

(Acts) Be a Berean

by Brian Brodersen

The scriptures are the holy scriptures, the scripture of truth, and they bring us comfort and encouragement, and they are essential for living a saved life.

Duration: 31:37

Scripture: Psalm 119:105, Daniel 10:21, Matthew 6:33, Luke 24:27, Acts 17:11, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12

Topics: "Biblical Wisdom", "Scripture Study"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes that Jesus is the main topic of the Bible and that by searching the Scriptures, we can come to know the Lord better. The Bible reveals our origin and how God intended us to live, including our roles in families and in community. The speaker encourages listeners to approach the Word of God with a hungry heart, seeking wisdom and understanding. By treasuring God's commands and diligently seeking knowledge, we can find the hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge that God desires to impart to us.

Transcript

Acts chapter 17, tonight we're going to look just at verse 11. We covered this in our previous study, but I wanted to come back and just consider for a few moments tonight the whole idea of searching the scriptures. Verse 11, speaking of the Bereans, it says, These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

And so Luke commends the Bereans. He commends them because they searched the scriptures. They searched the scriptures daily, he said.

And that is a good thing for us to follow as well. And there are several reasons why we ought to be searching the scriptures daily. And that's what I want to spend a few minutes talking to you about.

And so we're going to look at five things concerning the scriptures that would really just encourage us to search them and to be consistently delving into them and seeking to understand them more and more. Reason number one is because they are, according to Second Timothy 3:15, they are the holy scriptures. We should search the scriptures because they're the holy scriptures.

This is the only book in the world that is a holy book in the truest sense. In the truest sense, this is a holy book. The word holy means to be set apart, to be distinct, to be unlike anything else.

And that is truly what the Bible is. The Bible is unlike any other book because the Bible is the inspired word of God. And, you know, when you think about that, it seems like.

A no brainer that we would be searching it daily. I mean, this is the word of God. This is what the creator has to say.

This is what God almighty deems important. This is how the maker of heaven and earth wants to communicate his message to me. It would seem that once we understood that these were indeed the holy scriptures, God's word, we would.

Search the scriptures daily, we would give as much time as possible, and we ought to. And if we're not doing that, we need to make the adjustments to begin to do that, because this is where life is. This is where I come to know the Lord in that deep and intimate way.

And through knowing him, I experienced that working of his spirit in my life. You know, when the Lord was speaking to the children of Israel after he'd given them the law, he actually said to them, he said, now, among all the nations, there's not another nation that has this great and awesome law that I'm giving you. And this is going to be your wisdom and this is going to be your power.

And this is going to be what distinguishes you from everybody else. This is what's going to set you apart and cause you to be a blessed people. And so the Lord was really calling them to cherish the word.

And so, likewise, we need to cherish the word, I think, though, unfortunately, so many times we don't have that kind of perspective on it, we're not. Committed like we ought to be to really searching out the scriptures, you know, the Jewish people have been known historically as the people of the book. And although, you know, that's fine, I think it's a bit unfortunate that the church hasn't been so much recognized as the people of the book.

We are really, truly the people of the book because we have embraced the scripture in its entirety. The Jewish people, of course, have rejected the whole second half of it and so it's you know, in some ways it's a bit of a misnomer to say they're the people of the book, but they're you know, people use that because, of course, the scriptures came from the Jews and so forth. But that ought to be the designating title for us Christians.

We are people of the book. We ought to be searching the scriptures daily because they are the holy scriptures. Secondly, we ought to be searching the scriptures daily because they are the scripture of truth.

Daniel, chapter 10, verse 21, refers to the scripture as the scripture of truth. This is the place where you're going to get the truth and oh, how we need the truth. You know, you can't survive on lies.

You can't prosper on lies. You can't really advance and progress on lies. You've got to know what is true.

And here in the pages of scripture, we have given to us the truth concerning the important things of life. This is the handbook on how to live. Basically, that's what the Bible is.

You know, it's not a handbook on how to fix your car. It's not a handbook on how to tune your guitar. It's not a handbook on medical procedures and things like that.

And so sometimes people say, oh, the Bible, you know, it doesn't deal with every area of life. Well, they're right. It doesn't deal with auto mechanics.

We must confess that it doesn't deal with a lot of those things. But those are incidental things of life. You know, you can get by in life without knowing how to repair your car, but you can't get by in life not knowing how to live.

You see, we've got to know how to live, and that's what the Bible teaches us. It teaches us how to live. It teaches us how to live with ourselves.

It teaches us how to live with each other. It teaches us how to live in the context of a family, in a society and all of those things. So it's the scripture of truth.

It's the truth about where we came from. A lot of confusion in our world today about where we came from. A lot of our young people are growing up thinking that they came from a lower life form, that they evolved.

That they are descended from apes or something like that, and and they're going through life acting like animals and feeling very comfortable because after all, they they've been taught that that's who they're connected to. But it isn't true. What is true is that we're connected to God.

We're related to him. We were made by him. And that's what we find out in the scripture of truth.

We find out about our origin. We find out about how God intended us to live. He intended us to live in families together, husbands and wives and children.

And the Bible teaches us how to be fulfilling our roles. It teaches me how to be a husband and a father, how to be a man. It teaches the women how to be a wife and a mother, a woman, what a woman is supposed to be.

It teaches children how they're to function in the context of the family. And then it gives us understanding and insight into how to conduct ourselves in the interpersonal relationships that we experience in community and teaches us how to work together with each other. It teaches us how to conduct business and things like that.

All of these things are found right here in the scriptures because they are the scripture of truth and because it's the scripture of truth and because truth is essential to a healthy, prosperous life, we need to be searching the scriptures daily. So we are so in tune with the truth. We are so plugged in that we know what's true and we know what's not true and we can avoid deception and non-truth because that's only going to lead to difficulty in our lives.

Thirdly, we ought to search the scriptures daily because the scriptures bring us comfort and encouragement. That's what Paul said in Romans 15, verse four. He spoke of the things that were written before they were written for our learning.

He's referring back to the Old Testament scriptures. They were written for our learning so that we, through patience and the comfort or encouragement of the scriptures, might have hope. Many times we need comfort.

The scriptures will comfort you. Many times we need encouragement. We get downcast.

We get discouraged. We we feel like giving up. We feel like we're not going to survive or make it.

And when we open the pages of scripture, we find that the Holy Spirit is there moving upon our hearts and applying the scriptures to us and bringing us that comfort and that encouragement that we need, you know, throughout the scriptures, especially the Old Testament, but the New Testament as well. We have the stories of many different people. And we have brief sort of biographical sketches that are given to us, not all of the details of their lives, but but some insight into their lives and to their ups and their downs and into their encounters with God and how God worked for them and so forth.

And, you know, sometimes you might wonder, well, why did God write all of this down? I mean, what's his purpose in this? Was it just to tell us about these particular people? No, it wasn't. It wasn't just to give us information about people who lived in the past. It was to give us an understanding of how God works in people's lives.

And so when we read the stories of God and his relationship with Noah or with Abraham or with Moses or with David or with Peter or with John or with Paul or whoever, when we read about the relationships that these people had with the Lord, what God is wanting us to know is that's the kind of relationship he wants to have with us. He wants us to look at the lives of these different people and see how he works in a person's life and to then expect God to work in our lives in a similar way. So you see, we go through the lives of these people in the scriptures and we see how God comes to their rescue.

We see how God helps them. We see how God pulls them out of despair. We see how God blesses them.

And what happens? We're encouraged. We're comforted. And that's happened so many times to me.

It's happened to you, no doubt. It's happened to God's people all throughout history. Where you're in desperate need of a word of encouragement or some comfort to come your way and you open up and and you read something and there the Lord speaks to you all the book of Psalms.

What a great place to be comforted. David went through so many trials, he went through such great difficulty, but God comforted him in all of his distress. And David.

Has been used by God tremendously throughout the ages to comfort other people through the comfort that he received from the Lord. So he's going through these valleys, he's going through darkness, he's going through distress and difficulty, and he's writing down his experiences and he's writing down God's response to him. And so we thousands of years later, we find ourselves in the same predicaments and we open up the book of Psalms and we're reading about David's trials and we feel like I could have written this.

I might as well just insert my name here. And then we keep on reading and we find the response of God. And it's the very response that we needed to hear as well.

You see, God encourages us and comforts us through the scriptures. And so we really ought to be searching the scriptures daily for that comfort and encouragement we need. In John 5:39, Jesus told us regarding the scriptures, he said they testify of me.

He said to the Pharisees, he was speaking to them, he said, you search the scriptures because in them you think you have life, but they're actually testifying of me. The scriptures testify of Jesus, they teach us about our Lord. They don't only teach us about the fact that he came into the world as recorded in the

Gospels and he lived among men and he performed miracles and he taught and he died and he rose again.

Of course, they teach us all of that, but they teach us many other things as well. They teach us all of the ramifications of what he came and accomplished. And the amazing thing is that the deeper you delve into the scripture, the more you find that this statement of Jesus was.

Absolutely true, not that anything Jesus ever said wasn't absolutely true, but that that there's. Something in the scripture concerning him that doesn't always show up on the surface, but if we dig a little deeper, if we delve a little further, if we linger a bit longer to dig deeper, delve, that was good. The way I did those, that was unintentional.

I just rhymed that all together. I'm proud of myself that lingered longer. I like that one, too.

But if we do that, here's what happens. We we find out that my I didn't know that the Lord was revealed in that passage. I had noticed before that this is actually talking about Jesus.

You see, when Jesus said you search the scriptures because you think you have life, but they testify of me, he was not talking about Matthew, Mark, Luke and John because they hadn't been written yet. He was talking about Genesis to Malachi. And what he's letting us know is that scripture in its entirety was about him.

Now, some of us who have been studying the Bible for a while, we can kind of, you know, do just sort of a mental scan of the Old Testament and we can think, yeah, I can think of some places definitely where Jesus was talked about. He was prophesied that he would come and, you know, we can in Genesis, we can find a little bit there and we might even be able to think of something in Exodus, perhaps like the Passover lamb, for example, and maybe in Leviticus there's something and we could probably work our way through the books and find some things here and there. But Jesus said it's all testifying of me.

There's another New Testament quotation of a psalm that declares the volume of the book is written of me, Jesus speaking through the Holy Spirit, the volume of the book is written of me. In other words, the book in its entirety, what Jesus is saying is I am the main topic of the book. Jesus is the main topic of the Bible.

And so as we search the scriptures, what happens is we get to know. The Lord better, we get to see him in all of his beauty and all of his glory and the multifaceted aspects of his nature and character and love and work and all of those things. And it's a wonderful thing, but it doesn't appear to those who just sort of glance at the scriptures.

These things don't. Reveal themselves to those who are merely skimming over hurriedly, you know, I don't have time really for this, but out of duty, I better read a little bit. It doesn't lend itself.

To really opening up and revealing these deeper treasures, you've got to spend time searching, and I think that for many of us, the the problems in our lives so often are just connected to the fact that we don't really know the Lord like we ought to know him, like we we can know him, but we won't know him unless we search the scriptures as these Bereans did. They search the scriptures daily. And then fifthly, Paul, once again, going back to the verse we began with Second Timothy three fifteen.

He said there the holy scriptures are able to make one wise to salvation. We should search the scriptures daily because they make us wise to salvation. Now, that's an interesting thing for Paul to say, especially when you consider the fact that he's writing to a saved person.

Now, the holy scriptures certainly do reveal the way of salvation and the way of salvation needs to be revealed primarily to people who don't know it. In other words, to unbelievers. And of course, the holy scriptures do show the way of salvation to unbelievers.

But when Paul said to Timothy, who was a believer that the holy scriptures are able to make you wise into salvation, you know, there's another way to look at salvation that we quite often fail to do, and that is to look at it not in the greater sense of being saved from our sin and going to heaven, which, of course, it is that. But there's a lesser sense, but a vitally important sense as well. And that is being saved or delivered from the difficulties and distresses and and the problems of life that result from sin and disobedience and things like that.

You see, when Paul said the holy scriptures are able to make one wise to salvation, he's not only talking about telling us the way to get to heaven, he's talking about telling us the way to live. A life. That saved from.

Trouble, a life that saved from disaster, a life that's saved from the things that could befall us if we're not conducting our lives according to the scriptures. You see, a lot of people, even though they're Christians, even though they're saved. Even though they're going to heaven.

They're finding that. They're having a very difficult time on Earth. They're falling into one trap after another, they're being ensnared.

And they need salvation. Another way to look at salvation is deliverance. They need to be delivered.

They need to be delivered from the pitfalls of life and those things that will happen if we are not careful in our walk. But the holy scriptures, they will make me wise to salvation. They will teach me how to live the saved life.

You see, that's something that I think sometimes people aren't really considering or remembering. God saved us, not just for heaven. He saved us for right here on Earth.

He saved us so we can live a safe life. As Christian people, we shouldn't be. In disastrous situations in our marriages, we shouldn't be in disastrous circumstances in our families, we shouldn't be in financial distress.

Unless, of course, it's completely out of our control and not our fault. That can happen, but so many times what you do see, unfortunately, is Christian people, people who are saved in the fuller sense, they're going to go to heaven, but they can't live together in their marriage. They can't function together as a family.

They can't hold down a job. They can't pay their bills. They can't do the things that make for a good life.

Why not? They should be able to. You see, the Lord came to fix our lives, not to leave them broken. But what happens is this, quite frankly, people do not take the scriptures to heart.

They don't search them daily and meditate on them and apply them to their life. And so even though they're going to heaven. Their life is a disaster here on Earth in many areas.

And I think that it's epidemic at this time. All the time we meet people that are Christians, and yet their lives are just an absolute mess. It never ceases to, you know, kind of caused me to chuckle.

I don't know that it's really a laughing matter, but, you know, when we go into the jails and into the prisons and do the prison ministry and all of that. You know, you find all of these guys and they're all, man, yeah, I'm saved, you know, and you think, all right, praise the Lord, you got saved here and in prison. That's right.

Oh, no, I was saved long before I got into prison. I've been saved for 30 years, you know. Well, what are you doing in prison then? I know it's not because you were preaching the gospel and this is persecution, you know, but I can't tell you how many people are in jail tonight who were Christians when they were arrested for doing drugs or selling drugs or stealing something or embezzling or whatever they're doing.

And you think, what is the matter with this picture? There's something drastically the matter with it. But you see, it goes back to this. People aren't searching the scriptures daily to see that there is a way of salvation.

There's a life to be lived. And so we. If we want to live that good life, if we want to succeed spiritually, not only get to heaven, but have heaven here on Earth.

That experience will be determined to a large degree by our attitude toward and our relationship with the scriptures. If we are like the Bereans, then. You can expect.

Blessing in your life. You can expect that deliverance of God, you can expect that comfort and that encouragement, you can expect to know the truth as you face the various situations and circumstances that arise, and you can expect to be knowing Jesus in a deeper, greater and more wonderful way all the time. But if you're not searching the scriptures, then.

You can't really expect any of these things, you might make it to heaven, but. It could very well be a rough road between now and then, and who wants that? The Lord came to save us, not just for heaven, but to save us. For Earth as well and for life, and so let's follow the example of the Bereans.

They searched the scriptures. They had a heart for the word of God. It was a priority in their life.

You know, in the second proverb. There is some excellent instruction. To us on approaching the word of God, and as we're looking at this whole idea of searching the scriptures, I think in Proverbs chapter two, verses one through six, we have sort of a picture painted for us of.

Just exactly what we're talking about, listen to what it says, my son, if you receive my words and treasure my commands within you so that you incline your ear to wisdom and apply your heart to understanding. Yes, if you cry out for discernment and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver and search for her as hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom from his mouth, come knowledge and understanding.

Notice that as you read through this, notice the emphasis here, my son, if you receive my words and you treasure my commands within you, you see the idea is that there's there's something precious about these words to you. They're like a treasure to you and you're going to take them and you're going to make them

yours. You're going to treasure them within you if you incline your ear to wisdom and apply your heart to understanding to incline one's ear is to pay attention.

To apply your heart, you know, we speak of a person who's an applied person. And what we're referring to is this is a person who's diligent, a person who's serious, a person who's really, you know, putting forth a strong effort. That's what.

Is being referred to here, applying your heart to understanding and notice this, if you cry out for discernment, lift your voice for understanding. How often do we say, oh, Lord, teach me. Oh, Lord, I want to know your truth.

Oh, God, open up the scriptures to me. Lord, reveal yourself, show me who you are. That's the way we ought to be approaching the word of God, because when we're approaching it like that, that's when we're going to be receiving from the word.

What the Lord desires to impart to us, you see, the Lord is looking for the hungry heart, he's looking for the applied person, he's looking for someone who says, Lord, I want to know you, I want to know your word, Lord, I can't live without this. Lord, I've got to understand this. But isn't it true that so often we read over something and we don't necessarily understand it and we just say, oh, well, you know.

I'll just move on to something else, but we need to stop and ponder it and cry out and seek wisdom from God because he promises to give it if you seek her a silver and search for her as for hidden treasure. Oh, boy, hidden treasure. You know, somebody told you or somebody told me, look, I know where there's a billion dollars in treasure hidden.

I've got the map. Here it is. And it wasn't a scam.

It was a reality. You know, I would imagine that there wouldn't be any obstacle too great that you wouldn't be willing to seek to overcome to get to that treasure. But the scriptures, Psalm 19, says there are more to be desired than gold.

How is it that we would go after earthly treasure with such intensity? And yet here's the true treasure. And so often our attitude is one of indifference toward it. But if we understand it as treasure and we seek for it as treasure, listen, verse five, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

You want to know the Lord better. Do you want his knowledge? He desires, it says, to give wisdom and he longs to impart knowledge and understanding. God wants us to know him and he wants to reveal himself to us.

He wants us to have his wisdom, his knowledge, his understanding. And it's all there for us under one condition. We've got to seek it out.

We've got to search for it. They search the scriptures daily. Let's be people like the brains who search the scriptures daily when we are those people.

Then we'll know the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God in the deepest sense. Father, we thank you for these promises. And Lord, help us.

Lord, we all have Bibles and Lord, you've given us your word. Help us to seek it out. Help us, Lord, to follow the example of these people, to search the scriptures and to find you there in Jesus name.

Amen.

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