

## Just A Minute! *With Scripture*

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

### Opening Your Gift Package

The moment we trust that Christ paid for all sin on the cross and rose again, we are given many things. In a sense, every saint immediately receives a free 'salvation gift package' of spiritual benefits through the Lord Jesus Christ i.e. *"Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference."* (Rom. 3:22) Our new relationship with God includes many wondrous treasures. Below are a few of the many riches you can discover in Romans thru Philemon:

Romans 5: Justified, peace with God, access by faith into grace, a grace standing, able to rejoice in hope of God's glory, we can glory in tribulation, the Holy Ghost in us, God loves us, saved from wrath, reconciled to God, saved by His life, we have the atonement, and grace is able to reign.

As saints, we can be unaware of the many things we've been given. Yet, everything we have in Christ is meant to be explored, causing ever-increasing thanksgiving. Once we know of our God-given blessings, we are privileged to learn how to use them. As we attentively read the Word to seek the contents of our treasure box, we slowly unwrap our gift package. Many more riches will be found than just being forgiven, justified, and having eternal life, though these are truly marvelous! Much to be thankful for, indeed.

One example is to learn about 'peace' as we read: *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* (Rom. 5:1) As we think about it, we have a glorious 'at peace' relationship with God. There no longer is a sin barrier and no fear of judgment. We can progress in Paul's epistles to learn about the 'peace of God' and that it is designed to rule in our hearts, but also that the 'God of peace' can be with us. (Phil. 4:7-9, Colossians 3:15)

**To Do:** To open your gift package, read one of Paul's epistles and jot down as many blessings as you can. Meditate upon these things! Now go on to read another.

## Is Your Walk Pleasing to God?



Positionally, we are justified by faith and have peace with God. This shows we are secure & just in His sight. (Rom. 5:1) However, can God be displeased with our walk (how we live) as a believer?

Yes, we can grieve the Spirit of God by the choices we make and in our interactions with other saints: *"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."* (Eph. 4:30) If we are minding carnal things and walk in the flesh, contrary to what we know and who we are in Christ, He is not pleased: *"So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God."* (Romans 8:8)



The great news is that we are fully able to please Him when we live in the Spirit and grow, walking according to His Word and separate from this world and unrighteousness: *"No man that warreth entangleth himself*

*with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."* (II Tim. 2:4) Key passages, especially when studied in their context, can give clarity in how to please God:

-Colossians 1:10: *"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."*

-Colossians 3:20: *"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord."*

-I Thessalonians 2:4: *"But as we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God..."*



-I Thessalonians 4:1: *"...that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more."*

**Ponder this:** Dwelling on the Word renews the mind, teaching and empowering us to think as Christ does and to develop awareness of all God has, is, and will do for us. Thankfulness brings the desire to live godly to make wise choices to please Him. God gloriously has put all this in place so that we would be able to please Him in the details of life. *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me..."* (Gal. 2:20) So the question to ask: Is my walk pleasing God?



## Study Tool: Simply Read the Word (Part I)



Of all the options at our disposal, reading seems to be the most important study tool, as God says that taking in the Word renews our minds (*Rom. 12:2*). The terms 'read' or 'reading' are used 72 times in the Bible. The number of times a term is used can indicate its importance in Scripture. This tool is #26, on p.24 of "Exploring the Bible Using Study Skills," available on Amazon or free on our website (See top of p.1)

1. 'Reading' provides general insight into what was written. Reading can transition into studying, as we are prompted to examine the finer detail of a passage for

clarity, application, and underlying Truth, such as defining terms in a verse. Often, 'meditation' joins with reading and studying to consider and turn over ideas in one's mind to gain depth. Used together, they bring faith & conviction to become fully persuaded. (*Rom. 14:5*)

2. Prayerfully read to allow the Spirit to lead you: "*For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*" (*Rom. 8:14*) Consider what is said for understanding, but also meditate on it to develop wisdom about how to apply it in the details of your life.

3. Understanding what's read in the Word takes time; patience is needed. Reread verses, chapters, & books to digest the material to develop the mind of Christ.

## What Kind of Decisions Do You Make?

*"But I determine this with myself, that I would not come again to you in heaviness."* (*II Corinthians 2:1*) This verse, along with the response of the Corinthians gives us a glimpse of how to make godly (God-like) decisions. The book of *I Corinthians* was reproof and correction to this carnal Church (*II Timothy 3:16*). Paul made a decision within himself, deciding not to visit Corinth until the saints had time to apply the doctrine he had already sent. He did not want to inflict additional chastening: "*For out of much affliction and anguish of heart I wrote unto you with many tears; not that ye should be grieved, but that ye might know the love which I have more abundantly unto you.*" (*II Corinthians 2:4*)



The Corinthians needed to understand how they were functioning, that is, serving their carnal flesh. Once they understood, they had opportunity to be corrected, changing their behavior according to Paul's admonitions. Each saint, and especially those in leadership, needed to make a faith choice in response to the Truth. Titus brought Paul good news, as we see in *II Corinthians 7:7,9*: "*...when he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more...for ye were made sorry after a godly manner...*" Though it is never easy to put aside fleshly habits, the Church at Corinth as a whole, made a wise decision, correcting things precisely as Paul instructed.

**Think on this:** What can you glean from the response of Paul and the Church at Corinth to help you learn? Choose a personal situation that requires a decision to apply a few ideas below:

- 1) Pray. Determine in yourself that you desire to do all to the glory of God, as did our Apostle Paul: "*And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.*" (*Colossians 3:17*)
- 2) Consider the needs of others; prefer them above yourself i.e. Though personally grievous, Paul corrected Corinth to help them: "*Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.*" (*Rom. 12:10*)
- 3) Think/pray about related verses that you read or come to mind. How can they be applied? (*Philippians 2:12-13*)
- 4) Once you have clarity make a wise decision, as s did the Corinthians. Prayerfully revise your approach when needed, knowing it will please God. Remember:
  - 1) **Be thankful:** "*Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.*" (*II Cor. 2:14*)
  - 2) **God does the work in us:** "*Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.*" (*II Cor. 3:5*)
  - 3) **We are not able to do all things, but God is:** "*...through Christ which strengtheneth me.*" (*Philippians 4:13*)

## The Gospel and Our Loved Ones

By Erin Young

As believers we want others to understand the truth, especially our families. But how do we help them understand? If we lean on our own understanding, we fail. If we lean on the Word of God, we win. Many who don't believe the gospel, think they're undeserving. Which isn't wrong, none of us is deserving. *Romans 3:10-11: "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God."*



Many feel we are still under the law, that we must do something to gain salvation.

What does Scripture say about the law? *Romans 3:20: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin."* The law was never meant to be our salvation. It was meant to show us we need it.

So if the law isn't the answer, what is? *1 Corinthians 15:3-4: "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."* Paul tells us how we are saved. We are not under the law, but under grace. *Romans 6:14:*



*"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."*



It can be heartbreaking sharing with resistant family. If it feels

hopeless, just remember whose strength to lean on. *Romans 8:18: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."*

## On A Personal Side

# Question & Answers

by Deborah Johnson

**Question 1: My wife and I are Christians and would like to improve our marriage? Do you have advice from the Word?**

Three thoughts: First, if you do not read the Bible and pray together regularly, I would encourage you to put this in place. Purpose to have God at the center of your relationship. (*II Tim. 3:16*)

Second, when difficulties come, open the Word together. If your spouse isn't willing, you take a break from the situation to pray, read, and meditate on a passage to have a godly response. Then, return to the challenge to apply the Word. (*I Timothy 4:13-16*)

Third, make time to prayerfully read/discuss two passages together, focusing on how to apply them: **1) Romans 12** relates to being members, one of another. Your role as a brother and sister in Christ helps you to understand being members within the Body of Christ, but also how to function with each other. Think how this can help in your marriage. **2) Ephesians 5:** Note that this chapter also relays guidelines about behavior and interactions between all saints. (*vs. 1-21*) Then, it builds on this to provide specific instructions about the marriage roles. (*vs. 22-33*)

**Question 2: I am elderly, with physical limitations, and not able to attend Church any longer. How can I still have a ministry?**

-Develop a phone ministry with friends, church members, and family. Regularly call/write a note to encourage, or find how to pray or help them. Ask them if they would like to talk, study on the phone, or come over. Determine how often and when.

-Brainstorm with Church leadership on how you can help in the Church. i.e. call or send a card to the sick, homebound, or someone asking for support. Also, if you have the ability, offer to help pay a bill, support a ministry, or help someone in need.

-After consulting a leader at the Church, offer to make and donate an item to the Church or someone in need: a centerpiece, an afghan, a meal, or even send flowers. Basically, devise a plan to use your talents or the resources you have to bless others.

-Place a notice at your community center/library to offer phone Bible study or encouragement. Find ways to help your neighbors.

**Question 3: How do I deal with a wayward adult child?**

A beloved son or daughter who departs from God's Truth to embrace the world can cause grief for any parent. Value their free will, listen, and love them unconditionally. Avoid pounding them with Truth, as this can quickly push them away. However, respect who God has made YOU also, not allowing their unbelief or your fear to shut you down. Hold forth the Word in love by living it. Be yourself, and speak honestly and clearly. Use Bible terms or a verse in conversation, as it seems natural. Be patient, strategically choosing wisely in grace, when and how to speak. Pray for them daily, listening and doing what the Spirit is teaching you. *"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man," (Col. 4:6)*

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Stamp

To:

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

## Let, Be, and Yield (Part 3) by Jeanette Scallan

*“...that we should bring forth fruit unto God.” (Romans 7:4b)*

So then, if our own efforts to produce righteous works are in vain, how do we “walk worthy” (Eph. 4:1, Col. 1:10, 1 Thess. 2:12), “...bring forth fruit unto God” (Rom 7:4), and “...maintain good works?” (Tit. 3:8, Tit. 3:14) A search of the words ‘let,’ ‘be,’ ‘and’ yield in *Romans-Philemon* provides some indication of the importance our apostle placed on these terms, and their relation to our walk.

The word ‘let’ occurs 134 times in the Pauline epistles. Depending on how it is used in a verse, it can mean to allow, to permit, and in some cases to hinder from action. The underlying implication in the word’s use is that of personal choice. We choose to “...let God be true, but every man a liar...” (Rom. 3:4), or not, and this determines the extent to which God’s word can “...effectually worketh also in you that believe.” (1 Thess. 2:13)

‘Be’ occurs 615 times in Paul’s writings. Other verbs give amplification to its meaning, but in general the sense is to stand, remain or be fixed; hence to continue. Aspects of identity are often at the root of the word’s use. The emphasis Paul places on standing in who we are in Christ Jesus cannot be overstated.

‘Yield’ is only found 5 times in Paul’s epistles (once as ‘yielded’), and is only used in one sense of the word. It means to bring, to present, and to place a person or thing at one’s disposal. Obedience is implied, but not in the active sense of carrying out the will of another. Rather, it is the passive obedience of an instrument or tool made available to the hand of another. **(To be continued in the next issue.)**



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