

## "Back to the Bible"

What the Lord has caused to be written in Scripture never loses its authority. It stands written. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." If Scripture is authoritative, then let's go back to the Bible. Stay tuned.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. The Lord Jesus gave us the New Testament, the covenant of Christianity, in the first century. And though it's the twenty-first century, this new covenant is still in force and will be in force until the end of time. Following the Lord Jesus isn't a hobby; it's a serious commitment for a lifetime. It demands listening carefully to what the Lord has said and doing it. We must take seriously the need to follow the Lord Jesus by obeying what is written. We must go back to the Bible. Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you and want to be a part of your life each week.

From the earliest times of Christianity, the Scriptures warn of people in the church departing from the truth. Paul told the elders of the church of Ephesus in Acts 20:29 to 30, "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them." Later, Peter wrote in 2 Peter 2 and verse 1, "But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves."

We're living in a generation that has false prophets and teachers who've come in among churches and spoken perverse things and heresies that destroy people's commitment to the Lord Jesus and His truth. I've seen such churches that split and die because a wolf began spreading false teaching among the people to draw them away from the truth. This is why we need to know what the Bible and to stay with it.

We offer this study on going back to the Bible free! If you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have many free programs and materials on our website, [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). You can also see us on YouTube.

We'll now worship in song, read from 2 Kings 23:2 to 4, and explore our need to go back to the Bible.

Our bible reading today comes from 2 Kings chapter 23 verses 2 to 4. And talks about Josiah and his reform.

The king went up to the house of the LORD and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests and the prophets and all the people, both small and great; and he read in their hearing all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD. The king stood by the pillar and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep His commandments and His testimonies and His statutes with all his heart and all his soul, to carry out the words of this covenant that were written in this book. And all the people entered into the covenant.

That's a reading from God's holy word. About a commitment to keep the word of God. Let's pray together. Oh Father we're thankful that through the ages people have committed themselves

keep Your word. Help us Heavenly Father to also keep Your word. To do the things that You've taught us to do. To love You with all our heart and with all our soul. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

You might be asking, "Phil, why should we go back to the Bible? Isn't the New Testament a book written nearly 2,000 years ago? What has that to do with us today?" Well, that's a fair question. I'm asking you to commit your life to Jesus Christ, to love Him with all your heart and soul, and to put Him first in your life. And so I must have good reasons to ask this of you and good reasons why I've done that. I've often explained the reason I am a Christian is because Jesus Christ died for me in order to forgive my sins and He rose from the dead to give abundant reasons for recognizing Him as Lord. Now I believe Jesus, so I take His word seriously.

The Lord Jesus promised the apostles in the first century in John 16:12 to 13, "I still have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak from Himself, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come." Now Jesus promised the first-century apostles that they would be guided into all the truth, not most of it but all of it. The Holy Spirit would not leave out anything the people of God needed; they would have all the truth needed by the church for all time.

2 Peter chapter 1 verses 2 to 3 in the Legacy Standard Bible says, "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the full knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything (everything) pertaining to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence." Full knowledge? God certainly gives us all the truth, and this is why we must study diligently, so that we may handle the word of God accurately. Colossians 4 and verse 12 speaks about the prayer of Epaphras: Paul said, "Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God." And that's what we should all pray.

You see these passages, in scriptures, they assure us that the teaching of Jesus found in the word of God is all-sufficient to meet all our needs for life and godliness. God hasn't short-changed us in the truth. Our Father in heaven is omniscient, that is, He knows all things and can see the future. And when He revealed to the apostles the word of God, He prepared them and all of us today with the truth that leads to eternal life. The Bible is not simply old stories; it is the foundation of our spiritual lives with profound answers to our questions.

Paul said in Ephesians 4 and verse 5 that there is "one faith." By this he meant coming to believe the gospel of Jesus Christ and taking seriously all His teaching. One cannot say, well, "I believe in Jesus," if one doesn't believe what Jesus did and teaches. "The faith" refers to what is believed, that body of doctrine or teaching which can be found in the New Testament. Jesus revealed this body of teaching through the Holy Spirit who inspired the apostles and prophets to write down His teaching. Now the Lord Jesus promised in Matthew 23:34 to send "prophets and wise men and scribes." The work of His scribes was to make copies of His teaching, and we find what He and His apostles teach in the New Testament. It was in the heart of the Lord not only to teach His people but also to preserve His words for all time.

Now Jude taught the Christian faith was delivered only once. Many people miss this passage. Jude 3 says, "Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you exhorting that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints." Now Jude said this faith had been delivered once for all time and Christians should contend earnestly for this once delivered faith. It was already settled and needed to

remain unchanged. Now through the ages men have twisted the faith into some new cultural religion. But Jude calls for the once delivered faith to remain the same as it was given. This confirms the Lord's promise to the apostles that they would be guided by the Holy Spirit into all the truth.

And when we look at all the different religious groups that call themselves "Christian" but believe and practice things never found in the once-delivered faith of the New Testament, we marvel at how far many in America have wandered away from the truth and the morality of God. Much of what some call Christianity has little in common with the Christianity found in the New Testament. Rather than seeking to please God by following the Scriptures, they seek to draw disciples to themselves.

Our culture tends to make up its own faith rather than go to the Bible to find its faith. They don't really listen to Jesus or His word; oh, they listen to and obey whatever is popular for the moment. For many Jesus is merely a comfortable religious symbol. They pick and choose what they like and they reject anything they dislike. They don't listen to the faith delivered by Jesus; oh they tell Jesus what they believe. Some religious groups vote on what to believe rather than to let Jesus rule as Lord.

They remind me of the golden calves that Jeroboam put up in Dan and Bethel, telling the people in 1 Kings 12:28, "behold your gods, O Israel, that brought you up from the land of Egypt." The Jesus that many serve is not the Lord Jesus Christ of Scripture but a humanly manufactured symbol more like our culture than Scripture. Now this type of Christianity twists the Scriptures and cherry picks what they like while they ignore the rest. Friends, we must go back to the Bible to find the true Jesus and the true faith.

A popular but false Christianity is nothing new. Paul warned Timothy in 2 Timothy 4 verses 1 to 4, "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they'll accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths."

Well, that do you do when this happens? How do you return to true, biblical faith? Well, you repent and forsake the human things and you devote yourselves only to the things that come from God. You must know the Scriptures well enough to know what is biblical and what is not. And when you see that you're practicing a religion that has a human origin, you need to abandon the human and embrace what is divine.

Paul urged Timothy in 2 Timothy 2 verse 15, "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately (accurately) handling the word of truth." Now one who ignores Scripture and does what he pleases spiritually is hardly a workman that handles the word of truth accurately. The person whose eye is on our culture more than on the Lord will miss the precious promises the Lord offers. You can't have Jesus as your Savior if Jesus through His word is not also your Lord.

And this is why we need to examine what we believe and how we practice our faith. People used to ask, well "What would Jesus do?" Well, that's was not a bad question. Let's go farther and ask, "What does Jesus require of us in His word?" The Lord Jesus said in John 8:31 to 32 that, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." Now true disciples don't wander from the words of Jesus found in the New Testament. They make their home in these words. Because of this, they can be set free! They can be free from sin, free from the deceptions

of the world, and free from the entrapments of false religion. Now false religion ends in false hope. True faith in Christ and His word ends in a living hope and an inheritance in heaven.

False religion tells you all you have to do to be saved is believe or say some little prayer, but the Scriptures teach repentance and baptism are also necessary for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2 and verse 38). Saul of Tarsus prayed for three days and nights (Acts 9 verse 9 and also verse 11), but he was not free from sin until he was baptized and washed away his sins (Acts 22:16).

False religion tells you that once you are saved, you cannot lose your salvation. Oh that sound good. But the word of God says in Hebrews 3:12 to 14, "Take care, brothers, (now he's speaking to christain brothers. He says,) lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sins. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end." Salvation is conditional, and Christians must remain faithful to the end if they wish to share in Christ.

Hebrews 10 verses 26 and 7 tells the consequence of continued deliberate sin on the part of a Christian, "For if we go on sinning deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries." My friends, God means what He says. You can't quit on God, and deliberately sin all you want, and then expect God to save you in the end.

False religion says it doesn't matter what you believe or what church you attend. But if you're supporting a false religion, you may be deceiving yourself. You see false religions tell falsehoods. 2 John 9 to 11 says that, "Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds." You see, false teaching leads to evil deeds and false hope. Can you imagine how terrible it would be on Judgment Day to find out that what you believed was false?

Saul of Tarsus found out he was wrong about Jesus Christ and his zeal in persecuting the church. He found out in time to make a change. He said in Philippians 3:7 to 8, "But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. (He goes on to say) Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ." You see he became a servant of Christ and followed the truth. And you too can change your path in life. You can leave a false religion that only gives a false hope and return to the truth that's found in God's Holy Word! Please don't wait to find out at the Judgment what is right. Please follow Jesus.

Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that You have revealed Your will to us in Your word. Help us heavenly Father to love You with all our heart and soul and mind and strength. And to do Your will and to love others. In Jesus name, Amen.

We've been receiving calls, from many people in several states, telling us they feel as if their church, their church, has left them. The place they worshiped left its biblical foundations, left that once delivered faith. And now they feel there's no place for them to worship biblically anymore. They no longer hear biblical preaching that points to truth or speaks of sin and immorality. They hear ideas and practices that are foreign to Scripture and ask their leaders why this change has taken place. Well, when they do so, they're often ignored or shunned as troublemakers.

True Christianity turns to the words of Jesus for the truth, not human creeds, human councils, or whatever is popular in culture. The Lord Jesus came to bear witness to the truth, and “everyone who is of the truth hears” His voice (John 18 verse 37). Many people today have a hybrid faith mixed up with a little of Jesus and an awful lot of the world. They’ve forsaken the truth once for all time delivered to the saints and are relying on a false Christianity for their salvation. Well, this is why we must go back to the Bible. Only the Scriptures contain the firm foundation of truth.

Now don’t be fooled, the true gospel message was delivered through the apostles on the day of Pentecost after the resurrection. Peter answered the people’s question, “what shall we do?” because they were cut to the heart and had crucified the Lord Jesus. And he said, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Well, that’s the same message for all time. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, repent of your sins, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. The people didn’t wait, and nor should you.

We that hope today’s study about going back to the Bible has helped you focus on serving the Lord. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy, send your request to In Search of the Lord’s Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to [searchtv@searchtv.org](mailto:searchtv@searchtv.org). Or, call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now there’s a schedule of our programs and a map of churches in your area at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). And you can watch SEARCH on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, “SearchTVMinistry” and like the programs. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don’t worry, we’re not asking for money. We’re here to help you draw close to God and to be right with God.

So we ask that you show God your love by worshiping at church. I tell ya you need a church family. If you can’t attend, then we understand, but if you can attend don’t neglect worshiping at church. There’s probably a church of Christ near you. If you’re looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we’ll gladly help you find one. Well we’ll be back next week, Lord willing. So we ask that you keep searching God’s Word with us and look at the bible, tell a friend about the program and encourage them to watch it. As always we say, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord’s Way.