

Advanced Bible Study

Know What You Believe

I. The Word of God Applied to YOU

A. The SPIRIT'S Sword NOT yours!

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God... Eph 6.17

**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. Heb. 4:12*

God's word is living and active. It is sharper than any two-edged sword and cuts as deep as the place where soul and spirit meet, the place where joints and marrow meet. God's word judges a person's thoughts and intentions. Heb. 4:12

Discerner: Reaching, penetrating, discerning, judging, discriminating

1. The Holy Spirit is a "skilled" physician with the Sword of the Word.

BEWARE of the "scalpel" in the hands of the wrong person: they could cut an artery and cause someone to bleed to death!!! The Holy Spirit knows what can be "cut away" and what can't.

When the Holy Spirit uses the Word to reveal your heart to YOU it is different than when YOU use the Word to reveal someone else's heart to them. When others aren't ready, just like when YOU weren't ready to hear some things, you can have twelve witnesses and video footage and they will not receive what you have to say!

2. Conviction vs. condemnation.

Conviction leads to repentance and change; condemnation turns people away! God's plan is for us to go from "glory to glory" (*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. 2 Cor 3.17-18; But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. Prov. 4.18*).

B. Don't Get Caught up in Arguments

But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes. And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will. 2 Tim. 2.22-26, KJVS

**Refuse to get involved in inane discussions; they always end up in fights. God's servant must not be argumentative, but a gentle listener and a teacher who keeps cool, working firmly but patiently with those who refuse to obey. You never know how or when God might sober them up with a change of heart and a turning to the truth, enabling them to escape the Devil's trap, where they are caught and held captive, forced to run his errands. 2 Tim. 2.23-26, MESSAGE*

**O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called: Which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee. Amen. 1 Tim. 6.20-21, KJVS*

And oh, my dear Timothy, guard the treasure you were given! Guard it with your life. Avoid the talk-show religion and the practiced confusion of the so-called experts. People caught up in a lot of talk can miss the whole point of faith. Overwhelming grace keep you! 1 Tim. 6:20-21, MESSAGE

**Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. Rom. 16.17-19, KJVS*

BEWARE of any doctrine of yours that rests in books, cartoons, movies or philosophies other than Scripture. "According to Indiana Jones, the ark has a curse on it," "I saw in The Ten Commandments how the Israelites lived...," "In Joseph's Technicolor Coat on Broadway I saw how Joseph really lived," and the newer blasphemies, "Maybe Jesus really DID marry a prostitute!"

BE CAREFUL what you choose to believe: If you CHOOSE to believe a lie, God can allow you to be turned over to it! *And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. 2 Th. 2.9-12*

- C. Don't ADD or TAKE AWAY from the Word or Entertain Thoughts, Religions, or Philosophies That Do

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. Rev. 22.17-19, KJV

BEWARE: Your ideas, the media's portrayals, and the findings of science do NOT CHALLENGE timeless truths or REALITY.

**For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Matt. 5.18, KJVS*

When you hear "it's OK to do this and that" and begin to see the effects of such "anything goes; God understands" philosophies, this verse becomes apparent:

For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. 1 Cor 11.18-19

**heresies: Greek #139 - a CHOICE; to "prefer" or "take for oneself"*

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. Eph. 5.11

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. Gal. 1.8

Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto me. Matt. 12.31

987. blasfme÷w blasphemeo, *blas-fay-meh'-o*; from 989; to vilify; specially, to speak impiously: — (speak) blaspheme(-er, -mously, -my), defame, rail on, revile, speak evil.

But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. 2 Pet 2.1

For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. Mark 13.22-23

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. 2 Cor 11.13

For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ. But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. 2 Cor. 2.17; 4.2, KJVS

II. **If You Don't Stand for Something, You'll Fall for Anything!**

A. Be Ready to Share!

**But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ. 1 Pet. 3.15-16*

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all

things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. 2 Tim. 4.1-5, KJVS

**I solemnly call on you in the presence of God and Christ Jesus, who is going to judge those who are living and those who are dead. I do this because Christ Jesus will come to rule <the world>. Be ready to spread the word whether or not the time is right. Point out errors, warn people, and encourage them. Be very patient when you teach. A time will come when people will not listen to accurate teachings. Instead, they will follow their own desires and surround themselves with teachers who tell them what they want to hear. People will refuse to listen to the truth and turn to myths. 2 Tim. 4.1-4, GWORD*

B. Be Passionate! Let it BURN!

WHAT is your passion? What excites you? What do you love to talk about? What do you spend time and money and effort on?

**For since I spake, I cried out, I cried violence and spoil; because the word of the LORD was made a reproach unto me, and a derision, daily. Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay. Jer. 20.8-10*

*Every time I open my mouth
I'm shouting, "Murder!" or "Rape!"
And all I get for my GOD warnings
are insults and contempt.
But if I say, "Forget it!
No more GOD Messages from me!"
The words are fire in my belly,
a burning in my bones.
I'm worn out trying to hold it in.
I can't do it any longer!
Jer. 20.8-9, MESSAGE*

III. In Sharing: Know Different Stages; Different Needs

A. The Word is NOT a "Rule Book" to Lay Burdens on Us/Others

1. His yoke is EASY: we are "yoked" together as two oxen are yoked; HE does all the work as we are "in HIM."

All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Matt 11.27-30

2. Doctrines and Commandments of Men: love of self vs. love of God; Motives

One of the religion scholars spoke up: "Teacher, do you realize that in saying these things you're insulting us?" He said, "Yes, and I can be even more explicit. You're hopeless, you religion scholars! You load people down with rules and regulations, nearly breaking their backs, but never lift even a finger to help. Luke 11.45-46, MESSAGE

Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances, (Touch not; taste not; handle not; Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh. If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. Col. 2.20-3:2, KJVS

Example: When you are in love, no rules are necessary. Know we're in love with Jesus when you're not trying to manipulate His Word to fit your lifestyle. Usually arguments are challenged by people who aren't working to be holy or more in love with Jesus or to do His work on earth more, but by those who want to walk closer and closer to the world and still escape hell. When you're so in love with Jesus and doing His will, you're not going to even ask about going clubbing with people who are drinking and lusting in excess.

B. Do You Love Jesus? This question to Peter challenges his focus.

So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep. John 21.15-17, KJVS

Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. 1 Pet. 5.1-4, KJVS

C. "Feed My Sheep:" Milk or Meat?

1. Milk. If you feed a newborn meat, he could choke or die! Problem in the Church is we cram meat of doing the will of God and finishing His work (see below) down newborns' mouths and they are still carnal and can't do the will of God or even discern it yet!

**As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: 1 Pet. 2.2*

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? 1 Cor. 3.1-3

For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. Heb. 5.13

2. Meat

But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. John 4.32-24

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Heb 5.14

D. Help Others to the Next Level: More of JESUS!

I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake. I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not

in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. 1 John 2.12-17, KJVS

Little children: sins are forgiven you; known the Father

Young men: you are strong, Word abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one

Fathers: known Him from the beginning

"KNOW" 1097. γινώσκω **ginosko**, *ghin-ocē'-ko*; a prolonged form of a primary verb; to "know" (absolutely) in a great variety of applications and with many implications (as follow, with others not thus clearly expressed): — allow, be aware (of), feel, (have) know(-ledge), perceived, be resolved, can speak, be sure, understand.

"WOW" VERSES: *That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; Phil. 3.10 And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 1 John 2.3-4*

Jesus met every one and challenged them to the next level:

And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then? He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise. Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do? And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages. Luke 3.9-14, KJVS

E. Help "Each Man" to be "Fully Persuaded in His Own Mind"

Welcome with open arms fellow believers who don't see things the way you do. And don't jump all over them every time they do or say something you don't agree with—even when it seems that they are strong on opinions but weak in the faith department. Remember, they have their own history to deal with. Treat them gently. For instance, a person who has been around for a while might well be convinced that he can eat anything on the table, while another, with a different background, might assume all Christians should be vegetarians and eat accordingly. But since both are guests at Christ's table, wouldn't it be terribly rude if they fell to criticizing what the other ate or didn't eat? God, after all, invited them both to the table. Do you have any business crossing people off the guest list or interfering with God's welcome? If there are corrections to be made or manners to be learned, God can handle that without your help. Or, say, one person thinks that some days should be set aside as holy and another thinks that each day is pretty much like any other. There are good reasons either way. So, each person is free to follow the convictions of conscience. What's important in all this is that if you keep a holy day, keep it for God's sake; if you eat meat, eat it to the glory of God and thank God for prime rib; if you're a vegetarian, eat vegetables to the glory of God and thank God for broccoli. None of us are permitted to insist on our own way in these matters. It's God we are answerable to—all the way from life to death and everything in between—not each other. That's why Jesus lived and died and then lived again: so that he could be our Master across the entire range of life and death, and free us from the petty tyrannies of each other. So where does that leave you when you criticize a brother? And where does that leave you when you condescend to a sister? I'd say it leaves you looking pretty silly—or worse. Eventually, we're all going to end up kneeling side by side in the place of judgment, facing God. Your critical and condescending ways aren't going to improve your position there one bit. Read it for yourself in Scripture:

*As I live and breathe, God says,
every knee will bow before me;
Every tongue will tell the honest truth*

that I and only I am God.

So tend to your knitting. You've got your hands full just taking care of your own life before God.

Forget about deciding what's right for each other. Here's what you need to be concerned about: that you don't get in the way of someone else, making life more difficult than it already is.

Rom. 14.1-13, MESSAGE

Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. Rom. 14.1-13, KJVS

IV. Expanding What You Know

1. Know messages pertinent to historical time

For example *For this cause left I thee in Crete, Titus 1.5, KJVS; And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. 2 Tim. 4.12, KJVS; etc.* (easier seen in commands but true with historical setting scriptures such as those addressing women's heads being covered and women "not speaking" in church [they used to holler across the aisles]).

2. Know some messages are figurative and not literal

For example *And four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another. The first was like a lion, and had eagle's wings: I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made stand upon the feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it. And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side, and it had three ribs in the mouth of it between the teeth of it: and they said thus unto it, Arise, devour much flesh. After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads; and dominion was given to it. After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns. Dan. 7.3-7, KJVS*

V. **Look it Up!**

*Make sure you "exhaust" the subject and look up EVERY verse available!

*Make sure you don't allow one Scripture verse to contradict others!

*Make sure it is "interpreted" in context!

*In cases where there are questions or confusion, stick with what the majority of Scriptures show you.

*In cases where there are questions or confusion, ask yourself if your interpretation makes you more "holy" and demonstrates the character of Christ.

*Look up other words that mean the same thing!

*Know that there are subjects that Bible scholars have disagreed upon for YEARS, and your study may not fully answer every question (for example, pre-trib, mid-trib or post-trib???)

*Use other Scriptures you know that pertain, such as:

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. 1 Cor. 3.16-17, KJVS, does not pertain to "direct issues," but if you have facts that things hurt your body then this Scripture would apply).

All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any. 1 Cor. 6.12-13.

Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? Rom. 6.16

Hardly. You know well enough from your own experience that there are some acts of so-called freedom that destroy freedom. Offer yourselves to sin, for instance, and it's your last free act. But offer yourselves to the ways of God and the freedom never quits. All your lives you've let sin tell you what to do. Rom. 6.16, MESSAGE

"But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."
(Matt. 18:6-7, KJVS)

"Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way."
(Rom. 14:13, KJVS)

*We call this the "entertainment scriptures":

*For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, Without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure** in them that do them. Rom. 1.26-32, KJVS*

***From two words that mean "to approve by association" - "take pleasure" including being entertained by those who live in opposition to God's standards.*

I will walk within my house with a perfect heart. I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me. Psa. 101.2-3

**Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil. And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it. 1 Th. 5.21-24*

Sample subjects

Is it wrong to smoke or chew tobacco?

Is drinking a sin?

Is wearing jewelry wrong?

Is having a lot of money a sin?

Is it wrong to use drugs?

Is evolution Scriptural?

Is dating against Scripture?
Is rock and roll a sin?
Is homosexuality a sin?
Is it wrong to watch R movies?
What's wrong with gambling?
Do I HAVE to go to Church?
Is abortion wrong?
Do I have to "tithe"?
What does the Bible say about pornography?
Is it wrong to educate ourselves in other religions so we are
"informed"?
Is it wrong to watch entertainment that portrays Jesus other than
Scripture portrays Him?
What does the Bible say about divorce?
Is it wrong to put up a Christmas tree or celebrate Easter by giving
Easter baskets?