

Why Study the Bible?

by Rod Reynolds

King Solomon wrote, “Of making many books there is no end” ([Ecclesiastes 12:12](#)). But of all the countless books that have been written, is there any that reliably answers the most fundamental and important questions of life? Why do we exist? What is our nature? Is there a God, and if so, what is God like? What does God expect of us? Can we know the true God? Does God love us? Is there a path that can put an end to violence, unnecessary suffering and sorrow? What happens when we die? Is there a way to eternal life, and if so, what is it?

Believe it or not, there is such a book, a book that has the answers to these questions, and other questions vital to the life of every human. That book is called the Bible. The Bible is unlike any other, and has no equal, because it is God’s revelation to mankind of knowledge that can be found in no other source.

Do you know what the Bible says? Have you read it? Have you studied the Bible diligently to learn what God wants you to know? Why study the Bible? In this article you will find answers to this question of vital importance to every human being.

Nearly every household (about nine out of ten) in the United States has at least one Bible. However, more than half of Americans have read little or none of the Bible. Perhaps about one in five read the Bible daily (“Americans Are Fond of the Bible, Don’t Actually Read It,” [lifewayresearch.com](#), April 25, 2017).

In many other countries my guess is that even fewer people read the Bible regularly, if at all. And that means that most people really don’t know much about the Bible.

Yet, there are many good reasons not only to read the Bible, but to study the Bible and come to understand its teachings. There are more reasons to study the Bible than can be covered in a single article.

But in this article are discussed several reasons to study the Bible. Consider the following:

(1) Bible study can change your life, for the better.

The world is beset by problems of every description, and particularly by problems of behavior and morality. The Bible provides answers to the most fundamental questions of life, such as why you exist, and your potential destiny.

Its admonitions provide a sound anchor and structure on which your life can be built, giving you an incomparable sense of direction and purpose.

If you sense that your life is aimless, and out of control, or if you sense that the world is coming apart, and headed for disaster, which it is, hope and redemption are available. The Bible can guide you to the source of hope and redemption, and give you an understanding of what the future holds for mankind.

The prophet Hosea lamented: “**Hear the word of the Lord**, You children of Israel, For the Lord brings a charge against the inhabitants of the land: ‘There is no truth or mercy Or knowledge of God in the land. By swearing and lying, Killing and stealing and committing adultery, They break all restraint, With bloodshed upon bloodshed. Therefore the land will mourn’” ([Hosea 4:1-3](#)).

All too often, that describes much of the world in which we live.

But the Bible tells us also, “He who **heeds the word** wisely will find good” ([Proverbs 16:20](#)). “Happy is the man **who finds wisdom**, And the man who gains understanding” ([Proverbs 3:13](#)).

God assures us that if we consistently obey his words, the words found in Scripture, things will go well for us, as we avoid many of the pitfalls that disregard for God’s commandments produces. And that applies to nations as well as individuals. “Observe and obey **all these words** which I command you, that it may go well with you and your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the sight of the Lord your God” ([Deuteronomy 12:28](#)).

The Bible points to a time in the future when the Scriptures will be made known to all. God’s kingdom is destined to be established on the earth, and all nations will be taught God’s word. “Many people shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths.’ For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And **the word of the Lord** from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore” ([Isaiah 2:3-4](#)).

Not only will there be peace on the earth, but great joy. “All the kings of the earth shall praise You, O Lord, When they **hear the words of Your mouth**. Yes, they

shall sing of the ways of the Lord, For great is the glory of the Lord” ([Psalms 138:4-5](#)). “Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy! For You shall judge the people righteously, And govern the nations on earth” ([Psalms 67:4](#)).

For those willing to be taught, Scripture says: “You [God] will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore” ([Psalms 16:11](#)). “But He [Jesus] said, ‘More than that, blessed are those who **hear the word of God and keep it!**’” ([Luke 11:28](#)).

By studying and obeying the Bible’s teachings, you can set out now on that journey down the path of life, a life that leads to fulfillment and joy.

(2) Bible study reveals the way that leads to eternal life.

Not only can the Bible teach you how to live a happier life now, but it also reveals the path to life for all eternity, difficult as that may be to believe!

The Bible has the potential to transform your life and help you grow in the grace and knowledge of God as you obey, which in turn leads to eternal life that only God can give you.

Jesus Christ is the Word of God personified. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” ([John 1:1](#)). “And **the Word became flesh and dwelt among us**” ([John 1:14](#)).

The one spoken of as “the Word” in these verses is Jesus Christ. The words of the Bible are his words, the written word of God, inspired by God’s Holy Spirit. And in them are revealed the way to eternal life.

“...prophecy [the Bible] never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” ([2 Peter 1:21](#)). Peter admonished believers to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever” ([2 Peter 3:18](#)).

Peter said to Jesus, “You have the **words of eternal life**” ([John 6:68](#)).

To be granted eternal life in God’s Kingdom we must—with God’s help—grow and develop spiritually in the likeness of Christ.

We’re admonished, “As newborn babes, **desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby**” ([1 Peter 2:1](#)).

Paul wrote to the Thessalonians that, “...the **word of God,... effectively works in you who believe**” ([1 Thessalonians 2:13](#)).

In the Bible are the necessary information and instructions for us to become recipients of the gift of eternal life, which is given to those who repent of sin and put God’s word to work in their lives. Paul wrote to Timothy, “... from childhood you have known the **Holy Scriptures**, which are able to make you **wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God**, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” ([2 Timothy 3:15-17](#)).

Speaking to a group of Church leaders who had been called to Miletus, a city on the western coast of Asia Minor, to meet with him, Paul said, as he was about to depart for Jerusalem, “So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the **word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified**” ([Acts 20:32](#)).

For us to have eternal life we must bear spiritual fruit acceptable to God. Jesus said, “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. **Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away**” ([John 15:1-2](#)).

Jesus spoke a parable of a sower and seed, recorded in Matthew 13. For various reasons some of the seed that was sown produced no fruit. The seed in the parable is the **word of God**. For the word of God to bear fruit it must have a hospitable host, which in the parable is the “good ground.” “... he who received seed on the good ground is he who **hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty**” ([Matthew 13:23](#)).

If you are to have eternal life, **God’s word** must take root in your heart and mind and coupled with the power of God’s Spirit bear the life changing fruits of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, “**The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life**” ([John 6:63](#)).

If God’s word is working in your mind and heart his Spirit is working there, and if God’s Spirit is working in your mind and heart, it will be shown by the fruits you bear. “Now the **works of the flesh are evident**, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions,

jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that **those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God**. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, **let us also walk in the Spirit**. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another" ([Galatians 5:19-26](#)).

If we are to bear these spiritual fruits, we must **abide in the word of God**, we must study it, and apply it with understanding. Understanding comes from **hearing and applying God's word**, his commandments. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; **A good understanding have all those who do His commandments**" ([Psalms 111:10](#)).

The people in Berea (a city in Macedonia, or northern Greece) who heard and accepted the message of the gospel, the **word of God**, are praised because, "...they **received the word** with all readiness, and **searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so**" ([Acts 17:11](#)).

"Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And **in His law he meditates day and night**. He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper" ([Psalms 1:1-3](#)).

Paul admonished Timothy: "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, **rightly dividing [or applying] the word of truth**" ([2 Timothy 2:15](#)).

(3) Study the Bible as a source of wisdom and understanding.

Moses said to the people of Israel: "Surely I have taught you statutes and judgments, just as the Lord my God commanded me, that you should act according to them in the land which you go to possess. Therefore be careful to observe them; for **this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people'**" ([Deuteronomy 4:5-6](#)).

The Bible contains words of wisdom and instruction from God. And the book of Proverbs is specifically written to convey wisdom and instruction. “The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel: To know **wisdom and instruction**, To perceive the **words of understanding**, To receive the **instruction of wisdom**, Justice, judgment, and equity; To give **prudence to the simple**, To the young man **knowledge and discretion**” ([Proverbs 1:1-4](#)).

“But **whoever listens to me** [God’s words of wisdom and instruction] will dwell safely, And will be secure, without fear of evil” ([Proverbs 1:33](#)).

“My son, if you **receive my words**, And **treasure my commands** within you, So that you **incline your ear to wisdom**, And apply your heart to understanding; Yes, if you cry out for discernment, And lift up your voice for understanding, **If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures**; Then you will understand the fear of the Lord, And find the knowledge of God. For **the Lord gives wisdom**; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding; He stores up **sound wisdom for the upright**; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly; He guards the paths of justice, And preserves the way of His saints. Then you will **understand** righteousness and justice, Equity and every good path. When **wisdom enters your heart**, And knowledge is pleasant to your soul, Discretion will preserve you; Understanding will keep you, To deliver you from the way of evil, From the man who speaks perverse things, From those who leave the paths of uprightness To walk in the ways of darkness; Who rejoice in doing evil, And delight in the perversity of the wicked; Whose ways are crooked, And who are devious in their paths” ([Proverbs 2:1-15](#)).

Where do you seek for the wisdom and instruction described in this passage of Scripture? In the word of God.

The aim of this is found in the following: “So you may walk in the way of goodness, And keep to the paths of righteousness. For the upright will dwell in the land, And the blameless will remain in it; But the wicked will be cut off from the earth, And the unfaithful will be uprooted from it” ([Proverbs 2:20-22](#)).

“My son, do not forget my law, But let your heart keep my commands; For length of days and long life And peace they will add to you. Let not mercy and truth forsake you; Bind them around your neck, **Write them on the tablet of your**

heart, And so find favor and high esteem In the sight of God and man”
([Proverbs 3:1-4](#)).

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“Happy is the man who **finds wisdom**, And the man who gains understanding;
For her proceeds are better than the profits of silver, And her gain than fine gold.
She is more precious than rubies, And all the things you may desire cannot
compare with her. Length of days is in her right hand, In her left hand riches and
honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, And all her paths are peace. She is
**a tree of life to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who retain
her**” ([Proverbs 3:13-18](#)).

“**Get wisdom!** Get understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away from the words
of my mouth. Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; Love her, and she
will keep you. **Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom.** And in
all your getting, get understanding. Exalt her, and she will promote you; She will
bring you honor, when you embrace her. She will place on your head an
ornament of grace; A crown of glory she will deliver to you” ([Proverbs 4:5-9](#)).

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“My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings. Do not let
them depart from your eyes; Keep them in the midst of your heart; For **they are
life to those who find them, And health to all their flesh. Keep your heart
with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life**” ([Proverbs 4:20-23](#)).

Here is the wisdom of God speaking: “Now therefore, **listen to me**, my children,
For blessed are those who keep my ways. **Hear instruction and be wise**, And
do not disdain it. Blessed is the man who listens to me, Watching daily at my
gates, Waiting at the posts of my doors. For **whoever finds me finds life**, And
obtains favor from the Lord; But he who sins against me wrongs his own soul;
All those who hate me love death” ([Proverbs 8:32-36](#)).

**This wisdom is freely available to you. The only cost is the time and effort
it takes to drink in of it by studying God’s word.**

(4) Study the Bible because it is proven and sure.

The principles revealed in the Bible are not ephemeral, or short lived, like fads in
social trends or mores founded on weak principles or foundations of sand.

Today we live in a world where godliness is often scorned and ridiculed, and rotten, gross, immoral behavior is celebrated and promoted.

This was prophesied to happen, as it happened in ancient times. **“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, And prudent in their own sight!”** (Isaiah 5:20-21).

“He who justifies the wicked, and he who condemns the just, Both of them alike are an abomination to the Lord” (Proverbs 17:15).

“So now we call the proud blessed, For those who do wickedness are raised up; They even tempt God and go free” (Malachi 3:15).

That all too often describes the world we live in.

However, the words and precepts of the Bible are sure, certain and tested by time. They are eternal precepts and values reflecting the mind of the Eternal and Almighty God.

“The works of His hands are verity and justice; All His precepts **are sure. They stand fast forever and ever**, And are done in truth and uprightness. He has sent redemption to His people; He has commanded His covenant forever: Holy and awesome is His name. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; A good understanding have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever” (Psalms 111:7-10).

“The entirety of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous judgments **endures forever**” (Psalms 119:160).

“As for God, His way is perfect; **The word of the Lord is proven**; He is a shield to all who trust in Him” (2 Samuel 22:31).

“The grass withers, the flower fades, But **the word of our God stands forever**” (Isaiah 40:8).

When you study and drink in of God’s word, and apply it in your life, you can rest assured that you are following a proven path that will not fail to reward you in the end. Yes, there may be, indeed will be, trials and difficulties along the way, but the end result is that you will stand, when others who’ve gone a different way will have fallen.

“Therefore whoever **hears these sayings of Mine, and does them**, I will liken him to a wise man who **built his house on the rock**: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it **did not fall**, for it was **founded on the rock**. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and **does not do them**, will be like a **foolish man** who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; **and it fell. And great was its fall**” ([Matthew 7:24-27](#)).

When the children of Israel were preparing to enter the promised land, having wandered in the wilderness for forty years, they were given these instructions:

“When you come to the land which the Lord your God is giving you, and possess it and dwell in it, and say, ‘I will set a king over me like all the nations that are around me,’ you shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses; one from among your brethren you shall set as king over you; you may not set a foreigner over you, who is not your brother.

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“Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that **he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book**, from the one before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and **he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, that his heart may not be lifted above his brethren, that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right hand or to the left, and that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children in the midst of Israel**” ([Deuteronomy 17:14-15; 18-20](#)).

If you are in the first resurrection, you to are destined to share a role in the kingdom of God administering the government under Jesus Christ. “Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years” ([Revelation 20:6](#)).

Anyone who desires a better life; anyone who desires eternal life; anyone who desires wisdom and understanding; anyone who desires to walk on a sure path, anyone who aspires to be in God’s Kingdom, should study the Bible all the days of his life.

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Messenger Church of God
PO Box 619
Wentzville, MO 63385