

## "God's Word"

Of all the books in the world, no book is so holy and so true as the Bible. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." Today we're going to see many important reasons to hear and to follow the Bible. So stay tuned.

Welcome to In Search of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. The Scriptures show themselves to be true time and again! God gave us this unique and marvelous book to be the source of the truth that leads to eternal life. No other book has so many prophecies, practical advice, or relevance. The Scripture gives us the wisdom that we need to live as Christians and as heirs of eternal life in a world that doesn't always understand or appreciate us. So we say thanks for taking time with us today. We want to be a part of your life each week.

I was blessed eight years ago to come to In Search of the Lord's Way. The Lord permitted me to be a part of this great ministry to America and many other nations. We all miss brother Mack Lyon and are deeply grateful for what he has done. We're also deeply grateful for all the churches and individual Christians who pray for us and are behind this ministry. We're praying that God will give us many more years to serve and preach the gospel of Christ to the nation and the world. Well as we begin this new year, please keep us in your prayers.

I challenge you to read the entire Bible during 2017. Reading God's Word and hearing His wisdom and truth is the most valuable way to use your time. 1 Peter 2 verses 1 to 3 says, "Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord." I do hope that you hunger and thirst for God's Word. Nothing else will bless you more than knowing and practicing the will of God!

Now we offer this study of God's Word free. If you'd like a printed copy or a CD of our study and you 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 you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have materials free on our website, that's [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org).

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from Psalm 1 verses 1 to 6, and we'll explore the value of God's Word.

Our reading today is from Psalm 1. "How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season, And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, But they are like chaff which the wind drives away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the wicked will perish." That's good advice from the Old Testament. Let's pray together. Oh Father, help us to love Your word and to delight in it, and to let it sink deep into our hearts and to be obedient. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus name, Amen!

What is your delight? What is it you look forward to each day? Now the psalmist said the blessed person has a delight "in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night." The more one studies the word of God, the more that that word will become a delight. David said in Psalm 19

and verse 10, "They are more (speaking of the scriptures, they are more) desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb."

Romans 1 and verse 2 calls the Bible the "holy Scriptures," and 2 Timothy 3:15 calls them the "sacred writings." Now repeatedly, the Scriptures claim to be the very word of God. Henry Morris estimates that the Old Testament claims to be the word of God some 2600 times. The Lord Jesus considered the events of the Old Testament to be real history. Jesus took Jonah's three days and nights in the belly of the great fish as historical. Jesus used the punishment of Lot's wife as a means to warn his disciples not to turn back (Luke 17 verse 32). There's no evidence That Jesus ever regarded the creation, the flood, the crossing of the Red Sea, or any other story of the Bible as a myth or a fable.

Jesus underscored the truthfulness of the book of Genesis when He referred to the "beginning" of creation as the time when a man and a woman were created and joined together by God in marriage. Jesus said, "But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.' So they're no longer two but one flesh. And what therefore God has joined together, let not man separate" (now that's from Mark 10 verses 6 to 9). Now by quoting from the creation account in Genesis, the Lord Jesus acknowledged its authority in truth. By using the words "What God has joined together..." He recognized God to be the author of these Genesis writings.

No one can destroy the word of God, because no one can conquer God. Just like God, the Scriptures are everlasting. Psalm 119 verse 89 says, "Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven." The Lord Jesus could say in Matthew 24:35, that "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away."

Again the apostle Peter calls the word of God an imperishable seed. 1 Peter 1:22 to 25 says, "Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God. For, 'All flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls off, but the word of the Lord endures forever.' And this is the word which was preached to you." Yes, the word of God, found in the Bible, is here to stay and it will last till the end of time.

Now the Bible contains the mind and the heart of God. We can know God best by reading the Bible. He loves us and has always wanted the best for us. 1 Timothy 2 verses 3 and 4 says, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." From the very beginning God has always wanted that close relationship with each person. He's wanted each of us to live godly lives and to stay away from the sinful things that destroy us. The Bible is honest about people. It tells the good and the bad. It teaches us how to live wisely and how to avoid the pitfalls. Psalm 119 verse 9 asks the question, "How can a young man keep his way pure?" The answer is, "By keeping it according to Your word." One can say along with the psalmist, "Your word have I treasured up in my heart, That I may not sin against You" (Psalm 119 verse 11). Have you treasured up the word of God in your heart? If you haven't, do you realize how you have cheated yourself?

The Bible offers us the precious gift of truth. And we need the truth not a lie. We want to know what's real, not a myth and not a fantasy. I would rather know the truth that hurts for a short time but blesses me eternally than to hear a lie that pleases for now but costs me my soul. The Scriptures give us that key to sort through the many voices of our day and to be able to unlock the truth. The psalmist proclaimed in Psalm 119 verse 160, that "The sum of Your word (that is the sum of what's written in

the Bible) is truth, And every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting.” The Lord Jesus could say in John 14:6, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; and no one comes to the Father but through Me.” And He promised in John 8:31 and 32, that “If you continue in My word (that is the words He taught, the words that are recorded), then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” Now the Lord Jesus prayed in John 17:17, “Sanctify them in the truth; (and then he said) Your word (speaking to His Father, Your word) is truth.” And the Lord Jesus told Pilate, Pontius Pilate, in John 18 verse 37, “For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. And everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”

Now because the word of God is inspired and true, we can have hope. Romans 15 verse 4 says, “For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.” The word of God tells us where we came from, why we’re here, where we’re going when we die, and what the promises of God are! They give us true answers and they give us hope that there’s something better than this sinful and dark world that we live in today. Sometimes we think we face problems that no one has ever faced before, but there’s usually a circumstance in the Scriptures much like our own. God helped the saints of old, and you know what, He can help and He will help us too! God’s character hasn’t changed, no. He shows compassion on those who love and obey Him. And He’ll help us through every struggle and every heartache.

I love the promise of 1 Peter 5 verses 8 to 10, where Peter says, “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Now your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. )And then he says) After you’ve suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you.”

I tell you, were it not for the Scriptures, we would know very little about God and His ways. We wouldn’t know what the eyewitnesses said about Jesus. We wouldn’t know anything about creation or heaven. We would be as ignorant as the Stoics and the Epicureans who built an altar to an unknown God. It’s scripture that opens up God’s heart, God’s truth, and His promises to us.

God gave us His word to save us. The apostle Paul said in Romans 1 verse 16, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.” James 1 verse 21 says, “Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive that word (that is the word that’s in the Bible) that’s implanted, which is able to save your souls.” When Peter came to Cornelius’ house, he brought “words” by which Cornelius and his household were saved (Acts 11 and verse 13). Romans 10:17 says, “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.” 2 Corinthians 5 verse 19 says of the gospel, that it is the “word of reconciliation.” Philippians 2:16 calls it the “word of life.” The Lord Jesus said in John 6 and verse 63, that “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.”

Because the word is inspired and true, it has power to reach into our hearts and souls. Jeremiah 23:29 says about the word, “Is not My word like fire?” declares the LORD, “and like a hammer which shatters a rock?” Now at some point the word of God hits us between the eyes with a truth that we need to hear. Its truth stuns us, even cuts us to the heart, but in the end it blesses us. Acts 2 tells us about the response of the Jews when Peter preached about the death and resurrection of Jesus. Verse 37 says: “Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and they said to Peter and the

rest of the apostles, “Brethren, what shall we do?” Well verse 38 gives the answer, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

These folks were guilty of his death on the cross. And I’m sure that they didn’t at first want to hear about their sin against God. They probably didn’t want to know that they had crucified the Lord and the Christ who was the Son of God, they needed to face the truth. And the word reproves them, and reproves us and it rebukes us, not because the word of God is cranky or mean-spirited, no. The Scriptures speak out against sin but they don’t leave us hopeless and unredeemable. It informs us in order to protect us from evil and to deliver us from sin. It helps us see where we’re going, and when we’re going in the wrong way, and straightens us out so that we can go in the right way, in a direction that will help us to save our souls.

In Proverbs 2, a father is trying to impart God’s wisdom to his son. And he wants his son to “seek her as silver and search for her as for hidden treasures.” Oh, if his son pays attention and treasures up God’s wisdom, then God “stores up sound wisdom for the upright; and He’s a shield to those who walk in integrity, (He’ll be) Guarding the paths of justice, And He preserves the way of His godly ones” (Proverbs 2 Verses 7 and 8). Now many books can give you the wisdom of men, but only the Bible can give you the wisdom of God.

Beyond all this, the Scriptures help us to see ourselves spiritually. Yes, there are times that we need to see ourselves, so we can make the changes necessary to please God. James 1:22 to 25 says, “But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he’s like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he’s looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.” Oh, don’t just listen to God’s Word, do it!

Well why does all this matter? It matters, because our relationship with God is involved. Listening and obeying is the basis of our relationship with God. The apostle John said in 1 John 2 verses 3 to 5, “By this we know that we have come to know Him (that is have a relationship with Him), if we keep His commandments. The one who says, ‘Well I’ve come to know Him,’ and doesn’t keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected.” My friend, when you listen and obey, you show true and perfect love for God. Do you love God? Let’s pray together. Oh Father, help us in every way to do Your will and to listen to Your word. May Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus name, Amen!

Robert Johnson of Longview, Texas, recently wrote: “We must never be ashamed of the gospel, because it is God’s will. It possesses those same qualities that God Himself possesses, endued with His divine authority. It will never fail. Though everyone has free will, and many will choose to ignore it, or try to alter it, or reject it altogether, the gospel will endure. The one who has committed his or her life to it will not be disappointed, as through His word, God will accomplish His good work of salvation. May we be committed to its principles and precepts, to living them out in our daily lives, and faithfully communicating them to those around us. Those who take their refuge in the enduring word of God, shall endure forever with Him. “Every word of God proves true; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him” (Proverbs 30 and verse 5). Thanks, Robert.

When people distort God’s word to fit themselves, they cheat themselves and those who agree with them. Sadly, people often try to make the Bible teach something false. And they’re only fooling

themselves. When you distort doctrine, you have a distorted disciple. The Bible frequently says, “Be not deceived,” and it says that because people often lie to themselves rather than face the truth. That’s why we must continually listen closely to Scripture.

I worry about those who think they’ve been saved but haven’t listened closely to Scripture. Don’t be fooled. The Bible teaches that one must believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God to be saved (John 8 and verse 24). And out of love for God, one must repent of sin and turn to righteousness to be right with God (Luke 13 verse 3). A loving, penitent believer then must confess their faith and be baptized into Christ. Just as those on Pentecost needed to be baptized to have their sins forgiven, so do we. Baptism is the time that God sets us free from sin (Romans 6 verses 3 to 7). And I hope that you’re going to listen to God’s Word and obey it.

We hope today’s study has stirred you to buy the truth and not sell it. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy of our message, 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 you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now you can download these lessons or a newsletter online at [www.searchtv.org](http://www.searchtv.org). You can also catch us anytime on YouTube! Just go to our channel, “SearchTVMinistry.” We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now if you get a hold of us we won’t ask you or beg you for money.

Please get involved with a church of Christ. And if you’re looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we’ll be glad to help you find one. Well we’ll be back next week, Lord willing. So we say always, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord’s Way.