

Congratulations! If you are reading this pamphlet, it is likely that you are reading, preparing to read, or considering reading the Bible, which is God's word. Within the Bible are sixty six books in which you can learn about God and what he requires of you.

People often turn to meditation, church attendance, feelings, others' beliefs, circumstances, etc. to hear from God. But that is not the best way for you to hear from God. The **best** way to hear from God is to read HIS WORD!

Some of things the Bible declares about itself:

**Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God is quick (alive), and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

**Psalms 12:6-7** The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.

**2 Timothy 3:16** All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness

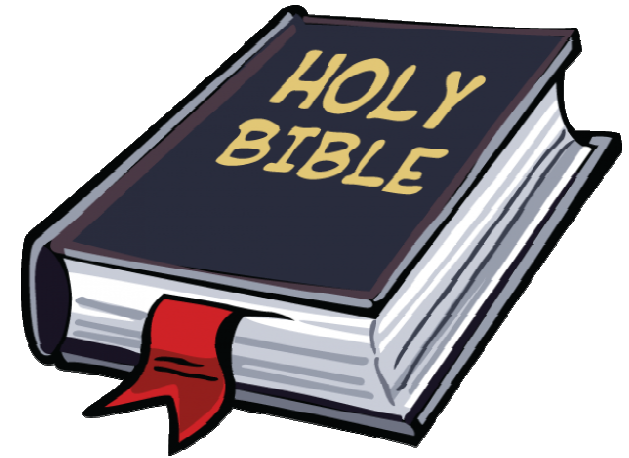
Caution: A multitude of books have been written about God and his word. Although some writings may be profitable, none will speak to you as God's word does, for they are of men.

Likewise, many Bibles contain commentary notes about certain verses. These can be helpful, but recognize these comments are of (fallible) man and are not God's word.

Bible Translations and the authority of the King James version: In recent times, there have been many new translations of the Bible. Most claim to have been written to make the text more readable than the old English of the King James Bible. That may have been the intent, but unfortunately, there are many verses which have lost the same meaning as that initially written in the KJV. Some examples are: Luke 4:4 / Mark 9:44, 46, 48 / Luke 2:33 / Acts 8:37 / Colossians 2:18. There are many more. Numerous lectures are available on-line on this subject.

Reading God's word is a journey that will not end. You won't regret a single minute of time spent with God in his word.

For best results, a literal interpretation of the Bible is recommended.



## Tips for **READING, UNDERSTANDING, and STUDYING** the **BIBLE**

Let's get started:

## READING:

When Jesus had gone forty days without eating and was tempted to turn stone into bread he replied, "It is written that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." (Luke 4:4).

This seems a strange thing for him to say. But if we consider that we are comprised of three parts: body, soul, and spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:23), and if we understand that we must nurture (feed) our spirit, then his reply makes sense. Jesus shows us that he was more concerned about nurturing his spirit with the word of God than nurturing his body with food.

In the same manner, if we understand that our spirit is nurtured by God's word, we need to spend time frequently and regularly reading the Bible.

## UNDERSTANDING

To properly understand the Bible, one must recognize that it is God's progressive revelation of his dealings with people throughout history. It is essential to understand that God gave **different instructions to different people at different times**. This principle is called "dispensationalism."

We are very fortunate to live today during a period commonly referred to as the "**dispensation of grace**," during which we may receive salvation by simply believing on the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ to pay for our sins (Ephesians 3:2). **This concept is taught at length throughout the Apostle Paul's writings (Romans to Philemon). These books are those that are directly relevant to us in this current age.**

It is a disappointing phenomenon that the vast majority of Christianity does not recognize Paul's authority as our apostle. Instead, there is a tendency to consider all books of the New Testament as instruction to the Body of Christ (a term for the Church, which is comprised of believers in Jesus Christ). But this is not correct.

All books of the Bible, except Paul's epistles (letters), are focused on God's plan to establish Israel as a nation of priests (Exodus 19:6) through which the world will be blessed (Genesis 22:18), with Jesus establishing His Kingdom of Heaven on earth (Revelation 22).

Once you understand the different gospels of Paul and Peter (Gospel of Grace and the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven), and the different purposes that God has for the Church (Body of Christ) and for Israel, many of the "contradictions" of the Bible will be resolved.

All the Bible is FOR us, revealing the character of God, describing how he created the universe, revealing his love toward us, and how he came to reconcile us to him at the cross. But not all the Bible is written TO us. Understanding what is **FOR** you and what is **TO** you will go a long way in giving you a better understanding of God's word.

## STUDYING

God commands us to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15)

Regularly reading the Bible is great, but if you really want to grow into a deeper relationship with God and gain the treasures of knowledge and wisdom, and to please him, then study His word.

- Memorize verses
- Learn the scripture well enough to be able to teach others
- Participate in Bible studies
- Watch and listen to others who have studied the Bible and have knowledge to share.

Recommended site: Columbus Bible Church  
[www.columbusbiblechurch.org](http://www.columbusbiblechurch.org)