



Just A Minute with Scripture

Much More Than Just Our Creator

God is the master architect of the Heavens and Earth: *"I have made the earth, and created man upon it: I, even my hands, have stretched out the heavens, and all their host have I commanded."* (Is.45:12) He is far above us (Is. 55:8-9) and we naturally fear such power and wisdom. God's character can sometimes be intimidating and distancing, causing doubts that He really loves and cares for us. How exceedingly sad, after all He has and is doing for us. We're part of His Creation, yet He is to be so much more to us than just a Designer and the Most High God.

God intends saints to have a close, personal relationship with Him. Though all of mankind is His offspring (Acts 17:28), once we are saved, being justified by Christ's blood, He becomes our Father and places His Holy Spirit within us. As we gain understanding of this wonderful privileged position, we can respond by faith to grow into this relationship to have intimate fellowship: *"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father."* (Rom. 8:15) This loving Father-adult child relationship is an eternal, personal connection, developing a supportive bond between us and our Father by prayer and the Word. He is always there; we can trust Him. He gave us Christ the Word and His Spirit to teach us His mind (I Cor. 2:16), conforming us to His image, working *"...all things work together for good."* (Rom. 8:28-29)

This intimate Father-son relationship was on Jesus' mind when He was in agony about His journey to the cross, even sweating *"drops of blood?"* Yet He had a fixed determination to live God's will: *"...Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done."* (Luke 22:42,44) He trusted: *"For the LORD GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed."* (Is. 50:7)

Think on this: Galatians 4:6 says, *"...because ye are sons..."* you can cry unto God trusting He will hear, knowing He loves you through all difficulties. God is not just a distant Creator, but an personal Father, supplying grace sufficient for all your needs (II Cor. 12:9), empowering you. (Phil. 4:13,19) As an adult son/daughter, you can trust your Father as Christ did in the Garden. Recall that you've been given so much, even God's wisdom and power by the Word, your spiritual armor and weapons. **Stand and trust!**



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Feel free to call if you have questions with any articles.

Are You A Believer?

If you have faith that Christ died on the cross to pay for all your sin, *Romans 3:21-26* says you are saved.

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."
(Rom. 3:23-24)

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Study Tools With Practical Study Ideas: Ephesians 5



Use tool #24 on page 23 of “Exploring the Bible Using Study Tools” to expand your study toolbelt, which increases your intimate relationship with the Father.

Quotations and terms commonly used in the Old Testament: When Scripture is referenced, look up the quote being aware of its context to get a complete understanding of the original passage. Also, when an Old Testament term is used, such as “tabernacle” or “stiff-necked,” go back to examine it further.

1. Find a reference to an Old Testament

passage in Ephesians 5: Look up the verse and observe how it strategically helps you to understand marriage.

2. Find two additional quotes in Ephesians 6: Look up each in their context. How did it help in understanding?

3. Ephesians 5:5: The term “unclean” is commonly used in Israel’s program. Use a concordance and dictionary to explore it to further your understanding.

4. Assess Ephesians 5 for additional terms commonly used in the Old Testament: Define and search them out.

“But now...how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements...” (Galatians 4:9)

Questions & Answers With Deborah

1. I grew up so idealistic about life and God. What’s a wise Bible view?

Many of us in America are raised with an unrealistic view of what to expect in life, like having the ideal life, spouse, family, big house, property, security, health, safety, and smooth life with many nice things. Life can truly be a harsh reality.

Yet, there’s more. As saints we don’t understand some things, like how God manifests His love to us and how He works today. Many naively expect God to swipe away their problems with a magic wand to get ‘the dream.’

Unfortunately, the realities of life happen and sadly, unexpected issues persistently arise, such as calamity, health challenges, unexpected expenses, job loss, a house fire, or tanking economy, etc. When God does not meet our (faulty) expectations or it is not ‘immediate,’ in our time frame, many saints (Continued)

Having Liberty and Under Grace

While God’s character **never** changes, He does alter how He deals with man. Why? He does this to accomplish His plan and purpose with man, His will.

Immediately in the Bible it’s clear that changes are made: In *Genesis 3:28* God “sent Adam forth from the garden” after they sinned. Again we observe that God saw “the earth was filled with violence” in *Genesis 6:11*, so He sent a Flood. God ‘confounded man’s language,’ when they built Babel in *Gen. 11*. As man’s history continued, there were additional adjustments, such as choosing Abraham (*Gen. 12*) to create His own Nation, Israel and when God added the Mosaic Law. (*Ex. 24:12*) The newest, but temporary, was the setting aside of Israel to form the Body of Christ to bring in the Dispensation of Grace to all nations. (*Rom. 11:25*)

The Galatians had become bewitched and diverted from the clarity of this good news of Grace to follow another gospel, the Law. They were moved away from a standing in grace and no longer recognized the change in God’s plan. Under the Law, Israel functioned as a child, under weak and beggarly elements, which is the bondage of the Law. God’s purpose was to humble them to rely on Him, not their flesh, under “the Law.” (*Rom. 6:14*) The Galatians allowed themselves to be lured back under Israel’s system, rather than to continue to function in liberty: “But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the **weak and beggarly elements**, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?” (*Gal. 4:9*) This can also happen to you if you are not wise to Satan’s devices. So, are you free, living your grace journey?





According to the Will of God

God's overall will is clearly revealed to us in Paul's epistles. He has a grand design for man: *"That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him. (Eph 1:10) Colossians 1:20 adds: "And, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven."* What a glorious will it is, affecting those in Christ: in the past, now, and ages to come.

God never changes His character, as it says in *Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."* His ultimate will for man never changes either, and yet, God executes different stages of His will for His two-fold Kingdom, at different times in the Bible. Some aspects are accomplished through Israel and His physical kingdom **on earth**, others through the Body of Christ for His **heavenly** kingdom.

When He achieves a portion of His will, He moves to the next stage: When He completed certain things with Israel, He set them aside for a time to form the Body of Christ to accomplish His heavenly purpose in this dispensation. (*Rom. - Phile.*) God will resume His plan with His Nation to finish His will for the earthly kingdom, (*Heb. - Rev.*) once His Body is Raptured.

Today, the Lord Jesus, by the will of God, is accomplishing many things for the Body of Christ i.e. *"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God."* (*Gal. 1:4*) Understanding His purpose and will, salvation, and how we are delivered from Satan's influence can motivate us to serve: *"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience."* (*Eph. 2:2*) Now we're quickened and seated in heavenly places. **Think on This:** Are you living in God's will: growing, thankful, and serving others?

Questions & Answers

With Deborah

blame God in their hearts for not being there and believe He doesn't care and is letting them down. This kind of thinking causes a lack of trust, frustration, loss of hope, or even anger, leading them to be derailed and pushing God away. Many Church groups encourage this false 'Health, Wealth, and Prosperity' view. Dear brothers and sisters, if this describes you, please pay attention to consider God's perspective.

Satan's plan is to pull you aside, so be wise. Sound doctrine is always the answer. Expect problems and sufferings in this fallen creation, knowing God will work the doctrine within to strengthen and enable you to get through any challenge. The process will grow you up to be able to walk by faith:

Rom. 5:3-5: Explore this 'glorying in tribulation' process, which works sound doctrine in the inner man. Know God is for you and fully provides!

Romans 8:18,26-28: Scripture teaches that suffering brings glory in you, the Spirit helps your infirmities by teaching the application of the Word. Also, God can utilize the problems for your eternal good, working the doctrine in you as you believe, conforming you to Christ's image.

II Corinthians 12:7-10: God provides an example with Paul: In weakness, as you go through problems, trust God and His grace doctrine within you. *"My strength is made perfect in weakness."* You can learn to glory and take pleasure in challenges: *"for when I am weak, then am I strong."* This is a glorious process. His grace is sufficient.

Philippians 1:28-30: Do not be "terrified" by others or dread conflict. God reminds all of us: *"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."* Expect difficulties and then, prepare!

Reflect: Be equipped for the battle and use His armor and weapons. (*Eph. 6/II Cor. 10:4*) God manifests His wisdom and power within you today, but not in the outer circumstances. God resides in you... believe this in your heart: *"...we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."* (*Romans 8:37*)

Zealously Driven

Romans 12:1 teaches us to be a servant: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.” But how? Once we are justified and progress through *Romans 6-11* we can effectually begin our godly love service in *Romans 12-16*: **Romans 6** teaches us our identity in Christ and how to access God’s power and wisdom. **Romans 7** explains how to serve acceptably, not with our works under the law, but by His work in us. **Romans 8** shows us how to dwell on sound doctrine to be quickened and apply Truth to bring forth Christ’s resurrection life. **Romans 9-11** helps us understand where we fit into God’s overall will and His purpose for the Body. Below are two aspects of our service to God.

1. Service Choices: Will we stay a child (babe in Christ), serving self, being unwise or unaware of sound doctrine? “...Shall we continue to sin, that grace may abound?” (*Romans 6:1-2*) Or, will we become spiritually mature adults, driven by thankfulness to our Father, with the wisdom Paul has taught, ready to serve and prefer others as a sacrifice? (*Romans 12*) Will we grow to serve acceptably or be derailed by Satan? “But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you.” (*Galatians 4:18*) **Think on this:** What are you being led by: the flesh or the Spirit of God? (*Romans 8:14*)

2. Service Attitude: We can be totally self-focused and not serve others at all; then, it is all about us. We can also be lukewarm, serving only when it’s convenient; again, self is exalted. A third option is to be zealous to serve God even when it is not the best timing for us. We choose to prefer others needs over our flesh and feelings. These things are determined by what we know and focus upon. **Reflect:** Where are you: zealous or self-absorbed?



Morning Prayer by MJ Weidman

Every morning you make me new
On this day I trust in you.
Fill me with your hope and peace
Anxiety and worry suddenly cease.
Show me today what is your plan
Plant my feet firmly, where I stand.
Thank you for your mercy and grace
In the shining sun, I see your face.
Your radiant colors, fill this fresh sky
I praise your name and lift it on high.

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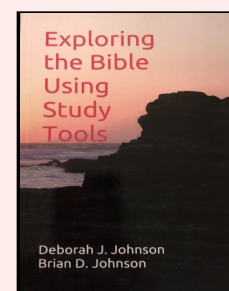
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