



## Should We Read All The Bible?

Over the years, talking to saints from various Church backgrounds revealed that many believers just read particular sections of Scripture: Saints may only focus on Psalms or Proverbs, or the gospels, Matthew thru John. Those who understand Paul's distinct ministry to the Gentiles, may exclusively read his letters, Romans to Philemon. It benefits us to study any of those books. Doctrine written 'to the Body of Christ' is especially crucial. However, upon examination, every book of the Bible is important to read. Neglecting any of it will affect edification. When reading outside of Paul's letters, context is especially important (i.e. 'to whom' it is written, & the subject/topic, when, where, why, & how).

*"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." (II Timothy 3:16)*  
And also: *"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." (Romans 15:4)*

**To Do:** If you haven't read through the Bible for some time or desire more familiarity with all Scripture, join our Bible Reading Group this January. The goal will be to read a little each day, progressing **at your own pace**. It is all grace, no pressure. (If you want to finish in a year, a Daily Reading Schedule is available.) Those who would like to join us, have questions, or feel they need help to stay on track, call:

**Brian/Deborah: (804) 519-1210**

## Just A Minute! *With Scripture*

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

### Did The Corinthians Need To Be Led By The Spirit?

Once we are saved, trusting that Christ died on the cross and paid for all our sins, immediately God gives us His Spirit. One reason He did this was to help us know what He has prepared for us in His Word. *"But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God...Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."* (I Corinthians 2:10,12)

As we read, yielding to Truth and 'led by the Spirit,' (Rom. 8:14) we are able to learn 'the deep things.' These 'things' are a structure of sound doctrine that can grow us unto spiritual adulthood. Our great privilege is to labor with God and live our life out of who we are in Christ. Through visions and revelations by Jesus Christ (II Cor. 12:1,7), Paul became our wise master builder. Romans-Philemon are the core building materials needed to mature our inner man.

*"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."* (I Corinthians 3:10-11)

Romans will establish saints in this foundation. *"For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established."* (Rom. 1:11) This teaching enables believers to make basic judgments/decisions to live godly and negotiate life's challenges. Once the basics are acquired, saints are readied to build further on this foundation. However, the Corinthians did not write these doctrines on their hearts, resulting in ungodly judgments.

The importance of being led by the Spirit ought to be self-evident. The Corinthians, as well as saints today, need the Spirit to understand and live the Word. This develops an intimate, ongoing relationship with our Heavenly Father. We are to 'take heed' to build up in sound doctrine to attain His life: *"That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."* (I Corinthians 2:5)



Living As Who You Are In Christ

## I Corinthians 2: The Spirit Can Teach Us The Deep Things Of God



The Corinthian's did not maintain faith in the teaching they received; other things were exalted instead. (their own wisdom/strength) Thus, Paul taught them by example, to stand fast in the wisdom and power of God: *"And I was with you in **weakness**, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was **not with enticing words of man's wisdom**, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."* (I Cor. 2:3-4) Explore the verses further for understanding/application.

**1) Read through Chapter 2 to determine the main theme:** Notice key words and topics to help you decide what title you would give to this chapter.

**2) Meditate on things to stir up doctrine:** a) Read and think on Verse 4. What is meant by 'but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power.' Did any verses come to mind? b) Meditate on what Verse 5 means: Describe a saint whose 'faith stands in the wisdom of men.' Now, explain what it would be like for a believer's 'faith to stand in the power of God.' How are they different? Think about verses. Do you have a better idea of the meaning of these phrases?

**3) Notice things listed in Scripture:** Read through Verses 6-12. This section provides clarity about 'the wisdom of God.' Notice what is listed. Questions you will be able to answer: How it is revealed, to whom it is and is not revealed, and by what method.

**4) Time markers in Scripture are significant:** Notice when 'God ordained (ordered or decreed) this mystery' in Verse 7. Meditate on reasons why He kept it hidden so long. Was God afraid or did He have a purpose in keeping this secret? What was it?

**5) Do a word search:** a) Read Verses 9-16. Meditate upon what this section teaches you about the Spirit and write it down. Do you have questions? What are they? b) Use a concordance to study what Romans-Galatians teaches about 'the Spirit.' Were you able to answer a few of these questions, or at least, get clarity on some of them?

**6) Compare verses and look at detail:** a) The mind of Christ: Read I Cor. 2:16, then think about the context, which is, Verses 9-16. Do Rom. 8:29 & 12:2 help you understand how to gain the mind of Christ? b) Who is the 'we' referring to in I Cor. 2:16? Paul & his companions, believers at Corinth, or all saints?

*\*Newer students: Focus on 'reading' Scripture rather than on using many new study insights. When you're ready, try answering a few questions above.*



There are many 'mysteries' spoken of in the Bible. A 'mystery' in Scripture refers to something God has kept secret for a period of time. For example, the mystery in Romans 16:25 reveals the significance of the cross of Christ, which establishes a saint. *"Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to **my gospel**, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began."* Strategically, God kept Paul's gospel a mystery.

I Corinthians 1:18 explains the distinct importance of the cross to those at Corinth: *"For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."* However, Paul could only teach these saints basic Truths (milk) about the gospel, due to their immature spiritual condition. *"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ and him crucified."* (I Cor. 2:2) This doctrine seems to be the foundational Truths Paul taught them when he was with them a year and a half; from which they unfortunately departed. (Acts 18:11)

Some of the things Paul desired to teach were too 'meaty' for them to digest, as they were still babes in Christ. (I Cor. 3:1) Advanced doctrine, such as is found in Ephesians, 'the hidden wisdom,' was designed for saints 'perfected' with basic spiritually understanding. *"Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect...we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory."* (I Cor. 2:6-7) As the Corinthians, or any saint believe fundamental issues of the gospel, they're able/ready to process the 'meatier' teachings.



## 1 Corinthians 2:16: "...But We Have The Mind Of Christ."

The 'mind of Christ' relates to acquiring understanding in the basics (Romans) to make decisions using the doctrine. (Rom.1:11) God empowers the inner man with Christ-like thinking for application to live & serve. He also rewards our labor: *"...every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God..."* (1 Cor. 2:8-9)

Sadly, the Corinthians did not have Christ's mind, but became carnal, even babes, not wanting 'to put aside their flesh' to work with God: *"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."* (1 Cor. 2:14)

The Father wants to have intimately fellowship and labor together with us, using His Word/prayer. He relays important things He knows will help us and, in the process, we develop a closeness to God. In these trying times, we ought to surely cherish this great opportunity!

## What Is Your Primary Source: God's Word Or Man's Wisdom?

Over time, Satan's influence on believers has been great, beginning in the Garden of Eden. We are not to be ignorant of his evil tactics, as he is ever desiring to interfere with God's ways and His Church, that is, saints of the living God. We are to be educated and stay aware, *"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices."* (II Corinthians 2:11)

The Corinthians fell for his luring ways, yielding to man's wisdom/power, rather than what Christ, through Paul, had taught them. They gloried in their own self-exalted ways and trusted in other things. Thus, they were 'puffed up,' which inhibited their growth in foundational issues that could mature them from babes to spiritual adults. The Corinthian Church generally functioned as unbelievers; the natural man, and *"...receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God..."* (1 Corinthians 2:14)

Today, we see similar concerns in mainstream Christianity: Sunday services contain simpler, lighter messages, using fewer verses, focusing on personal stories/music/social time. 'Book studies,' use material written by man and focus on this person's views 'about' Scripture. These are slowly replacing true Bible study; direct reading/examination of Scripture in context, comparing verses with verses. Some dear saints stay stuck here, either unaware or lacking desire to use Scripture as their direct source. As a result, growth is limited, and they often miss out on direct communion with God. Saints have the option to move forward, yielding/trusting the Spirit to teach them directly from His Word.

**TO DO:** Is God's Word your authority/direct source? If this is a challenge for you, consider making a change. Step out in faith. Simply, read Scripture aloud with a friend/family and discuss what it's teaching, keeping in mind its application for life. *"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."* (Rom. 11:36)

## Just A Minute With Scripture



Since each individual and life experience is unique, every person's journey of faith is quite different. A person does

not jump from being an unbeliever to a strong believer and Bible student quickly; there are many stepping stones that prompt maturity.

Certain people, experiences, Churches, books, etc. can impact one's faith walk. A saint may attend a group or follow certain teachings that are 'less than ideal' for a time, yet God is able to help them to move forward and learn. (Through trials, saints can make progress in their journey, but they can also hit obstacles and get stuck, blind, or derailed.)

We can view our dear brothers/sisters in great patience & love, avoiding judgments and encouraging growth, recalling that God is patient with us. *"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand...Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."* (Romans 14:4-5) **Grace works!**

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Stamp

**To:**

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

## Oh, We So Need A Break

Life can sweep us up into a busy, even frenzied pace, dealing with a myriad of challenges. By the end of the day we can be frazzled and overwhelmed. Is there even time to give God the glory for His goodness, relax to care for ourselves, or simply reflect on the day. Slowing down seems impossible.

We greatly desire to detach ourselves from the busyness and problems, even for a moment. Truly, it is possible! *“Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.” (Col. 2:2)*

**Take the ‘15 Minute Challenge’:** For one week, purpose to do the three simple things below, then evaluate its impact on you. Give this small bit of time, just 15 minutes a day, to God.

- 1)** Before getting out of bed each day and before going to sleep at night, use 2-3 minutes to thank God for the spiritual and physical things in your life. Think of new ways to yield your life to Him.
- 2)** Before starting each day, take 5 minutes to open your Bible and look at a verse, like Philippians 4:8. Meditate on one or two things.
- 3)** Stop to take at least one ‘mini-break’ during the day: Be quiet and close your eyes for 2-5 minutes, to leave ‘this world’ to commune with God within your mind and inner man. When you put yourself in His realm, the pressures and worries fall away. (An unused office, supply room, or even a restroom can serve as a quiet place in a pinch.)

Reflect: If this experience was beneficial, use what you learn. Personalize and expand the quiet times, continuing to improve time with God, reading/thinking about the Scriptures. Prayerfully interrupt stressful times in your day for a moment of silence with God. Take back your life and yield it to your Father. *“...yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.” (Romans 6:13)* **Take God-breaks!**



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

### From Our Readers

“I’m thankful to be a part of our little group. (Virginia)

“I really rejoiced where I last left off in the Romans study, chapter 12. The questions in the ‘Romans Study Guide’ are so helpful to see what lies just below the surface.” (North Carolina)

“Fighting the flesh and winning out with God’s grace!” (Virginia)

“Thanks for your time and listening ear. Love you. (Virginia)

“Oh, hi sweet sister, you’ve been such a helper on this journey.” (Washington)

### Opportunities To Study

In North Chesterfield, VA

- 1. Brian’s Family Study: Fri.: 7-9 pm**
- 2. Women’s Bible Study & Support Wed.: 10:30-12 pm local library**  
Call for Info at (804) 519-1210

Request email/postal subscriptions/past issues or forward questions and ideas using contact information above.