



## Personal Corner: Are You Growing?

Scripture itself teaches us to read and study the Bible. As a writer, I often wonder how to effectively encourage others to see that this is God's priority for them. Satan uses the world system to blind saints to the great value of reading, with busyness, distractions, and subtle lies.

God's mind on this issue is clear throughout His Word. *"Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes."* (Deut. 11:18) Further, in Job 23:12: *"...I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food."*

So, how often do you eat? Much more, we are to take in God's eternal food. If there's one way to grow and live godly, that is, faith in the Word, what would wisdom say?

Christ **IS** the Word (John 1:1-14), and taking in the Scripture forms Christ in you. Paul says, *"...give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine...meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all."* (I Tim. 4:13-15) How do you 'give yourself wholly?' Could it be by reading, studying, mediating, and praying?

We have ideal provisions to help us understand: The Spirit, completed Word, and knowing the Scripture written 'to us' in Romans-Philemon. **(To Do:** Study Deut. 11:18, Job 23:12, Prov. 1-4, Is. 55:8-11, Matt. 13:18-23, Rom. 10:17, Phil. 4:7-9, I Thess. 2:13, II Tim 2:15, II Tim 3:16, Heb. 4:2 & 12 and Heb. 5:11-14) **Grow in God's Word.**

## Just A Minute! *With Scripture*

The King James Bible is used for references. Verses may be underlined/made bold for emphasis.

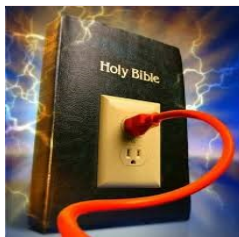


Each assembly is a living organism with a distinct personality determined by it's members, having particular qualities. As saints are perfected in wisdom and conviction, they can profoundly affect one another. Some even choose to be addicted to serving. *"I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have **addicted themselves** to the ministry of the saints)."* (I Corinthians 16:15)

Members, even those in charge, are on a learning journey and can graciously encourage one another. *"For the love of Christ constraineth us..."* (I Cor. 5:14) Ongoing perfection occurs as we renew our mind: *"...that ye may stand perfect & complete in all the will of God."* (Col. 4:2)

Each member is uniquely important to the whole, yet no Church functions with full maturity in all areas. Leaders have the job to train members and are to be highly esteemed: *"...submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth."* (I Cor. 16:16)

What can you do? Paul instructs: *"...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."* 'Shine as lights,' exposing the treasure within, *"...holding forth the word of life..."* (Phil. 2:12-16) As you endure and minister to others, your own growth is magnified. What a perfect design!



### Thought for the Month

'Plug into the source,' God's Word, to access His power and a wealth of treasures. These are actually your provisions. Do you know what they are and how to use them? Study the Scriptures to reap the eternal benefits; *"...we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."* (II Cor. 4:7) **Think on this!**

## Reading The Bible Together!

In January, a number of saints determined to read through the Bible this year, desiring accountability from one another. At this point, most are at different places, because life interruptions can be unavoidable. Maybe all of us will finish it this year, but maybe not. It is all grace and has been a glorious experience to encourage one another in love.

Scripture is your spiritual power source to live unto God. Reading it will 'pull the film of darkness' off your eyes,' clarifying more sound doctrine to enable holes and gaps in your understanding to be filled in. Meditation brings together seemingly disjointed Scriptural pieces in order to grow.

When going through the Bible, many admit that some chapters discourage them in their reading i.e. Hard to pronounce genealogies, description of building the Temple, but also the numerous laws, ordinances, sacrifices, and holy days. How can you 'push through' reading these seemingly irrelevant, and thus, somewhat boring chapters?

First, approach it with God's mind: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning..." (Romans 15:4) and "...the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God," teaching us even the difficult passages. (I Cor. 2:10)

Second, years ago I finally realized that there are many important underlying teachings to know throughout the Scriptures. For years, I just skimmed or skipped sections, but 'all the pieces' work together to fully renew our minds.

A comprehensive structure is being formed in the inner man, using all the Scripture. Minimally, the Old Testament recounts God's history with man, but it also provides the groundwork to understand details in Paul's epistles. 'Rightly dividing the Word,' helps you understand what to apply in your life. (II Tim. 2:15) Trust God's ways are always designed for your good. All of His Word is for you!

A few examples:

**-Numbering the Nation of Israel:** Scripture records individuals and families. It provides irrefutable historical proof, stirs up the facts of history,

and includes numbers, names, and places, which have specific meanings. These names and numbers teach a doctrinal story when their definitions are understood. (**To Do:** Use a Bible name dictionary and numerology resource to define names and numbers.)

**-Laws/sacrifices:** This listing can be wearisome, but specifies the heaviness of keeping the Law. While it is a glimpse of God's righteousness and character, it burns the futility of the law system in your mind, but also, that you need Christ. Even grace believers put themselves & others under the law, so this reminder is most needful for all.

**-Building the Temple:** God's design requires tedious work to construct the instruments and building. Each measurement, item, color, and material represents something bigger. It is a blueprint of the heavenly Temple. It teaches God's organization, perfect standards, man's need for the Lord's help, and how His ways are far above man's. "*For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*" (Isaiah 55:9)

Join us today; begin in Genesis and get as far as you can reading through the Bible. Generally, it seems reading three chapters per day will make it happen in a year, but go at your own rate, depending on your goals and life situation. Get others to join you! Make a way to teach grace, encourage others to stay in the Word, and find opportunities to discuss questions and new insights, while getting together for fellowship.

**Let us know how you are doing!**

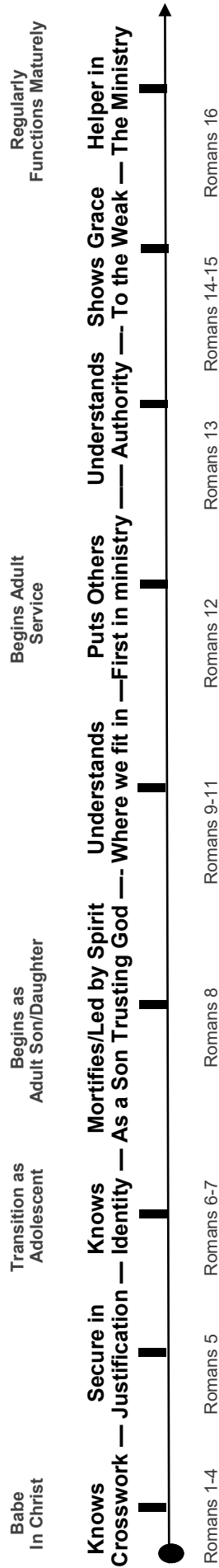






## WHERE ARE YOU? Spiritual Growth Timeline in Romans

**Timeline Purpose:** To assist in understanding how the book of Romans is progressively laid out for edification. Slowly review it, thinking about how God establishes believers. It is also an evaluation tool to obtain a 'general idea' of where you or others are functioning spiritually. Observe behavior or specific Bible questions and use this to gain insight into where you or others are functioning in Romans and how to proceed to make changes or help others mature and be established. (Romans 1:11)



### Roman's Growth Timeline

This timeline is designed to guide believers in reading the book of Romans with understanding. Paul knew that the churches at Rome needed ALL of the doctrine contained in the epistle in order to be established, just as we do today. (Romans 1:11 & 16:25-26)

**Personal Note:** Years ago, I realized that I didn't really know where I was in my spiritual maturity. Too much of my learning was data and facts in my head, without heart understanding. So, I decided to take this 'Bible head knowledge' and make it my own to gain personal conviction. I started to read differently; purposing to be led by the Spirit. I began slowly in Paul's epistles, Romans-Philemon. I started in his first book, Romans, and determined NOT to 'check' commentaries or resources. To my delight, in time, God took the Scripture and placed it in my heart, renewing/fine-tuning areas of inaccurate thinking, misplaced pieces, and remnants of religious thinking. He clarified many passages, and helped me to regularly experience 'light bulb moments,' that is, coming to new Bible insights. The Father was 'able' to teach me by His Spirit; just me and God. We are fully able to trust God the Spirit within us to help us grow!

**To Do:** Make the time to slowly read through Paul's epistles in the order God laid them out and determine to read in a new way. Ask yourself questions like these: Do I understand the terms I am reading? How is Paul building onto what he has already taught? Do I believe differently than what the verses are saying? When you finish reading and studying a section of Romans, then progress to ask additional questions like: *Chapter 1-4:* Am I clear about Christ's blood sacrifice and the issue of faith? *Romans 5:* Am I confident in my justification and eternal security, knowing I have a grace standing and peace with God? *Romans 6-7:* Do I continue in sin and/or generally live under the law? Follow this pattern through Romans. Reflect and study these things! An additional question to ask whenever you read: Can I apply this in my life? Then, meditate on these things, reading and enjoying God's wonderful grace and kindness!

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Stamp

To:

**“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus...” (Romans 3:24)**



**‘On A Personal Side’**  
*We welcome feedback and questions.*

**From Our Readers**

*“I so appreciate the Newsletters. When they come in the mail, I open it up and read it right away; then, I reread the newsletters and look up the verses. Thank you! (Arizona)*

*“I am really grateful for the support and love you have shown me and my ministry. The newsletter is a good companion. I use it...to teach lessons; the insights really help in building my knowledge...” (Africa)*

*“I was so excited to get your books! I plan on starting a Bible study with my LGBTQ homeless youth very soon and I think this is going to be perfect.” (Arizona)*

*“We were blessed (at the Florida Retreat) by the truths you shared with us as you encouraged us to value and study God’s Word.” (Florida)*

**Could you use help?** Do you need a little encouragement to read or apply the Word in your life. Would it be useful to know where or how to study? Maybe you have been struggling with life issues and need a little assistance. Consider contacting a Church member or someone mature in the Scripture to help. **If this is not an option, call us at (804) 519-1210.**

Join Us In North Chesterfield, VA

**Bible Study Opportunities**

**1. Family Study**

Fridays 7:00-9:00 pm

Brian’s Topic: Overview of Old Testament

**2. Women’s Bible Study & Support**

Wednesdays at LaPrade Library

10:30am-12 pm

**3. Friday Women’s Study 1:00-3:00 pm**

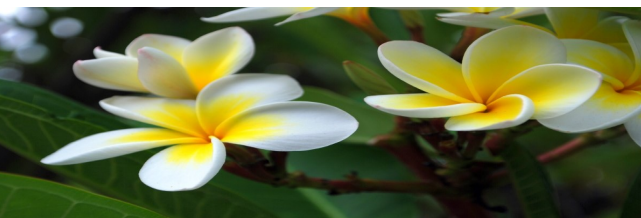
**Call for Info at (804) 519-1210**

**Where Are We Living?**

Of course, we live on earth; but consider it to be unfriendly territory. *“Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: we are not ignorant of his devices.” (II Cor. 2:11)* Saints will tend to walk in darkness if their minds are not constantly renewed. Satan’s beguiling doctrine blinds and veils Truth. He competes with God’s Word, being the great imitator & angel of light. *“And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.” (II Cor. 11:14)*

Since we are in his terrain, (Eph. 2:2-3) keep separate, and use the ‘armour of light’ as protection and power to negotiate hurdles, strongholds, and barriers so you are not derailed or side-tracked. (Romans 13:12) Focus above, walking by faith to have victory. *“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet **the inward man is renewed day by day.**” (II Cor. 4:16)*

It’s not JUST about going to church or Bible studies, but rather, it is a personal investment in the Word; a relationship is being built with your Father. Don’t be blinded, *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ...” (II Cor. 5:10)*



**We are now on YouTube!** If you need help with Romans, we are taping a basic review of it, chapter-by-chapter. We will post new videos as they are made. The *2017 Florida Retreat sessions* will also be posted when they are done being edited. Go to our YouTube channel: **Christian Life Coach Support Services.**