

## **How to read and understand the word of God, the Bible.**

Now that you are saved, tell others the gospel of Christ so that they too can be saved (Rom 1:16, 1 Cor 15:1-4, Acts 16:30-31, Rom 3:22-25, Eph 1:13, 2:8-9, and John 6:47).

Read the Holy Bible as often as possible. It is the word of God. It is how God communicates to us and we learn God's ways and the truth. Concentrate on the Gospel of John, the later part of the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 9-28) and especially Paul's letters (Romans through Philemon). Paul is "the apostle of the Gentiles" (Rom 11:13) and his letters preach, declare, and defend the gospel of Jesus Christ (Rom 1:15-16, 1 Cor 15:1-4, Phil 1:17, Rom 15:16, 2 Tim 4:17). Paul's letters are the doctrine for the saved Gentiles in this age of grace and are the key to understanding the rest of scripture (2 Tim 2:7, 2 Peter 3:15-16). Note, the epistle to the Romans is the preaching of the gospel of Christ.

While "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable" (2 Tim 3:16), not all scripture is written to or about us, the saved Gentiles in this age of grace. The word of God says to "study to show thyself approved unto God ... rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15). The Bible has been written to many different groups of people over all time. So that we do not get instructions and doctrine not written to us, "rightly dividing" is necessary. The most important division is that we are not under the law given by God in the Old Testament to the children of Israel. That law consisted of many ordinances: observing holy days, a priesthood, a sacrificial law, temple service, dietary restrictions, etc. We "are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom 6:14). In fact, almost the entire Old Testament (except Genesis and Job) is written to and about the children of Israel under the law. However, Genesis 1-22 is important to read as it is foundational to understanding the real God and the basis of the gospel of Christ.

The New Testament is about the Lord Jesus Christ (God the Creator, the Word made flesh, the Son of God, the Lord, and the only Saviour) who is the fulfillment of the promised Saviour in the Old Testament (Gen 3:15, Isa 53). However not all of the New Testament is written to or about us, the saved Gentiles in this age of grace. For example, James is written "to the twelve tribes scattered" (James 1:1), that is, it is specifically written to those of the children of Israel who are believers in Christ, but not written to us the saved Gentiles in this age of grace. Hebrews is written to believing Hebrews (the children of Israel) not to Gentiles. However, it does contain much doctrine about Christ. The early part of the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 1-8) is about the 12 apostles preaching mostly to the children of Israel. But the later part of the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 9-28) is predominantly about the ministry of our apostle Paul, "the apostle of the Gentiles" (Rom 11:13).

There are 4 gospel accounts, with Matthew, Mark and Luke being very similar, and John somewhat different in what they record. In Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus Christ and

the apostles are preaching “the gospel of the kingdom”. This kingdom was promised to the children of Israel (Rom 15:8). It consisted of miraculous healings as evidenced in the Isaiah scroll that Christ read in the temple and what Christ did (Luke 4:17-18, Matt 4:23). The children of Israel were told that by the testimony of 2 or 3 witnesses shall every word be established and that is why these 3 are very similar. However, most of the children of Israel did not believe in Jesus Christ as the Messiah, because they were looking for a conquering king and not a Saviour crucified for their sins. Some even stoned Stephen (Acts 7:58-60). Thus, that kingdom was put on hold when Jesus Christ, the King of kings, ascended in the clouds to heaven (Acts 1:6-11). There will be no kingdom of God on earth until the Lord Jesus Christ returns in the clouds of heaven and sets up His 1000-year reign (Dan 7:13-14, Rev 1:7-8). After that is a new heaven and a new earth where dwells righteousness (2 Pet 3:13). After that is eternity. The kingdom that is coming soon is that of the antichrist run by Satan in the tribulation and the tribulation occurs after the rapture of the church. This is described in the book of Revelation.

The gospel of John is written to the whole world, both Jews and Gentiles. It contains many passages about who Jesus Christ the Lord is and how salvation is just by faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ and is guaranteed forever from that moment of belief (John 3:14-18, 3:36, 6:47, 10:28-30, 11:25-26). However almost all of the gospel of John is written about events that occurred before the crucifixion and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, the fully revealed gospel of salvation is given in the letters of Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles. The letters of Paul that are written to us, Romans through Philemon, all begin with “Paul” (2 Thess 3:17). Paul is “the apostle of the Gentiles” (Rom 11:13) and his letters preach, declare, and defend the gospel of Jesus Christ (Rom 1:15-16, 1 Cor 15:1-4, Phil 1:17, Rom 15:16, 2 Tim 4:17). Note again that the epistle to the Romans is the preaching of the gospel of Christ.

**So here is a reading plan.** If you have not read the Bible or are not that familiar with the Bible, read the whole Bible from beginning to end so you know what it says. The disadvantage to this is that parts of the Old Testament can be quite tedious. So, you could just skip the tedious parts. Or you could just defer reading the Old Testament, except for Genesis 1-22, and skip to reading the whole New Testament. Or you could skip directly to the gospel of John, later Acts (Acts 9-28) and Paul’s letters. From then on, read Paul’s letters as many times as possible. Then less frequently, the gospel of John and later Acts (9-28). Then even less frequently the rest of the New Testament. Finally, read the Old Testament the least frequently of all, with the exception of reading Genesis 1-22 more often than the rest of the Old Testament. This way, you will have concentrated your efforts on the doctrine of the church and the key to understanding all scripture, which is Paul’s letters (2 Tim 2:7, 2 Peter 3:15-16).

There are very many names of people and places in the Bible. Many are unfamiliar. So, to learn correct pronunciation, an audio version of the King James Bible is a good idea,

especially a dramatized version which really helps with recall. You can read along while listening. You can listen while in your car or walking.

If you are having a group Bible study or fellowship with a church in a house, then reading while listening to Paul's letters will give you some of the best sermons ever. All churches should frequently do this too. Go through the whole letter and then discuss what is actually written. You could break the letter up and have discussions after each chapter. You could start off such gatherings by breaking bread and sharing a meal or some food. This is a great time to fellowship with each other. After that, sing some good Christian songs. After that, you can spend time learning the word of God, especially Paul's letters.

If you read or listen to the Bible 15 minutes per day, you could read all of Paul's letters at least 20x, and the Gospel of John and later Acts 3x, and the rest of the New Testament in a year. If you read or listen to the Bible 30 minutes per day, you could read Paul's letters at least 30x, the Gospel of John and later Acts 5x, the rest of the New Testament and the entire Old Testament once in a year. Imagine how many times if you continue this for more years.

When reading the Bible, read in faith, believing everything it says. Modern science has produced skepticism in miraculous events. But this just stems from the false assumption that there is no God. Satan "deceives the whole world", sometimes when modern science uses the no God assumption. "With God all things are possible" (Matt 19:26), including miraculous events.

The more you read or study the word of God, especially Paul's letters, the more you will be able to discern truth from error. You will be able to recall verses, phrases, and passages without even trying to memorize them. You can also recognize deception easier.

It is good to have a hard copy of the King James Bible to read and study. You can mark it up by highlighting important passages, even color coding by topic. You could also make use of an online Bible site or an app. The big advantage with today's technology, you have access to it almost wherever you go. You can also use it for quick searches. Just type a word or any phrase to see if it is even in the Bible. Pay attention to determine if it is in Paul's letters. Make sure to use the King James Bible.

The Bible explains how to understand the word of God. Isaiah 28 contains one of those instructions. "Precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept" (Isa 28:10). A Biblical precept is a fundamental statement of truth that is absolutely clear. John 1:1-18 contains a set of precepts of who Jesus Christ is. It is clear and undeniable. John 3:14-18 is the precept of how one is saved forever by faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ. Some other important precept passages are Acts 16:30-31, Rom 1:16, 1 Cor 15:1-4, Rom 11:13 and Gen 1. At the end of this paper is a set of scripture references

organized by topic. These scriptures define fundamental precepts. For some of these topics, the references should be considered in the order listed.

While right division leads to recognizing the gospel of John, later Acts (9-28), and especially Paul's letters as written to us, the saved Gentiles, there is another way to apply right division. If a passage, verse, or phrase sounds like damnation, it is not written to us, or the subject of the passage is being misunderstood. Salvation is guaranteed forever, by grace at the moment of faith in the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ and His shed blood as the complete, finished and only payment for all our sins.

The reason that it is important to rightly divide the word of God and get the precepts correct is that in "the last days perilous times shall come" (2 Tim 3:1). "Evil men and seducers will wax worse and worse deceiving and being deceived" (2 Tim 3:13). Many will subtly preach "another Jesus", "another gospel" and "another spirit" (2 Cor 11:1-4). Paul is to present the church as "a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Cor 11:2) and Philadelphia is warned to "let no man take thy crown" (Rev 3:12).

God is not burdensome to His children and makes things simple so that we are not deceived. So, while "all scripture is given by inspiration of God", the Almighty has made it easy for us. Instead of equally studying almost 800,000 words in the whole Bible, Paul's letters are the doctrine of the church and the key to understanding all scripture. These 13 letters, Romans through Philemon, have a bit over 40,000 words and all begin "Paul". Thus "rightly dividing" allows you to concentrate your efforts and get things right. Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, explains it all (2 Tim 2:7).

Those that get the gospel of salvation (the gospel of Christ) correct, mostly use the letters of Paul, combined with what is said by or about Jesus Christ in the gospel of John. They also rightly divide the word in that the saved Gentiles are not under the law given in the Old Testament to the children of Israel. They also know precept must be upon precept and context is important (Isa 28:9-10). Finally, they believe the Bible is completely true and nothing else is needed to determine truth (2 Tim 3:16-17). The areas of variance in lesser doctrines come from using an incorrect precept or not rightly dividing.

Those that do not get the gospel of salvation correct have false precepts, and do not rightly divide (Isa 28:13). They may not quite believe the entire Bible is true or many times will have additional writings that are added, possibly an additional book or catechism. Unfortunately, that ignores the command of God to "add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Prov 30:6).

Use the King James Bible exclusively. Since the 1960s, there has been a proliferation of new bible versions. Unfortunately, many of these contain a number of changes, and

many of these changes are serious errors because they now consider what a small set of manuscripts say. Sinaiticus and Vaticanus are two of those manuscripts.

Multiple versions of THE word of God or THE Bible makes no sense and is confusing. The Bible says, "God is not the author confusion ... in all churches of the saints" (1 Cor 14:33). So, God did not author multiple conflicting versions. Paul wrote that we should "all speak the same thing" but that is impossible with different conflicting versions. The word of God says, "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven" (Ps 119:89). So, God has only one version not many. Also note that in the declaration of the gospel in 1 Cor 15:3-4, the phrase "according to the scriptures" appears twice. So, God warns that changes to the Bible could be an attack of the gospel of salvation itself. Unfortunately, that is the nature of some of the changes in these many new versions. These new versions have errors which make them inconsistent internally, but Christ said, "the scripture cannot be broken". So, these new versions are not THE scripture. "THE whole armor of God" includes "THE word of God", so these new versions are not "THE whole armor of God". These new versions contain things that are proven to be not true, that is, lies. Satan is "the father of it", that is lies. Christ said to the Father, "thy word is truth", so these many new versions are not the word of God. The word of God says, "God that cannot lie", so again these new versions are not the word of God. The word of God says that the word of God is "sharper than any two-edged sword", these new versions are a dull plastic spoon in comparison. These many versions which conflict with each other and are self-contradictory in many places appear in "the last days" when "evil men and seducers wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived". They appear in the last church age "the church of the Laodiceans" which is "lukewarm".

Consider that in 1960, which Bible version would you have read? Not a new version because none of these many new versions even existed. The only answer is the King James Bible or possibly the Geneva Bible which is nearly the same. The same answer is true from 1611 to 1960. The claim is that Sinaiticus and Vaticanus are the earliest and best manuscripts. They are not. They were written about 300 years after the originals and were modified in the centuries since. They disagree with the vast majority of manuscripts (the majority across geographic area, languages and across the centuries) in thousands of places. They also disagree with each other in thousands of places. It is delusional to use them at all. They could not possibly be the best and they are not the earliest.

The number of errors in these many new versions are many and touch on a large number of doctrines. They remove many of the proofs that Christ is God, even adding things that deny that Christ is God. They lower the titles of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some even accuse Christ of sin. They remove many passages about worship of Christ in the gospel accounts. They add works for salvation and even show salvation as a process. They add things that show losing salvation. They promote bearing false witness, pride, fornication, and abortion. They preach another Jesus, another gospel, and another spirit. They destroy many important warnings and prophecies, many of these are

essential to protecting the gospel of Christ. They promote idolatry, pantheism, and new age spiritualism. They remove Paul as the apostle of Christ and remove right division. These last changes switch the gospel from the crucifixion, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ to the gospel of the kingdom sent to the Jews in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. This also further reduces the titles of Christ. Again, many of these changes are serious errors because they now consider what a small set of manuscripts say. Sinaiticus and Vaticanus are two of those manuscripts.

Unfortunately, the language of the King James Bible is a bit old. The text of most King James Bibles available today is from circa 1769. Some of the spelling has not been updated. Some of the words are also unfamiliar, although the Bible has a built-in dictionary, and the definition is fairly obvious. Online dictionaries are available. Some of the verb endings are antiquated. The King James Bible uses the words “thee”, “thou”, “thy”, “thysself”, “thine”, and “ye”. The ones that begin with “t” are second person singular pronouns. The distinction between singular and plural second person pronouns is not used much in today’s English. Today’s English uses “you”, “your”, “yours”, and “yourself” only. However, in the original languages that the originals were written in, that distinction does exist. Without that distinction, a passage or verse could be misinterpreted, although most can be understood correctly.

While the language of the King James Bible is a bit old, I strongly advise you to use the King James Bible exclusively and not any new bible version at all. An audio version of the King James Bible can help.

All scripture passages and references are from the King James Bible, the word of God in English.