



Know
Your
BIBLE

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SEARCH PROGRAMS

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Topics subject to change without notice

OCTOBER 6 – KNOW YOUR BIBLE

The Bible is a library of 66 inspired books that come from God Himself. They were written by about 40 authors over a period of 1500 years. They teach us what God wills for our lives and how we can show Him our love.

OCTOBER 13 – UNDERSTANDING YOUR BIBLE

To understand the Bible we must know what the authors of the 66 books were saying to their original readers. We need to understand the language, context, and historical background of each book.

OCTOBER 20 – WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

Many believe what they think the Bible says and yet have never studied it for themselves. The Scriptures give us many truths necessary for us to know. Since we will be judged by Scripture, we need to know what it says.

OCTOBER 27 – WHAT THE BIBLE DOESN'T SAY

Human traditions and doctrines of religious groups often fill people's minds with things they think the Bible teaches. We need to know if the Bible really teaches these things. We are searching for the Lord's will and the truth.

Know Your Bible

Some think of the Bible as an ancient and outdated book of myths and legends. But nothing could be farther from the truth. The Bible tells the history of the world from God's perspective. The Bible contains what God wants us to know about Him and about ourselves. Humans are exceptionally complicated beings physically and mentally. And it's absurd to imagine that they evolved from non-life or even from lower forms of life.

Genesis 1 reveals humans were created in the image of God, Acts 17 reveals that we're the offspring of God, and Hebrews 12 and verse 9 reveals that God is the father of spirits. Rocks and minerals can't make spirits and they can't make you form with that complicated body, physical body that you have. It just makes sense to listen to the One who created you and loves you. To listen to the bible. It makes sense to heed His warnings, to follow His instructions, and to learn all you can about Him. The God who created you wants you to love and live with Him forever in heaven. 1 Timothy 2 verses 3 to 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."

2 Timothy chapter 3 verses 14 to 17 will be our reading today. And there it talks about how wonderful and how great the value of the word of God truly is. Verse 14.

"You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood (speaking of Timothy) you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

Oh what a wonderful book the bible is. What it can do for us. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that through Your love, Your grace and mercy You have caused this book to be written down so that we might know Your will, Your ways, Your love and Your promises for us. Father help us to take everything You say seriously and to do Your will. And in Jesus name, Amen.

Let's take a look at this book. The Bible is actually a library of 66 books, written over a period of 1500 years by about 40 authors. In the days when Jesus walked on the earth, the Hebrew Bible consisted of twenty-two books. Now these twenty books contained all 39 books found in our English Old Testaments. The New Testament contains 27 books. The Old Testament reveals to us the history and the covenant God made with His chosen people Israel. The New Testament reveals the new covenant God made with all nations, all people who believe in Jesus. This New Testament is now God's covenant in force with all who believe, Jew and Gentile.

The new covenant was prophesied in Jeremiah 31:31 to 34 which says, "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, (no) My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the LORD, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Hebrews 8:8 to 12 quotes this passage in Jeremiah. In verse 13 the Hebrew writer concludes, "When He said, 'A new covenant,' He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and

growing old is ready to disappear.” Later in Hebrews 10:8 to 10, this writer says: After saying above, “Sacrifices and offerings and whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin you have not desired, nor have you taken pleasure in them” which are offered according to the law, (that is the law of Moses) then he said, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” (That’s Jesus speaking and) He takes away the first in order to establish the second. (And it’s) By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.” So, Christians obey the new covenant or New Testament.

Under the old covenant, people were born Israelites and had to be taught as they grew up to know the Lord; but under the new covenant, people become Christians because they have already been taught, they’ve heard the gospel of Jesus Christ and they choose to follow Him. In the New Testament, those who were baptized into Christ were penitent believers, not infants. Acts 8 and verse 12 says, “But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.” Now these folks were not infants who were being baptized.

The Bible contains a variety of types of literature. Much of the Bible is in narrative form, where stories that is histories, about God and man are recorded as actual events, which they are. Many books contain poetry and the words of song that reveals the emotional responses to the great acts of God and the desire for salvation and justice. Other books contain the wisdom of God about everyday life. Several books of the Old Testament contain prophetic materials about the coming Messiah and about the future of certain nations. The books of the Old Testament are valuable for us to study. We cannot know many of things about God and about ourselves, unless we study the Old Testament.

Now the four gospel accounts in the New Testament, that is, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, reveal what God wanted us to know about Jesus Christ from His birth, life, death, and resurrection. And if we’re to follow the example of Jesus, we must study these precious accounts. Matthew and John were apostles who knew and walked with Jesus from the beginning. Mark and Luke were prophets who were close to the apostles and eyewitnesses from whom they learned the truth. Now we can’t find any ancient books with more credibility than the four gospel accounts. They are not only historically accurate; they are inspired of the Holy Spirit and provide the gospel of our salvation.

The book of Acts reveals the history of the church from its beginning, at Pentecost, to its spreading in the known world. We learn how the church began on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. Some have called this the hub of the Bible because it builds on the prophecies of the Old Testament about the Messiah and reveals how God raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him on the throne in the heavenly places. Acts 2 and verse 36 reveals that Jesus is both Lord and Christ. Now the word Christ means the Messiah.

Now the rest of the book of Acts reveals how people repented and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins (Acts 2:38). It reveals the efforts of the apostles and how the church overcame obstacles and persecution. It tells how Stephen and James suffered for their faith in Jesus Christ. Acts also tells us of the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, who became the apostle Paul. Much of Acts gives us the details of his three missionary journeys of this amazing apostle.

Now thirteen epistles, found in the New Testament, come from Paul. And they reveal the commandments and instructions that he received from the Lord (1 Corinthians 14 verse 37). It reveals how he dealt with social, moral, and doctrinal problems with these newly organized churches. It also gives valuable advice to the ministers he trained, Timothy and Titus. These epistles reveal the heart of Paul as he deals with false teaching, with opposition, and with these young converts. Through it all, Paul remained devoted to the will of God, to the necessity of holy living, to the truth, and to God’s grace.

The book of Hebrews comes to us from an unknown author. We're not sure who wrote the book, but this first century book reveals for us the necessity of paying attention to the teaching of the Lord and His apostles. He wrote in a time when many had become dull of hearing and drifting away from the truth of the gospel of Jesus. And so this book of exhortation hoped to bring these wandering Christians back to Christ, who is our Savior and our hope.

The general epistles of Peter, James, Jude, and John were written to encourage brethren to remain faithful to their calling in tough times, to love one another, and to stay faithful to the truth. Peter and John remind them that the earth and its works will be destroyed in 2 Peter 2 and in 1 John 2. James encourages them to rejoice in their trials to keep their faith active, to recognize their lives are like a vapor and not to boast about tomorrow, and to refrain from judging brothers. Jude 3 urges us "to contend earnestly for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints."

The book of Revelation was written in the first century to the seven churches of Asia. Now though John wrote the book, it is the "revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants the things that must shortly take place" (Revelation 1 verse 1). The book ends with a prophecy describing the end time with a judgment scene and a description of heaven. From Revelation 20 and verse 12 we learn that we will be judged by the things that are written in the books according to our deeds. Now how we live and whether we believe in Jesus and what is written in the books matter. Those whose names are in the book of life will enter into the eternal city, while those whose names are not in the book of life are to be lost eternally.

We must take the Scriptures seriously, not just one verse or two. We must take all God says seriously. John said in Revelation 22 verses 18 to 19, "I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book." I tell ya, we must take every word, every sentence, every verse, every chapter, and every book seriously.

Now it's easy to rely on what we've learned in the past and then drift away from it. We must never, never stop studying the word of God. And what was true in the first century and what was true in the twentieth century is still true today. God hasn't changed His mind about right and wrong. He hasn't changed a bit. And cultural cannot overrule God. People can't tell God, God tells people. And people who oppose God, you know what, they don't last, they don't last. God will always be. Hebrews chapter 2 verses 1- 3 says, "For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, (that is from the word of God) so that we do not drift away from it. For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" How?

The Bible is indeed inspired of God. And the word "inspired" means it was breathed out by God (2 Timothy 3 verse 16; it came from Him. And one can say of any Scripture that God is the source of it. 2 Peter 1:20 to 21 says, "But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, (that is one's own making up) for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." God through the Spirit was behind every book of the Bible, moving the apostles and prophets to write.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians 2 verses 12 to 13, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words." You see, God uses words to teach us things that we must know to have eternal life. Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 2:13, "And we also thank God constantly for this, that when

you received the word of God, which you heard from us, (that) you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers." Friends, we must receive and accept this book, this written word from God, for what it really is, the word of God! Now whether spoken by the apostle in the first century and those prophets or written down by those men, God's word is holy. It's divine and it's authoritative.

Yes the Bible is authoritative and it'll judge us on the last day. You remember the Lord Jesus said in John 12:48 that, "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day." Oh we're not going to be judged by opinion polls, by human traditions, by votes, by human creeds, or by cultural opinions. We will have to face Jesus and His words that were written down. 2 Corinthians 5 and verse 10 says that, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." Now you might escape any consequences for your sins in this life, but you cannot escape facing the Lord one day.

Solomon wrote in Ecclesiastes 11 verse 9, "Rejoice, young man, during your childhood, and let your heart be pleasant during the days of young manhood. And follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes. Yet know that God will bring you to judgment for all these things." We must all consider how our hearts and how our lives affect our souls. Are you right with God?

Let's pray. Heavenly Father help us to take Your words seriously, to study it, to memorize it, to love it and to share it with others. And help us to do Your will. In Jesus name, Amen.

The Bible will profit you when you read and study it. You need God's Word for guidance, for God's promises, and for God's ways. Don't assume that you know the truth about God, if you have never studied the Word of God to see how He speaks about Himself. Many people follow a corrupted view of God that looks only at parts of Scripture instead of studying the whole Bible. The person who never studies the Bible is no better off than the person who has no Bible.

The gospel is the good news of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The Scriptures contain this gospel of grace and hope that we all need to be freed from sin and enjoy an inheritance in heaven. If you miss studying the Scriptures, you're missing the only hope you have of obtaining eternal life. John 20:30 to 31 says, "Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."

To obey the gospel, a person must first put his faith and trust in the Lord Jesus and what is taught in the gospel. He must out of love repent of his sins, turning from evil to the ways of the Lord Jesus. Repentance takes place when we deny ourselves and take up our crosses daily to follow the Lord. The Lord must be first in our lives, and we aren't afraid to confess our faith in Him before others. Upon confessing Jesus Christ, we must be baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of our sins, just as they did on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38 to 41). And so I hope you will you obey the gospel?

Understanding Your Bible

Now to understand the Bible one needs several things. First, they need a correct translation to have a reliable understanding. Now good Bible students do not rely on just one translation; they study several of the better known, standard translations. Second, one must have an understanding of language. A Bible dictionary that defines words and reveals vital information is a great help. Good interpreters find out the meaning of words, study grammar, and investigate the historical, geographical and cultural circumstances surrounding any text. They also acquaint themselves with various literary forms.

Third, to understand the Bible one needs the common sense to ask what God means by what He says. Properly understanding the Bible is not reading into the word of God what we feel or think but carefully paying attention to what He has said. Properly understanding Scripture is not reading it through the eyes of human traditions or creeds but looking back at what it meant when it was first written. Properly understanding the Bible doesn't pick out a few passages to the neglect of others that are just as relevant. We cannot be presumptuous but must take all that God says into account on any subject. Let's hear what God says!

Our reading today is from the six verses of Psalm 1. Psalm 1 sets the stage for the entire book. And is really worth looking at.

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

Yes that's a very strong statement about God's will. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that You through Your grace and mercy have given to us a book by which we may know Your will. And my grow to love You and be able stand firm in this world. Help us Heavenly Father to love You with all our hearts and to do Your will always. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

We need the heart of Ezra, who was both a Levitical priest and a scribe. Ezra 7:10 says, "For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel." It's not enough to know the Word, we too should practice and teach it. Nehemiah 8 and verse 8 says that Ezra and others "read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading." As preachers and teachers we too should help everyone understand what God wishes for them to know.

When Paul and Silas came to preach the gospel in Berea, Acts 17:11 says about the Bereans, "Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." And we too should have

such a mindset, to examine the Scriptures for ourselves to see if what we are hearing from those who are teaching us, to what the Bible really says and compare it. Today religious leaders are teaching many half-truths and ideas that lead to misunderstanding. Now just as the Pharisees wrongly adopted an oral law in addition to the written Law of Moses, so there are religious leaders today who have accepted human traditions far different from the teaching of the first century New Testament.

If we're to understand the word of God, we must ask these questions: What did the author intend his original readers to understand? We approach a Scripture to understand what the passage meant as the author wrote it and as the original readers understood it. We don't want our understanding to be cluttered with doctrines and practices that came centuries later and had nothing to do with what the Lord and His apostles taught. Now here are some things we realize as we approach the Bible

First, God has spoken in the Holy Scripture. Our faith rests in the certainty that God has inspired the Biblical text; and, as a consequence, that text partakes of the inerrancy of His very nature. Second, we believe the Scriptures are capable of being clearly understood. While there are some passages hard to understand, as Peter said in 2 Peter 3:16, Scripture is largely intended to be understood. Peter could say to the early Christians in 2 Peter 1:12, "Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been established in the truth which is present with you."

Third, the best way to understand Scripture properly is to seek out what the authors intended the readers to know. To do that, we must have some knowledge of the language the authors used and the historical and cultural circumstances which influenced each book of the Bible. Now the Old Testament was written in Hebrew, though some books contain the Aramaic language. The New Testament was written in the common Greek of the first century. Fourth, God has not revealed some things to us. We'll never know some things in this life. Deuteronomy 29:29 says that, "The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law."

A good Bible student will have faith. It does no good to say you believe in God, if you refuse to believe what He teaches. A good Bible student must have a love for the truth. Now believing a lie will not bless you or help you to know God. A good Bible student must be honest. Now some try to rewrite what the Bible teaches in order to make it say something different. Rather than accept what God says they want to make agree with their desires. God has spoken, and we must lovingly accept what He has said, even if it doesn't agree with what we want. A good Bible student studies the Word of God with humility. He realizes that God is all-wise and knows all things. We are merely humans and limited. It's an important day in our lives when we realize that God is God, and we are not. Jesus is Lord, and we are merely servants.

A good Bible student pays attention to learn from God rather than tell God what he thinks. A good Bible student has a willingness to listen and learn. God doesn't approve of an unteachable, arrogant spirit. And we should be willing to dig deep and to meditate on God's Word. God never forgets, and we should never forget, that we must obey God rather than men. Psalm 1 and verse 2 reminds us that the blessed man's "delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night." A good Bible student won't allow his doubts or contemporary culture to overrule what God says.

In John 6, some disciples were offended by something Jesus said. And John 6:66 to 69 says, "After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. So Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God." Now some today are like those former disciples, they withdraw to their own peril. Only Jesus has the

words of eternal life. And if you reject Him, who will you find to die for your sins? No one will or can do what Jesus did for you.

Let me suggest these tips as you study your Bible. First, familiarize yourself with the sixty-six books of the Bible. If you have a study Bible, read the introduction before each book. The Bible is actually a library of books. The Old Testament was written to a different audience than the New Testament. The Old Testament addresses the ancient nation of Israel, while the New Testament is addressed to Christians, both Jews and Gentiles. The books of the Bible are written in different styles of literature: history, narrative, poetry, wisdom, prophetic, exhortation, and apocalyptic. The Bible was written over a period of 1500 years by forty different authors who lived in a variety of places. Now each book has its own historical and cultural setting.

Second, select good Bible study helps. It will help you greatly to acquire a Bible dictionary, a Bible atlas, and a concordance. These tools will help you define people, places and things that you may be unfamiliar with. There are several reference books that define the specific words used in Scripture. We can easily misunderstand a word, if we do not know its meaning, as the Scripture uses it. Good students study words.

Third, read each individual book in its context. Now each book has a historical setting in which it is to be read and understood. Many passages are misunderstood because the reader has never taken time to investigate the background of the Scripture. Some questions he must ask of any passage: Well, who is writing the passage? To whom is the author writing? You see not everything in the Bible is written to every person. When was the passage written? What was the author's intent and purpose in writing? The direct or literal sense of a sentence is the meaning of the author, when no other idea is indicated; not any figurative, allegorical, or mystical meaning may be present. What circumstances may have prompted the writer to give rise to this lesson? What kind of literature is he using to make his message known? And what are the historical and cultural circumstances that bear on this passage? And, what would this message mean to its original recipients?

Fourth, learn to draw out the meaning of a passage; do not read into the passage anything that was not originally there. There's a difference between reading into a passage something that was never there and drawing out what is there. Those who study the Bible must be careful not to read into it their own personal prejudices or concepts that they think ought to be in the Bible. People are not smarter than God. One must read God's Word with an open mind to learn what He has said and to understand the Bible for what it says for itself. The Bible is always its own best interpreter.

Fifth, let the Bible explain itself. A difficult prophecy in Joel 2 finds its fulfillment in Acts 2. On the day of Pentecost, Peter said, "This is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel" (Acts 2 and verse 16). In Ephesians 4 and verse 4 Paul says that there is "one body"; this body is defined earlier in Ephesians 1:22 as the church. In Revelation 1 and verse 20 John explains that the seven stars are angels or messengers and the seven golden lampstands are the seven churches. Well there's no further need of wondering what these mean. The Bible is indeed its own best interpreter. A plain, clear passage should always be used to make the dark and abstruse passages clear. A difficult passage never denies or contradicts the plain teaching of the Scripture.

Sixth, the Scriptures admonish us not to add or take away from what is revealed. Deuteronomy 12:32 says, "Whatever I command you, you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to nor take away from it." We must learn to stay within the teaching and observe the teaching carefully, completely, lovingly and accurately.

Seventh, the Scriptures do contain a law of inclusion and exclusion. We must "observe all things that Jesus commands (Matthew 28 verses 19 and 20), yet we must realize the difference between general

commands and specific ones. When God gives us an instruction in general terms, He allows us to use our common sense to fulfill that command in a variety of ways. For instance when God tells us to "go into all the world," He allows us to travel any way we think best; but when God gets specific, He expects us to do specifically what He commands. While the generic commands allow one to fulfill it in different ways, specific commands demand to be fulfilled specifically. Specific commands exclude substitutes and additions. When God told Noah to build an ark of "gopher wood," this excluded all other kinds of wood.

Eighth, take all that the Scriptures teach on any subject. And all the truth on any one subject is not usually found in one passage. There's a difference between a true statement and the whole truth of a matter. John 5:24 says, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life." Now it is true that we are saved by faith, but it is not the whole truth. Faith apart from love, repentance, or baptism will not save.

Ninth, recognize figures of speech. There are many figures of speech in the Bible. Many problems occur because uninformed students interpret a passage literally when they should interpret it figuratively. E.W. Bullinger, in his book *Figures of Speech*, said, "It may truly be said that most of the gigantic errors have their root and source, either in figuratively explaining away passages which should be taken literally, or in taking literally what has been thrown into a peculiar form or Figure of language: thus, not only falling into error, but losing the express teaching, and missing the special emphasis which the particular Figure was designed to impart to them." Biblical authors didn't use figures of speech to do away with the truth; they used them to emphasize the truth.

Read and study your Bible each day. Read it slowly. Look up words you don't understand. Meditate on its teaching, its promises, and its warnings. Respect and love the truth. Treasure it up in your heart. And let God speak.

Let's pray together. Father we're thankful for Your word and its power to make a difference in our lives. To help us to grow spiritually and to stay away from the things that are evil. And Father we pray that our love for You and our love for the truth may grow more and more. In Jesus name, Amen.

Apply the message of the Bible to your life. We ought to bring the message of the Bible home by responding to the passage with our hearts and lives. Now here's some questions we can ask that will help us apply the Scriptures to our lives: Does this command something I'm not doing? Does this suggest a change in my behavior? Does this reflect a spirit or an attitude that I'm not manifesting? Does this confirm a belief that I already hold? Does this suggest further study or a change in my beliefs? Have I accepted this promise and trusted God to fulfill it? Have I seen this promise fulfilled in my life? How would it change matters if everyone obeyed this command? What would Jesus do in my place?

Now a person has failed God and himself if he or she has applied the truths of the Scripture to everyone else but neglected to apply God's Word to himself. Romans 2:6 to 8 says "He will render to each one according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury." God is no respecter of persons.

Become a Christian by placing your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ, repenting of your sins out of love for Jesus, confessing Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and being baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. In baptism God washes away our sins (Acts 22:16), buries and raises us with Christ (Romans 6:4), and causes us to be born again by His grace (Titus 3:5 to 7). Now those who sincerely study God's word realize the necessity of repentance and baptism to salvation (Acts 2 and verse 38).

What the Bible Says

Now it matters whether we listen to the Bible. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:21, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." Wise people listen to Jesus and do what He says, but foolish people fail to do what they hear from Him. Wise people stand with God, but foolish people fall. Obedience to the word matters. John 3:36 says, "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him."

To be obedient we must know what God says. Obedience begins with listening and paying attention to what we have heard. Sadly, many people assume they know what the Bible says, when they've only heard some of what God says. We must take time to examine Scripture for ourselves because many are preaching human tradition rather than the gospel truth. We must listen to all that God says on any subject, if we expect to know the truth. You can trust the Scriptures to teach the truth.

Our reading today comes from Psalm 19 verses 7 to 11. And there it tells us of the value of word of God and its sufficiency for our lives.

The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul;
 The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.
 The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;
 The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.
 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;
 The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether.
 They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold;
 Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.
 Moreover, by them Your servant is warned;
 In keeping them there is great reward.

Oh we need that great reward by keeping the words of God. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that You have designed this wonderful book that teaches us so many good things that are true and right and righteous all together. Help us Heavenly Father to be good servants. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

To say what the Bible says in such a short time requires that we speak in summaries. First, the Bible says this about God. God is our Father, He created the heavens and earth. We are made in His image. God loves every person. And Jesus said in John 3:16 and 17, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him." Oh yes, God wants to save not judge.

Now it's important to know God is God, and we are not. God the Father is not limited by flesh and blood or by time. The Lord Jesus said in John 4:24 that "God is spirit." Hebrews 12:9 reminds us God is the father of spirits. Acts 17:28 to 29 reminds us, "for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.' Being then the children of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and thought of man." Moses said in Psalm 90 and verse 2, "Before the mountains were born Or You gave birth to the earth and the world, Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God." The one who created time is not subject to it.

God doesn't have limits like humans. Isaiah 40:28 to 29 says, "Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth Does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable." Yes God knows all things, can do all things, and has all power. Matthew 19:26 reminds us that, "With God all things are possible." Proverbs 15 verse 3 say that, "The eyes of the Lord are in every place keeping watch on the evil and the good." Psalm 147:5 says, "Great is our Lord and abundant in strength; His understanding is infinite."

We must also understand about God that He is supremely holy. God cannot be tempted to sin, nor does He tempt any man with sin (James 1 verse 13). God commands His children, "Be ye holy, for I am holy" (1 Peter 1:16). God's eyes are too pure to approve sin (Habakkuk 1:13). David said in Psalm 5 and verse 4 that, "You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; No evil dwells with You." This is why our God who is Just and Righteous must punish evil.

Second, the Bible says this about Jesus Christ. The Old Testament speaks through Moses and the prophets that God would raise up a prophet, priest, and king, who is the Messiah, the Christ. And Jesus fulfilled all these prophecies according to Luke 24:44. He was born in Bethlehem according to Micah 5 verse 2. He was the prophet like Moses predicted in Deuteronomy 18:15. He was rejected by His people according to Isaiah 53. Yet He set up a kingdom in the first century according to Daniel 2 and Matthew 4:17. And though He died upon a cross and though the Lord laid upon Him the iniquity of us all, Jesus was willing to bear our sins and do the Father's will. 1 Peter 3:18 says, "For Christ also suffered for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, so that He might bring you to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit."

The apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 15 verses 3 to 4, "For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures." Now Jesus is our Savior, but Jesus is also our Lord. 2 Corinthians 5 and verse 10 says, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."

Third, the Bible says this about the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not an "it" but a person. Jesus told the apostles in John 14:26, "But the Helper, (that is) the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you." Jesus continues talking to the apostles in John 16:13 when He says, "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come."

Now the Holy Spirit was behind the birth of Jesus (Matthew 1 verse 18), behind the resurrection of Jesus, and will be involved in our resurrection and will be involved in our resurrection. Romans 8 and verse 11 says, "But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you."

Fourth, the Bible says this about Scripture. Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 3:16 to 17 that, "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training (or instruction) in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." Peter also realized the inspiration of Scripture; and he said in 2 Peter 1:20 to 21, "But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, (that is men didn't make it up) for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." The prophets did not speak when or as they wished. God communicated to them what He wished for them to say.

God told Moses at the burning bush in Exodus 4 and verse 12, "I, even I, will be with your mouth, and teach you what you are to say." David said in 2 Samuel 23:2, "The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, And His word was on my tongue." Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 2:13, "For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe." Now when God spoke through His servants, His message carried His authority. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 14:37, "If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment." The Scriptures are God's complete and final revelation to us.

Fifth, the Bible says this about the church. Jesus said that He would build His church. (Matthew 16 verse 18). Now the church Jesus has and it belongs to Him and Him alone. The church is made up of people, not bricks and mortar. Jesus shed His blood for people and His church (Acts 20 and verse 28). Jesus is the only head of His church (Ephesians 1:22 to 23). The church is called a kingdom in Matthew 16 verse 19 and in Revelation 1:4 to 6. Now if you are in the church, you're now in the kingdom of God. The church is called a temple in 1 Corinthians 3 and verse 16, and the household or the family of God in 1 Timothy 3 and verse 15.

Now Jesus built and designed His church; the church is of divine in origin. Philippians 1 and verse 1 says, the local church is organized with overseers (that is elders) and deacons. When the Scripture speaks of churches, the author meant local congregations who believed alike and were in fellowship with each other. Local churches helped one another in times of physical and spiritual need. Now churches are filled with people who love and care for each other. And unity is so important.

Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 1 and verse 2 that, The church is made up of saints; all Christians are saints, sanctified by the blood of Jesus. All Christians are brothers and sisters in Christ. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 23 verse 9, "Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven." Churches in the first century worshipped with singing, praying, partaking of the Lord's Supper, giving funds, and hearing the word of God preached. Churches are devoted to the truth of God's Word.

Colossians 2:6 to 8 says, "Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude. See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ." Now the church that Jesus built remains faithful to the teaching of Jesus in the first century and are unwilling to let current culture rob them of the truth.

Sixth, the Bible says this about salvation. First, that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Romans 3 and verse 23). That the wages of sin is death (Romans 6 and verse 23). Now this is still true. Sin still exists and still separates us from God. Isaiah 59:1 and 2 says, "Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear."

More than that we need to know that we are saved by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross for our sins. Yes, He died for our sins. And we are saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2 and verse 8). We cannot earn our salvation; it's the gift of God. Gifts, however, carry with them conditions and responsibilities. Jesus healed the blind man of John 9 but He asked him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. Well now this blind man didn't earn his sight but he did meet the conditions of our Lord to get his sight.

When the guilty souls of Pentecost asked what to do about their sins of crucifying Jesus, the Lord and Christ, Peter responded in Acts 2:38, "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.” Now they didn't question Peter, saying they were already saved, no, but they were baptized that very day. Acts 2:41 says, “So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.” When they were baptized, the Lord saved them and added them to His disciples. Now to be saved, we must remain faithful to Jesus Christ. If we forsake the Lord, we can lose our salvation.

Seventh, the Bible says this about the future. First, Jesus is coming again. Second, the earth and its works will be destroyed. 2 Peter 3 and verse 7 says, “But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.”

2 Thessalonians 1:7 to 9 explains this. There Paul writes, “the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. Yes, these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.

But the Christian has hope when the Lord comes for His own. 1 Thessalonians 4:16 to 17 says, “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.” Oh, we thank God for this promise.

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful that You have given us Your word that tells us about our lives, about You and about what You expect from us. Help us Heavenly Father to be obedient to Your will. To love You with all our hearts so that one day we may be caught up to meet You in the air and live with You forever. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

The Bible also teaches that you have a responsibility and an accountability to God. Jesus promises to come again one day and raise the dead. John 5 verses 28 to 29 says, “Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.” Yes, we'll all be judged and either enter heaven to be with the Lord or enter a place of punishment to be separated from Lord forever.

Now we're choosing whether to be with the Lord by what we believe and how we live. The Lord Jesus said in John 14:15, “If you love Me, you will my commandments.” “If” is the key word. People who love the Lord keep His words, but those who don't love the Lord don't keep His words. If you choose not to love Him, you will sadly live with the consequences of your choice. With sadness God will grant your choice to ignore Him. And there's no hope for the disbeliever and the disobedient.

Your hope is in believing and obeying because you love the Lord. Believe with all your heart Jesus Christ is the Son of God and be willing to confess that. Turn from a life of sin, worldliness and all those things to a life of love and service by repenting. Now being baptized into Christ by being immersed in water for the forgiveness of your sins is necessary. And when you're baptized into Christ, you're baptized into His death. That's when God frees you from sin by the blood of Jesus and gives you newness of life (Romans 6 verses 3 to 7). Yes, that's when God causes you to be born again, adds you to His church, and makes you His child.

What the Bible Does Not Say

Eve ate an apple! Three wise men! It might surprise you what the Bible doesn't teach.

The Bible doesn't say that Eve ate an apple; she ate a fruit. Scripture doesn't say how many wise men visited Jesus. Scripture doesn't say what kind of fish swallowed Jonah. Scripture doesn't tell us to pray to Mary or that Mary was a perpetual virgin. Scriptures never calls Peter a pope, and the church was founded upon Jesus Christ not Peter. The Scriptures require bishops to be married not single. The Scriptures never speak of purgatory or limbo. There are several concepts that started centuries after the New Testament was written and have come to be widely believed. These false ideas. They are the inventions of men, not the Word of God.

In the days of Jeremiah, prophets dreamed up what they believed God said, but they were mistaken and false prophets. Jeremiah 23:16 says, "Thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, filling you with vain hopes. They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD.'" In verse 21 God says, "I did not send the prophets, yet they ran; I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in my council, then they would have proclaimed my words to my people, and they would have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their deeds." Well we still have false teachers today who speak from their own imagination.

Our reading today comes from the book of Revelation chapter 22 verses 18 and 19. And emphasizes our need to really pay attention closely to the word of God and not add to it or take away from it.

"I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book."

And yes this talks about the book of Revelation. But it is also true of all the writing and the teachings of God. We have no right to add to or take away from the teaching of God that's taught in Deuteronomy 4:2, Deuteronomy 12:32 and Proverbs 30 verse 6 as well. Let's pray together. Father we're thankful that You have given us Your word. And Your word is clear. Help us never to be presumptuous, to add to what You've said or to take away from it. Help us always to be good listeners. To love You with all our heart and soul and mind and spirit. This is our prayer in the name of Jesus, Amen.

We hear numerous doctrines that you can't find in the Bible. They've arisen because people listened to men rather than to God. One of the most destructive doctrines is that church tradition must be obeyed like the written Scriptures. Now all kinds of ideas have arisen over the centuries that contradict Scripture and lead people to believe what is false. God never said these things, but people are certain they're true because of church tradition. Well, let's examine some of these things.

Some say babies are born in sin. This idea became popular in the fifth century with Augustine and was adapted by many evangelicals in the Reformation. Some people quote David in Psalm 51:5, "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me." Well now this doesn't say David inherited his sin from his mother, just that sin was present when he was born. In fact, David said in Psalm 22 verses 9 and 10 about God, "Yet You are He who brought me forth from the womb; You made me trust when upon my mother's breasts. Upon You I was cast from birth; You have been my God from my mother's womb." Ezekiel 18 makes it clear that God doesn't hold children to be responsible for their parents' sins. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 19 verse 14, "Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." I tell you little children aren't depraved.

One of the more popular doctrines is that people are saved by faith alone. Well, there can be no doubt that we are saved by faith. Hebrews 11 and verse 6 says, "And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." Now the phrase is "faith" not "faith alone." John 3 and verse 36 says that, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." That's the New American Standard Bible and the ESV. Yes, obedience is as necessary as faith for salvation. The Lord Jesus said in John 8:51, "Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he will never see death." Well, He said also in Matthew 7:21, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." Well now, are we to throw away these verses?

You know, breathing gives us oxygen and life; but we also need water, food, clothing, and shelter. It would be absurd to say that we're alive by "breathing alone." Well, in the same way, we must love God to be saved (1 Corinthians 16 verse 22). We must repent or we'll perish (Luke 13:3). We must be born again of water and the spirit, if we are to enter the kingdom of God (John 3:5). The doctrine of "faith only" ignores many Scriptures that require more than faith.

Other people claim the doctrine, "once saved, always saved." And they quote John 5:24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life." They also quote John 10:27 to 28, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand." Well, they ignore the fact that one can quit listening and quit believing. They ignore that some willfully forsake the Lord.

Hebrew 3:12 to 13 warns Christians who were once saved, "Take care, brothers, 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 sin." Hebrews 10:26 to 27 goes farther, "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." Now no one can snatch us from the Lord's hand, that's true, but Christians can defiantly choose to forsake their faith and follow the world. And they will be lost.

Some religious groups sprinkle water on infants and call that baptism. The little infant is incapable of hearing the word, choosing, believing in Jesus, and needing to repent. And yet in the book of Acts the people who were being baptized believed and repented first. That's different isn't it? They weren't infants. They weren't little children who were being baptized but grownups. Peter told the people at Pentecost in Acts 2:38 to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins. In Acts 8 and verse 12 the bible says, "But when they believed Philip as he preached good news (that is the gospel) about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Now these people who believed and were baptized were men and women, not little children or infants. We have no New Testament command or record of any infant being baptized. We have no right to make a law for God. The first infant baptism took place in the latter part of the 2nd Century. And Tertullian opposed it strenuously. It was not until the 4th Century that this practice was accepted—four centuries too late!

Nor were they sprinkled for baptism. Sprinkling for baptism was first mentioned in 251 A.D. when Cornelius opposed Novation who was sprinkled on what he thought was his death-bed. Cornelius opposed the practice. It was not until 1311, at the Council of Ravenna, that men held sprinkling to be equivalent to baptism. Well, that's 1,300 years too late. Later than the New Testament of course.

The word baptism refers to an immersion in water not sprinkling. And this is why Paul said in Romans 6 and verse 4, "Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life." Immersion is like a burial and resurrection, but sprinkling is something different and it was added centuries later.

I hear people say, "Well it doesn't matter what you believe as long as you love Jesus." Well now this may sound good, but it's false. The Lord cares what we believe. He said in John 8:24, "Therefore I said to you (speaking to the Jews) that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, (that is the Messiah, the Christ that) you will die in your sins." Jesus demands we believe He is the Christ, the Son of God. The Lord Jesus said in John 12:48 that, "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, (my words what I teach) has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day." Again, the Lord Jesus said in Luke 9:26 that, "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words (that is My teaching), the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels." The words of Jesus will matter on Judgment Day. You cannot believe anything that you want and still be pleasing to the Lord.

Many religious groups recognize a special class of saints and priests. The Scriptures, however consider every Christian to be a saint and a priest. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 1 verse 2, "To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling, (that is we were called by the gospel and) with all who in every place call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours." Yes, all are saints. And he regarded every Christian as a saint, as a person sanctified in Christ who calls on the name of the Lord Jesus. Peter agrees and he said to all Christians in 1 Peter 2:9 to 10, "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy." So every Christian is holy and a royal priest.

The New Testament never commands the church to use instruments of music in worship. Oh we can read of the church singing in praise to the Lord, but the Scriptures are silent about the use of instruments in worship. Ephesians 5:19 says, "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord." Colossians 3:16 says, "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God." Hebrews 13 verse 15 says, "Through Him (that is through Jesus) then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name."

There simply is not a single commandment, example, or inference of any church in the New Testament using instruments of music in worship. Oh sometimes I hear people say that David played the harp. Yes, he clearly did; but David lived a thousand years before Christ. David was not a Christian. He worshiped as a Jew. He also offered animal sacrifices. We don't look to David for how to worship as Christians. Christians do not look to the Old Testament to learn how to worship; they look to the teaching of Jesus and the apostles in the New Testament.

Historically speaking, church historian Everett Ferguson said, "It is quite late before there is evidence of instrumental music, first the organ, employed in the public worship of the church. Recent studies put the introduction of instrumental music even later than the dates found in reference books. It was perhaps as late as the tenth century when the organ was played as part of the service. This makes instrumental music one of the late innovations of the medieval Catholic church. When introduced in the Middle Ages, the organ was still not part of the liturgy proper. That is, it didn't initially accompany the hymn service,

but was a separate item in the service. The type of chant employed left no place for instrumental accompaniment until new styles of music developed." Now using instruments of music in the worship of the church is of human origin not divine.

Many people have bought into the lie, well, "God wants me to be happy," reasoning that they can even commit sin if it makes them happy. Well does God want us to be happy? Well yes, but He doesn't want us to buy into the happiness that sin brings. They think happiness justifies the sin they want to commit. God wants us to be happy and righteous, not happy in sin. 2 Thessalonians 2 verses 10 to 12 reminds us that some do not have "the love of the truth so as to be saved. For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness." Now wickedness may please for the moment, but wickedness always leads to being lost. Oh friend, let's follow Jesus. Let's follow His word.

Now it's easy for people to become blind to the origin of what they are used to. You may assume God instructed us to believe or do certain things, simply because you are used to them. You may have always worshiped with instruments, but that doesn't mean the Lord Jesus commanded their use. You may have grown up with babies being sprinkled, but that doesn't mean it's Scriptural. You may have heard salvation by "faith only" and "once saved, always saved"; but that doesn't make it right. Following the words of the New Testament is always the right thing to do. And I pray that you'll take time to read the scriptures for yourself and see what God actually said.

Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful that You have given us Your word so that we might know what it means to follow You in the way that You would have us follow. Father help us to be careful and loving in our obedience. To not add to Your word and not take away from it. But to listen to You and obey Your words. In Jesus name, Amen.

We shouldn't risk our souls on what the Bible doesn't say but rather follow the things the Lord and His apostles did say. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 7:24 to 27, "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it." We must hear the words of Jesus, do them, and build our houses upon the rock. When you build on what God didn't say, you're building your house on sand.

Now you're deciding what you believe and how you will react to the Lord Jesus Christ. If you believe church traditions not found in the New Testament, you may be like the Pharisees who believed in their oral traditions and invalidated the written word of God. The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 15:13 to 14 that, "Every plant which My heavenly Father did not plant shall be uprooted. Let them (that is the Pharisees) alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit."

Now it's better to follow Jesus and His words than to follow human traditions. Believe with your heart and confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God, repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2 and verse 38).