

Just A Minute! With Scripture

The King James Bible is used for all references. Verses may be made bold or numbered for emphasis.

Theme: II Corinthians 3 The Wonder of a Lamb

Consider how a little lamb completely relies on his shepherd to keep him safe. If the sheep herder is not consistently watchful and caring, the lamb's life is greatly endangered. What can be learned? We know that since the beginning of creation God has proved Himself to be all-powerful, all-knowing, and a loving Father. He is fully able to be our perfect provider in this dangerous world. Do you truly rely on Him in your life, both in the daily challenges and big obstacles? If not, do you know how this can be learned?

God does invisible work within you to develop this faith. He says: *"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."* (Rom. 10:17) This develops confidence. Take a moment now to read *Philippians 2:5-8*. The Lord Jesus humbled himself, being God, to become a human being and servant. In love, He trusted God (Luke 22:42-44) to live, suffer, and die on the cross so you could live forever in heaven with Him. As you learn and believe how this power works, you can also walk through any circumstance relying on the depth of His great loving kindness toward you. We can mature to be able to teach and help others: *"Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men."* (II Cor. 3:2)

God takes the focus off our flesh, emotions, and concerns when we walk by faith. As we confidently live as His living epistle, others watch and learn about Him. Though the world is a very hard place, God has given us all things to rely on. He says, *"My grace is sufficient..."* (II Cor 12:9) As we learn about His power, wisdom, and exceeding love, we can be confident in God with an abiding trust to rest in Him: *"If God be for us, who can be against us?"* (Romans 8:31b)

Think on this: Paul is our example, yet other Bible characters also understood this faith. Esther, who realized she needed to walk by trusting to do what God said: *"...If I perish, I perish."* (Es. 4:16) All the Jewish saints of old, listed in *Hebrews 11*, had this faith: *"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report."* (Heb. 11:1-2) The challenges in life enable us to learn to depend on God by faith. Basically, it's our training ground for eternity. The lambs abiding reliance on the shepherd can remind us of the confidence we can learn in God.

Wisdom Teaches: Regularly read Scripture. It is spiritual sustenance for the spirit and soul. *"...which effectually worketh also in you that believe."* (I Thessalonians 2:13)



Are we self-destructive or do we embrace life? The only way we can be derailed is when we allow it. Wise choices are the key. Satan will have his way with us if we exalt fleshly desires and carnal choices. Will you allow him to render you ineffectual and prevent you from growing up from a babe (I Cor. 3:1-3) unto spiritual maturity? Purpose to let Christ and His life work within you.

God made us to be His servants: *"Who also hath made us **able ministers** of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."* (II Cor. 3:6)

A few questions to think about this:

1) Who made us "able?" God enabled us, but it is only possible in Christ as we believe His Word: Look up/meditate on: Romans 4:21, 11:23, 14:4; I Cor. 10:13.

2) What does "able ministers" mean? Search out these terms in Paul's epistles: After doing a word study on "able" and "ministers," use a dictionary to find more information. This can help you increase your faith in order to live it in daily circumstances.

3) What are we taught in Romans 6-8? Led by the Spirit, study/meditate upon these chapters. It's about our new identity & accessing His wisdom/power!

Am I Saved From God's Wrath?

You are saved when you believe that what Christ did on the cross paid for all sin. Your sins ARE then forgiven. He said on the cross: *"When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, **It is finished:** and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."* (John 19:30) Decide to trust what His Word says!

You may not feel different at first, yet you have total peace with God. (Romans 5:1)



Study-Devotional on Galatians Using Study Tools



This Study-Devotional of Galatians provides an opportunity to expand your understanding of the epistle. Answer the questions below slowly, doing a few per week. Think on these things. (See if you can think of any other questions to study?)

Verses to read/study this Month: *Galatians 2:7-9:*
⁷*“But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; ⁸(For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:)* ⁹*And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.”*

1. What does “contrariwise” mean? To what does it refer? Cite the verse. Does this term help you? How?

2. Describe the “gospel of the uncircumcision” and the “gospel of the circumcision.” Why were these phrases selected and are they used in other places? Does this prove that there is more than one gospel?

3. The use of a parenthesis is interesting in *verse 8*. Why was it used & how does it help you understand?

4. Define the phrase, “wrought effectually.” *Verse 8* seems to be a comparison of Peter and Paul’s apostleship? What is it teaching? Did Peter and Paul’s apostleships focus upon the same group of people?

5. The three men listed were “pillars.” Describe this term. What did they believe about Paul’s ministry? What books did these men write, and to whom?

6. What does “the right hands of fellowship” mean? Has this ever happened to you? Describe it. Why did Paul need this to be done to enable his ministry?

7. Is the meeting that took place in *Galatians 2:1-10* the same as documented in *Acts 15*? If yes, what new information can you glean from what was provided?

What Do You Behold... A Wretched Man or New Creature?

II Corinthians 3:18

As a saint, do you find yourself seeing and feeling like “the Old Man,” though you know it has been crucified with Christ? (*Rom. 6:6*) Generally, your image in the mirror would be that of an imperfect, frustrated person, who always falls short. “*For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do...Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the bondage of this death?*” (*Rom. 7:19,24*) This is the critical eyes of condemnation, not God’s liberating grace.

However, we can learn to see ourselves as God does; forgiven and having His righteousness, because we are “in Christ:” “*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*” (*II Cor. 5:17*) We are this glorious new creature and Christ and His Word can work in us by the Spirit, transforming us into His image: “***But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.***” (*II Cor. 3:18*) This is like the transformation from a caterpillar to a butterfly. When we read, think about, and believe the Scriptures, our perspective changes: “*And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind...*” (*Rom. 12:2a*) This is a spiritual process that generates godly thinking within us: “*...But we have the mind of Christ.*” (*I Cor. 2:16*) Our mind is changed as we yield and let the Spirit lead. (*Rom 8:14*)

Think on this: It takes time to have your mind renewed. Purpose to move away from the “wretched man’s” thinking. Otherwise, Satan’s influence will continue to be manifest; sin will reign, along with pride, and self-exaltation. Take the time to study these things for yourself in the Word and meditate upon them. This will enable you to become aware of how to access God’s wonderful grace treasures and the new identity He has given to you, to live as an eternally beautiful and glorious “new creature!”





By Erin Young

Sharing the Gospel

Many of us today know the importance of sharing the gospel. But what exactly is the gospel? *"For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."* (1 Corinthians 15:3-4) Our job as members of the Body of Christ is to share this truth with as many as possible.

Look objectively at yourself to see how you need to grow spiritually!

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!" (1 Corinthians 9:16)

Paul tells us that he received this gospel in a mystery. *"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."* (Romans 16:25) No one knew about it before it was revealed to him. And he says that it is his gospel we are to believe and follow: *"In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel."* (Romans 2:16) *"Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel."* (2 Timothy 2:8)

He also makes the importance of how powerful the gospel is. *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."* (Rom. 1:16) We can take comfort in knowing that once we are in Christ, nothing can separate us from Him. We need to, and have the privilege to share this truth with everyone.

On A Personal Side

Question & Answers

by Deborah Johnson

Question 1: If God has really given us all things (Rom. 8:32), I think I am missing quite a few things. Can you please explain?

It is important to know that God never promises to provide for ALL our physical needs and wants. Actually, he desires that we learn contentment, relying on Christ to work in our inner man, as God instructed Paul (II Cor. 12:7-9, Phil. 4:11-12). He learned, *"And having food and raiment let us be therewith content."* (I Tim. 6:8)

On the other hand, God provides ALL the spiritual things that we need, once we are justified. *"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"* (Rom. 8:32) However, it takes time and maturity to realize what they are and know how to use them. They are contained in the Word, which enables us to endure/live for Him. God calls them the *"unsearchable riches of Christ."* (Eph. 3:8) and a *"treasure in earthen vessels."* (II Cor. 4:7) He provides for our spiritual needs to fortify our inner man (Phil. 4:13,19) for the difficulties of life, enabling us to make wise, godly decisions.

Question 2: Could you describe what the Bible says about the ways of the natural, unsaved man?

Ephesians 2:1-2 provides a succinct list of six characteristics in man, before he trusts Christ: *"And you hath he quickened, who were 1) dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past 2) ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, 3) the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 4) Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, 5) fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and 6) were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."* **To Do:** Also study Rom. 1:18-32.

Question 3: Does Scripture give us guidance for friendships?

The Word has a lot to say about friendships. Use this to begin your own study. We all have people in our lives, but are they godly and healthy? Who we choose to spend time with is important: *"Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"* (II Cor. 6:14) Our body is His living temple (vs.16), and we're His ambassadors. As members of His Body, we are to function on earth in His stead. (II Cor. 5:20) Friends have a great impact on us; choose wisely!

Meditate on the interactions you have, including family. Look at whether they are enticing you to do evil and pulling you down or encouraging and lifting you up to live godly. Strategically, determine whether to keep them

Food For Thought

Do you have a daily spiritual routine to help you grow? Some areas to consider: Thank God for everything He has given you, pray to be open to learn about the problems that plague you, and think on the Word to apply it.

in your life or minimize interactions. In some cases, some ought to be set aside. Evaluate your life regularly to make needed changes in love and grace, unto the Lord.

Christian Life Coach Support Services
 (804) 519-1210 - lifecoachesdjbj@yahoo.com
 Website: Christianlifecoachsupport.squarespace.com

Stamp

To:

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

Stuck and Unable to Break Free?

Have you ever felt trapped and wonder how to get out of a deep hole of problems or habitually bad ways of thinking? Most of us have felt this way at one time or another. Some are plagued with an issue their entire lives. We may eventually find a way to deal with them that works for a while, but eventually the problem returns and seems more grievous than before.

This is living life in our own power, without God. We believe ‘we can resolve it’ if we just try harder or find the right self-help/inner healing approach. This is man’s way, being under the law: *“For I know that in me (that is in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.” (Rom 7: 18)* God’s way works; it is grace. He instructs us to renew our mind: *“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)* Faith is developed by hearing and thinking on His Word. *(Rom. 10:17)* The Spirit empowers the Word to be effectual.

To access God’s power, try this simple 5-10 minute daily plan:

Week 1: Read one new Bible passage faithfully each morning; select a verse from Paul’s epistles (*Romans thru Philemon*).

Week 2: Along with a verse each day, include a prayer to your Heavenly Father, thanking Him for three new things. Start a list!

Week 3: Finally, add meditation to the verses you read and include a request in your prayer for a heart desire to grow.

*Do this consistently for two months and it can become a new spiritual habit. To further develop your own faith journey, pray and think on what you would like to do next, i.e. talk with God about how to grow or find a godly friend-mentor to help you. (Suggestions: If you need help finding someone, talk to your Pastor or email us for ideas: Lifecoachesdjbj@yahoo.com) God is in you to help you through the process. This is a great opportunity!

Christian Life Coach Support Services

Writers/Editors: Brian/Deborah Johnson
 Certified Christian Life Coaches
 (804) 519-1210 lifecoachesdjbj@yahoo.com
Website: Christianlifecoachsupport.squarespace.com

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