

Sunday September 10th 2023.

Back to Basics – Scripture.

**Scripture: Psalm 119:9-11; 2 Tim
3:14-16 & John 1:1-5**

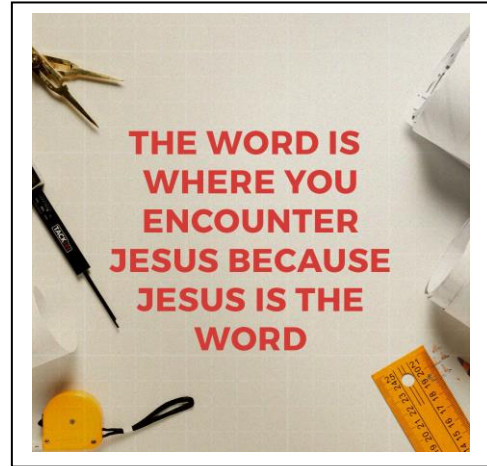
Introduction: How many enjoy reading? If we do, we have our favourites – mystery, historical, romance, comedy, specific learning subjects. We are drawn to read books that spark our interest. We have different reasons as well – fact or fiction or a mixture of both.

Books broaden our knowledge, guide, and teach us. Literature has come a long way from the pictures and symbols used in ancient days.

The Bible: Here we have the most widely read and long-lasting book in the world – the Bible. Made up of 66 books yet behind these, there lies a wonderful unity. God’s inspired word to us = **HIS STORY.**

Individual documents existed before the collection of books were gathered in the New Testament. And they’re not in specific chronological order. It is interesting that several of the letters of Paul, composed before his 2 years detention in Roman, existed before the earliest Gospel was written.

Napoleon Bonaparte described the Bible as a living being, with power that invaded everything he ever did. And Abraham Lincoln



said I believe the Bible is God's word because it finds me where I am."

All Scripture is God-breathed. God is the author of the Bible. In **Genesis 2:7**, God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being, in the same way as Scripture is.

The Bible is 100% accurate in predicting the future – prophecies. Unique among all books ever written, the Bible accurately foretells specific events—in detail, years and even centuries, before they occur.

2000 of the 2500 prophecies recorded in the Bible, have already been fulfilled to the letter—no errors. The remaining 500 or so reach into the future and may be seen unfolding as days go by. Of these prophecies, the most striking examples are the predictions about an "anointed one" ("Messiah" in Hebrew) who was to arrive in the future. About 4 BC, a miraculous event occurred—a boy named Jesus was born to a virgin named Mary. You can read His story in the book of Luke.

What is the function of the Scripture?

Think for a moment, you've never heard a commercial say, "...this spread tastes just like margarine" have you? Butter is the definitive spread, not margarine.

In the same way, spiritual concepts, morality, and Godly living are tested by searching the Scriptures because God's word is the standard for comparison, not human ideas.

Many people have improved or changed their lives in a significant way based on a desire to improve. History shows, however, that only God's word has the power to completely transform and re-direct one's life in a totally opposite direction.

For example, C.S. Lewis was a brilliant writer and professor at Oxford University in England. He was also an atheist but was converted and eventually became one of the most prolific Christian writers because of his experience of immersing himself in God's word.

The word of God brings comfort and hope, as well as strength and encouragement to those who are in sorrow and are suffering. We could not count how many times or how many people have read Psalm 23 ("The Lord is my shepherd...") in times of trouble and have been comforted by David's inspired words written almost 3000 years ago but meaningful for every generation.

Here are four life-changing ways that Scripture helps us.

1. Teaching

The Bible provides complete teaching on how we should live our lives. It serves as our manual in life. It teaches us how to operate according to God's standard. It reveals who God is and who we are in His sight. The truth that we will learn from the Bible leads to salvation.

2. Rebuking

"Rebuking" refers to an "expression of strong disapproval, reproach, rebuke, reproof." There are times when we must be confronted with the Word and rebuked. What makes the Bible beautiful is that it will rebuke us and reveal our mistakes and all the wrong things in our life. The Bible will expose these things so that it will be forgiven if we ask for repentance.

3. Correcting

"Correcting" refers to "restoration," and "improvement." One of the goals of the Bible is to correct us from our former ways of life. The Bible corrects our behaviour, character, and mind-set. It will point out what is wrong, and it help us get rid of it. Its goal is to help us completely realize our wrong deeds and to start doing what is right and be given the opportunity to start living a Christ-like life.

4. Training in Righteousness

"Training" or "instruction" is "the act of providing guidance for responsible living, upbringing, training, instruction."

The word refers particularly to the kind of training and discipline that parents give children to train them to be strong, upstanding adults when they grow up. In the case of children, sometimes this involves verbal instructions; sometimes it involves physical punishment to enforce discipline. The idea here is raising up baby Christians to maturity.

How do we tap into the power of God's word? Here are 3 things everyone can do.

Read the Word

Reading your Bible on a regular basis; there's no power without knowledge and there is no knowledge without the study of God's word.

Respond to the Word in Obedience

Perhaps the proper reaction is not in the reading part, but in the obeying part. Let God's power to redeem, restore, and regenerate flow through your spiritual veins by obeying the Word! Obey the gospel and be baptized; obey the Spirit and start living a Holy life; obey the Lord and be faithful.

Spread the Word

Finally, maybe it's time to take a step forward in your maturing process and begin serving, giving, or leading more as God would have you.

Conclusion:

We all experience temptations, although what we are tempted by may be different for each of us. None of our temptations are unique to us, however. But the enemy's intent is always the same – to derail, distract and ultimately cause Christians to drift away from our relationship with God and with each other.

God's promises shout from the pages of Scripture – the devil's accusations and temptations fade into background noise. Jesus' voice is amplified in our situations and circumstances.

We can surrender to God's will, rather than submit to the devil's temptations when we recite God's promises. When we learn God's words, we can put them in our scripture bank vault and recite them whenever we need to.

James tells us that every temptation comes with a chaperone called ESCAPE. The devil doesn't have the power to command, all he can do is make suggestions.

Our future and what we leave behind are determined by the decisions we make today.

What will your decision be today?