so that we see the truth, know the truth, live the truth. "*In God, whose word I praise, In God I trust*"(PSA56:4)