Scripture... Not A Typical Book

The Lord says, “...holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” (II Peter 1:21) God wrote Scripture for you. Christ is God, but He’s also the Living Word: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us...” (John 1:1,14) As you read by faith, Christ the Word is placed into your inner man.

Scripture has characteristics like no other book. God says, the Word, “…shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please...” (Isaiah 55:11) Scripture prospers, doing His will, by the Spirit. Reading it is ‘the’ priority of life. Your Father has eternally important things to, individually, teach you.

The Bible overflows in power, with precision. “For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12)

Scripture is designed to thrive & produce fruit, so approach it differently than man’s writings. I Thessalonians 2:13 clarifies how it works. “...ye received the word of God...not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.” It transforms your mind, to ‘live unto God.’

Things to remember:
Read slowly & consider each concept & word to avoid head knowledge. Think, meditate, & really listen to God. This links old, new, & related teachings together, refining understanding. Consider your approach to God’s Word. Account it unique & True, worthy to be exalted above all. Trust God & pray to apply His teachings in your life.

Most people desire a ‘smooth sailing’ relationship, but even little things can ‘rock the boat.’ God created the institution of marriage, & designed His Word to fully equip you. Be humble & look at yourself first, in grace:

1. Decide to be like-minded:
Are you both saved, trusting Christ died on the cross & shed His blood to pay for all your sin? God gives you ‘His righteousness’ & the Holy Spirit, once you believe. “Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.” (Romans 4:8) Once justified, the Lord is able to teach your ‘inner man.’ This can be instrumental in dealing with relationship issues. Seek help, if either of you are unclear about your just standing before God. (Contact info above)

2. Prepare yourself as a couple, submit to God's authority:
   a) Read & discuss Scripture together.
      Don’t put it off, make reading a priority. Begin with 15 minutes a day. It will help you to become one, spiritually. (one mind & heart) The Word ‘renews’ the mind, replacing worldly, selfish attitudes & places God at the center of thinking. “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind...” (Romans 12:2) Suggest the idea to read together, but at first, you may need to start alone.
   b) Pray with one another, daily.
      Stop to pray aloud before tough discussions also, & in the ‘heat of arguments.’ This interrupts ‘the flesh’ from ruling conversations & motives. Ask your mate to pray, but begin, even if it is by yourself.

3. Clarify marriage roles:
Many quarrels are linked to conflicting perceptions of roles & differing expectations. Similar beliefs will develop, as you read & discuss the Word. Start with the topic of marriage/relationships. Search for, and exalt God’s view.

As you study this issue, pray to be open to renew your mind. (Examine passages like Romans 12, I Corinthians 7, Ephesians 5, & Colossians 3.) Notice the first instruction in Ephesians 5:21-33. “Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.” Both are to submit to one another, with high respect for God the Father.

Discussions & problem solving can proceed more smoothly when: you are like-minded, God is the authority, & roles are clear. Be patient. The maturing process takes time. However, you now can, ‘step outside of yourself,’ to consider issues more objectively, seeking God’s mind.

It may help to see how relationships & computers are alike. Both require a common link for clear communication. Choose to build a spiritual link and plan ahead to prepare your hearts. Don’t ‘walk after the flesh.’ Instead, pray & ‘yield unto God.’ (Romans 6)

Seek Answers & Help If Needed!

Join Us For A Discussion & Insights Using Scripture

Oneness In Marriage Relationships
Thursday, October 29th, 6:30-8:30 pm
Chesterfield Central Library - 9901 Lori Road, Chesterfield, VA - Call for details - (804) 519-1210

See last page for Another Seminar: Anxiety

Christian Life Coach Support Services
Individual, Couple or Group Coaching - In person or phone
Presentations - Ladies Retreats
Call for details - (804) 519-1210
God The Father: Worthy To Be Praised & Worshipped!

Romans 1:20: “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead...”

Understanding is acquired by prayerfully reading, reflecting, and gaining conviction to live God’s instructions. Romans-Philemon, epistles to the Body of Christ, is the best place to start, to transform our mind & trust Him.

God is worthy to be praised & worshipped all day long. “O praise the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great toward us...” (Ps. 117:1-2) Read Psalms to observe David, in Israel’s program, glorifying God. The Body of Christ is to follow Paul’s example. His doctrine & life uniquely praise & worship God, as a faithful adult son, trusting through great suffering.

Romans 12, begins to unveil these new instructions for worship in the Church today, different than Israel. Individually, we are to be a living sacrifice, & do service, with gifts to offer. We are the temple, & “...manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ...”, known and read of all men. (I Cor. 6:19, II Cor. 3:2-3) Study how to worship with your life.

Even when we don’t understand, we can trust God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Start with the premise, God is good & kind, all-knowing, and always for us. God is our Father, who has been with us through all the years, selflessly & patiently loving us in grace. Think on This!

Conviction of heart to trust & exalt God, develops by regularly taking in & meditating upon the Scriptures. Sincere study will reveal God’s exceeding grace & profound love, most worthy of our worship.

What will it take to trust Him? We need to grow up in the Word to see differently. Instead of the, ‘me, me, me,’ ‘I want...now,’ and ‘I need to know...’ view, we can be patient, thankful, & pray to rely on Him. As we mature, we can develop Christ’s mind & thinking. Then, we can yield & give God our time & effort, trusting Him.
In the last issue, we introduced the topic of spiritual fitness: functionally able, ready, & willing to serve God. As background on the subject, it is helpful to understand that Romans 1-11 is a unit. It is designed to progressively prepare us to operate as a living sacrifice. This service is taught next, the Romans 12-16 section.

Each chapter adds components, absolutely necessary, to move us forward in our growth. They enable & empower us to accomplish His purpose, to think & operate in the way God desires.

Without preparation in the first 11 chapters, we’re limited in our capacity to serve. This foundational instruction begins our training, & develops Christ’s love in us. Operating as a living sacrifice takes an internalized understanding of these chapters, personal maturity, & selfless love.

Last month’s article focused on issues in Romans 1-6. We learned that God made changes in our identity, to enable us to be spiritually fit to serve Him:

1) God imputes His righteousness to believers. (Romans 1-4)
2) We are then quickened, (made spiritually alive) & reconciled to God. (Romans 5-6)
3) Our old man is crucified & we are dead to sin. (Romans 6)
4) We’re now responsible to choose wisely. (Serve God, not remain in sin)
5) Romans 7:1-6 can progress us:

5) We have been made dead to the law. Paul states, “...ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ...” In the past, “...the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.” (Romans 7:4-5) Before being justified, we were clearly in bondage!

However, God broke the law’s control over us. “But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of the spirit...” (Romans 7:6) We are finally free from the curse of the law, that is, ‘trying, but always failing,’ to keep the law. This is a grievous sin cycle. God simply desires us to yield, & then, just rest. His power will work, by the Spirit stirring up doctrine in us, to walk by faith.

Romans 7:17-22 pinpoints another identity change:

6) The inward man is now separated from sin. “Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” (Romans 7:17) The dramatic awareness, that sin is not a part of our new identity, further releases us from legalism and the pressure of performing. To God be all the glory...Freedom!

In a future issue, we will continue in Romans 8 to review additional ways our loving Father has made us spiritually fit to serve Him, by the Lord Jesus Christ. Pray to develop an awareness of these things for yourself. Until then, read through Romans 1-11. This will be eternally beneficial!

Note: The scope of this article is limited. This is just an introduction to some of the major changes made by God, which enable us to live as who we are in Christ. There are also many secondary, underlying topics in Romans 1-11, that are not being addressed. For example, students have opportunity to learn study skills & discover depth to the character of God. In addition, this section provides opportunity to develop trust in the Father & His Word and to walk by faith, saying ‘No,’ to the flesh.

Things To Do:
1. Search things as a ‘Berean’ (Acts 17:11)
2. Study Romans 1-11. See how God has changed you!
3. Review Romans 5-6. Notice how grace can reign.
4. Attend a Seminar: ‘Oneness In Marriage Relationship’ or ‘Anxiety & Unwise Thinking Patterns.’

Can Grace Reign In Your Life?

Romans 5:21 states, “That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” The verse states grace ‘might’ reign, through righteousness. (Each word is significant & important to notice when studying.) This term indicates our responsibility to choose. Grace will not automatically reign in our life. Another important point is that when grace reigns, it is ‘by’ Jesus Christ our Lord, not ‘by’ our efforts or fleshly works.

Romans 6-8, explains that as Christ lives through us, grace reigns. We yield to God, allowing His Word & power, by the Spirit, to lead. This enables us to make wise choices. Romans 6 teaches, we are ‘dead to sin & alive’ as we yield. Chapter 7 instructs, we are ‘dead to the law,’ and free. Romans 8 teaches, it is our choice to be ‘dead to the flesh,’ “...if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.” (Rom. 8:13)

There are many things that can sidetrack believers from allowing grace to reign:

-Seeking to please others or our own flesh, above God’s Word.
-Buying into worldly wisdom & the social, cultural, & political agendas, more than God.
-Losing sight of God’s goals & purpose, lacking motivation to live them.
-Viewing this physical, temporal realm as more real, than the spiritual, eternal realm of God.

Reflect on these issues in more depth for application. Study Romans 5-8 for yourself, as a Berean, to be fully persuaded on these issues. (Acts 17:11)

Grace Can Reign In Your Life!
From Our Readers...
“I really enjoy your 'Just A Minute' newsletter. Please continue to send them.” (California)

“Your newsletters have been a source of inspiration and learning materials to us.” (West Africa)

“Thanks so much for sending the newsletters and please keep sending them as long as God leads you to do them. God Bless you!” (Virginia Beach)

“The newsletter print (font) may be too small.” (Virginia)

“Thank-you for your newsletter, it was very well written! I could not offer criticism.” (California)

“It’s hard to get used to the landscape orientation for 'Just A Minute.' I like the old style better.” (Virginia)

*Suggestions will/have been considered in making improvements to this newsletter.

Praise Report
Written by reader, Deborah Garner
A mission trip, whether stateside or abroad, is life-changing. It is good, to step out of our comfort zones and experience the selfless love and awesome power of God in a fresh way.

My recent trip to Kenya revealed how God supersedes our weaknesses, uncertainties, and character defects to accomplish His purposes. When asked to teach and minister, I realized that the Word stored up in me from years of study, just came out along with His heart. The reward of serving is ‘Joy Unspeakable,’ new friendships, and an awareness of how God fleshes out His Word through us.

Speaking from a background in the travel industry, my new discovery is that there is no better way to experience another country, than to take a mission trip. There is no greater adventure than to travel with a mission to be God’s heart, hands, feet, and mouthpiece. Then, the sights, sounds, and tastes of a foreign land and its culture take on new meaning. This is the TRUE essence of TRAVEL. Go on new meaning. This is the foreign land and its culture takes sights, sounds, and tastes of a

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