

# (People God Uses) 04 Knowing the Word of God

by Chuck Smith

---

*Knowing the word of God is essential for living a life that honors God and for being effective in our service for Him.*

**Duration:** 48:08

**Scripture:** Luke 24:27, Acts 17:2, Acts 19:20, Romans 9:17, Romans 10:11, Romans 11:2, Galatians 3:8

**Topics:** "People God Uses"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of running the race of serving the Lord Jesus Christ with all-out effort. He refers to the book of Acts, highlighting the power with which the early believers proclaimed the truth of Jesus Christ and the evidence of His resurrection through miracles and signs. The speaker expresses a desire to be able to proclaim the truth with similar signs and wonders in today's doubting world. He also discusses the scarcity of teaching the word of God in today's pulpits and emphasizes the need for a comprehensive understanding of the Bible through a survey and studying it within its context.

---

## Transcript

Paul wrote to the Corinthians, Know ye not that you are not your own? You've been bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are His. We are really not our own to order, to decide, to determine.

We've been bought with a price. We were slaves to sin. We were being held in the bondage of sin.

But Jesus redeemed us. He purchased us with His own blood, that we now might be the servants of Jesus Christ. We are not our own.

We've been bought with a price. And therefore, if we live unto self and live for ourselves, without any thought of what He wants or what He desires, we are really robbing Him of what is His. Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, which is in us.

Not our own. We've been bought with a price. I'm certain that each of us desire to serve the Lord.

That's why we're here tonight. We desire to be effective in our service for Him. I like the title of that book, My Utmost for His Highest.

Paul talked about pressing towards the mark or the prize of the high calling of God. He reminded us that though we all run in a race or all run in a race, only one receives the prize so run that you might obtain. That encouragement of an all-out effort on our part as we serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

As we serve Him, of course, our desire is to be effective in our service. We read the book of Acts. We read with what power they proclaimed to a unbelieving world.

They proclaimed the truth of Jesus Christ and the proof of His resurrection by the miracles and the wonders and the signs that were done. And we sometimes wish that we could proclaim the truth of Jesus Christ to this doubting world with signs and wonders and miracles that would substantiate that which we are declaring concerning Jesus Christ. In the last part of Mark's Gospel, we read, and they went everywhere preaching the Gospel, the Holy Spirit working with them with signs following.

And we would each of us like to have that kind of power in our lives and through our ministries that we would be really effective for the Lord. And so it is important that we take a look at these men that God was using in such a powerful way in that first century to proclaim the truth of Jesus Christ. And as we have been looking in Acts chapter 3, studying the characteristics of these men, we discovered that first of all, they were men of prayer.

Secondly, we found that they were men of faith. And then we found that they were men who were not ambitious for their own sakes or glory, but they were only desiring to glorify Jesus Christ and to bring glory to Him. They had come to the cross in their own lives.

They had reckoned the old nature, the old life to be dead, crucified with Christ and living now for Him. Now tonight we're going to look at another characteristic of these men. And we find it beginning in verse 18 of the third chapter of Acts.

Peter is talking to the people concerning their culpability in the death of Jesus Christ, laying the blame completely upon them. But he declares to them, now brethren, verse 17, I know that through ignorance you did it, as did also your rulers. But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Messiah should suffer, He has so fulfilled.

Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. And He shall send Jesus the Messiah, which before was preached unto you, whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all of His holy prophets since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me.

Him shall ye hear in all of the things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul that will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.

Notice he is making reference to the prophets, all of the prophets and the things that the prophets had declared. And then he quotes from Moses' prophecy in Deuteronomy concerning the Lord sending another one like as unto Moses, to whom they were to give heed. Now, we must sort of transfer ourselves back to

the times of the early church and of the disciples here in the book of Acts.

Gutenberg had not yet invented the printing press. The only copies that they had of the scriptures were handwritten copies. They were very rare.

They didn't have family Bibles in each home. They didn't have many different versions or translations of the scriptures. The copies of the scriptures were rare.

And so it was necessary that they memorize and hide the word of God away in their hearts. Now, they didn't have nicely bound Bibles with India paper and divided into chapters and verses so the scriptures were readily accessible. They had scrolls and the various books were in the individual scrolls.

So not having the advantage of having a Bible like I have and I'm up here, I can turn to different passages and it's all here and I can go from the different books of the Bible because I have them all in a easily accessible form. Not so with them. They only had the various scrolls and so as Peter is talking and as he begins to talk to them about the scriptures, as he begins to quote out of the scriptures, he can't say, John, hand me the Deuteronomy scroll.

And he can't unroll the thing and say, now over here, you know. There were no chapters and verses. In fact, there were no commas or anything else.

It just was running along in a straight line. I guess this way. And so they couldn't read the scriptures.

They couldn't read passages of the scriptures to the people but had to quote them by memory. The word of God was in their heart but they had a good working knowledge of the word. They knew the scriptures but not just know them.

They had a good working knowledge of the scriptures. They were able to draw out the scriptures that applied to a particular circumstance. And they could quote not just a single verse but they could quote several verses of scrolls or of the books that were not necessarily that well-known.

Sort of interesting passages and were able to put them together in a very adaptable way to adapt it to the things that were happening right at that moment. It is interesting to me how that Peter did quote from several different books in the Old Testament and he quoted at length passages from the various books in the sermons that he preached. Every time that Peter was preaching, he was quoting to them the scriptures.

And so they demonstrate to us the importance of knowing the word and having the word hid in our hearts. The men that God used and the men that God uses are men and women of the word. Those that have a good working knowledge of the scriptures.

To minister the word of God to the people is to model your ministry after Jesus Christ. There are a lot of ministries today that are very weak as far as the word is concerned. There's a lot of pop psychology.

There are a lot of messages that are rich with interesting stories, but there is little just plain teaching of the word of God. And yet the word of God is the foundation for our faith. Our faith is established upon God's word.

And if you are going to be strong in faith, you must be strong in the word. Jesus was constantly speaking of the scriptures. In Matthew 4.4, Jesus answered and said, when Satan was tempting him, it is written,

quoting now the scriptures, it is written.

And he answered every temptation of Satan with the words, it is written as he quoted to him, the scriptures. In Matthew 21.42, Jesus said to them, did you never read in the scriptures the stone which the builders rejected? The same has become the head of the corner. This is the Lord's doing.

It is marvelous in our eyes. Jesus assumed that yes, you should have read this in the scriptures. You should know the scriptures.

In Matthew 22.29, Jesus answered and said unto them, you do error not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God. And how many people have fallen into error because they did not know the scriptures. It's tragic.

How many people fall into error because they are easily deceived because they don't know the scriptures. As Paul was writing to the Ephesians concerning the gifted men that God had placed in the church. First of all, the apostles, then the prophets and then the evangelists and the pastor teachers.

He said the purpose of this was for the perfecting of the church for the work of the ministry. The building up of the body of Christ until we all come into the unity of the faith and knowledge of the son of God and to the measure of the stature of the image of Christ, that we'd be no more like babes who are tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine and slight cunning of men who lie in wait to deceive. There are many cunning men lying in wait to deceive and those who are not skilled in the word can easily be deceived because they are not solid in the word.

Jesus said, you do error because you don't know the scriptures. I got a letter this evening from some fellow, addressed me, dear Chuck. And he didn't send this letter out to everybody.

Of course not, he sent it out only to his mailing list. But he had a special prophecy he said for me. And I wasn't to read the prophecy until I had responded to the appeal to send money to him.

And then I was to open the fourth envelope and read this prophecy to me. I'm tempted to write him back, but my wife is sort of discouraging me. But I wanted to just write him back and tantalize him and just say that I wanted to send him a thousand dollars and all and just sort of lead him on.

And because that's the whole, it's just a money gimmick thing, but it's tragic that he's preying on people all across the United States. And tell him that I was expecting this big check. And as soon as I did, I wanted to send him a generous offering and just appreciate the prophecy and all.

And I was going to sign it Lottie Bull because that's what he said to me. So Jesus said they erred because they didn't know the scriptures. And in Matthew 26, he said, but how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be.

You see Jesus referring to the scriptures again refers to the inerrancy because it is in the scriptures. It must be. Peter, as he in the first chapter of Acts said, the scriptures must needs be fulfilled.

And so not only are they the word of God inspired by the spirit of God, but they are inerrant because they are God's word. In Matthew 26, 56, we read, but all this was done that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. And then all of the disciples forsook him and fled.

Mark's Gospel 7, 13. Jesus was talking to the Pharisees of how they made the word of God of none effect through their traditions. In John 5, 39, he encouraged them, search the scriptures for in them you think you have eternal life, but they are actually testifying of me.

In Luke 4, 21, Jesus began to say to them, this day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. Luke 5, 1, came to pass as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God. He stood by the lake of Gennesaret.

Why did they press? They wanted to hear the word of God. I wonder why it is that so many pastors across the country today do not bring to the people the word of God. Why so many are dealing with other subjects than the scriptures.

In Luke 8, 11, Jesus, when he gave the parable of the sower that went forth to sow the seed and it fell on different soils, he said, now the seed is the word of God. It is the word of God that brings forth fruit in our lives. A seed is extremely interesting as we have come to understand now about the DNA and the coded information within the DNA.

Within each cell of your body, that coded information to replicate your body. You're talking about cloning now and taking DNA and making a clone of a person. And the information is all there in the DNA of the replicating of us.

Well, that's what is within a seed. It is just the DNA coding, which you put that seed into the ground and the DNA code that has all of the information of the kind of fruit tree or whatever it's gonna be. It's all encoded.

It's all encapsulated within that seed. To produce from the DNA, the original product, you might say. Now, when Jesus is saying that the seed is the word of God and the effect of the word of God in our lives is to reproduce Jesus Christ.

And he said, now you are clean through the word that I have spoken unto you. And it is the word of God that brings us into conformity to Jesus. And thus, as we take in the word, it is forming, the word forms in us the very image of Jesus Christ.

Jesus in Luke 8, 21, answered and said unto them, my mother and my brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it. Luke 24, 27, beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. I recently heard one of these pastors who has given himself over to a seeker-friendly church and actually has very interesting psychological sermons.

They're fascinating. And he does throw in a few scriptures here and there just to sort of legitimize the ministry. But he was pointing out, or he was, he doesn't pointing out, it's because he doesn't have to point out, he was declaring that Jesus never expounded, he never preached an expositional sermon.

But what does it mean when it says he went through the scriptures and expounded unto them? Maybe he doesn't understand what exposition is. But Jesus went from Moses and all the prophets and expounded the scriptures of the things concerning himself. And in Luke 24, 32, and they said one to another, did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way and while he opened to us the scriptures? That was the ministry of Jesus, to open to the people the scriptures.

And if we model our ministry after Jesus, we would be doing the same thing, opening to the people the scriptures. We do read in Nehemiah that when they came back to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, that they

made a little platform, the people gathered together, and they stood on the platform and read to the people the scriptures. You see, this word of God was scarce.

As we said, it was handwritten on scrolls and there weren't that many copies available. So they were reading and for the whole morning, they were standing there reading the scriptures to the people. And as they were reading the scriptures, the people began to weep as the spirit of God moved upon their hearts through the word of God and repentance.

I am convinced that there is power in God's word to bring repentance. It's exciting to see the power that is in the word of God. It is alive, it's powerful, it's sharper than a two-edged sword and it's able to cut right down to the heart of people.

And it's just a tragedy that there is such a scarcity of the teaching of the word of God in the pulpits today. In Luke 24, 45, it says, then Jesus opened their understanding that they might understand the scriptures. In John 7, 38, Jesus said, he that believeth on me as the scripture hath said.

John 10, 35, he said, if he called them gods to whom the word of God came and the scripture cannot be broken. Infallible, Jesus declared the scripture cannot be broken. In John 13, 18, Jesus said, I speak not of you all.

I know who I've chosen, that the scripture might be fulfilled. He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me as he was declaring that one of those that were sitting with him there was gonna betray him. John 17, Jesus said, while I was with them, as he is praying to the father while I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name.

Those that you gave me, I have kept. None of them is lost but the son of perdition that the scripture might be fulfilled. Notice how often Jesus was quoting the scriptures to them.

Matthew 4, 4, he answered and said, it is written. Matthew 4, 7, Jesus said unto him, it is written again. Matthew 4, 10, then said Jesus unto him, get thee hence Satan for it is written.

Matthew 11, 10, for this is he of whom it is written. Behold, I send my messenger before thy face which shall prepare thy way before thee. Matthew 21, and he said unto them, it is written, my house shall be called the house of prayer.

You've made it a den of thieves. Matthew 26, 24, the son of man goeth as it is written of him but woe unto that man by whom the son of man is betrayed. Matthew 26, 31, then said Jesus unto them, all of you shall be offended because of me this night for it is written.

I will smite the shepherd and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. Mark 7, 6, he answered and said unto them, well has Isaiah prophesied of you hypocrites? As it is written, the people honor me with their lips but their heart is far from me. Mark 9, 12, then he answered and told them, Elijah verily will come first and restore all things and how it is written of the son of man that he must suffer many things and be set at naught.

But I say unto you that Elijah is indeed come and they have done unto him whatsoever they have listed as it is written of him. Mark 11, 17, as he taught saying unto them, is it not written, my house shall be called of all nations, the house of prayer. Luke 24, 46, and he said unto them, thus it is written and thus it behooved the Messiah to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day.

John 6, 45, Jesus said, it is written in the prophets and they shall be all taught of God every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the father cometh unto me. John 8, 17, it is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. John 10, 34, Jesus answered them, is it not written in your law that I said ye are gods? I thought that was quite interesting.

Jesus said, isn't it written in your law that I said? He's claiming now to be the author there that I said ye are gods. Not only was it a prominent part in the ministry of Jesus, but it was a very prominent part in the ministry of Peter. As we pointed out earlier, every time Peter preached a sermon, he was quoting from the scriptures.

The sermons were all based upon the written word of God, the scriptures. And so with Paul the apostle in Acts 17, 2, and Paul as his manner was, went in unto them and for three Sabbath days, he reasoned with them out of the scriptures. In Romans 9, 17, Paul said, for the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up that I might show my power in thee and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.

Romans 10, 11, for the scripture saith, whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. Romans 11, two, God hath not cast away his people, which he foreknew. Know you not what the scripture says of Elijah, how he makes intercession to God against Israel, saying in Galatians 3, 8, and the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith preached before the gospel unto Abraham saying, in thee shall all nations be blessed.

322 of Galatians, but the scripture hath concluded all under sin that the promise may be of faith in Jesus Christ and it might be given to all that believe. And so all the way through his epistles, Paul is quoting the scriptures and he is teaching from the scriptures and making reference to the scriptures. The men and women that God uses are men and women of the word who have a good working knowledge of the word.

We are told in Psalm 138, two, that God has magnified his word above his name. As we previously pointed out, when we were studying the second chapter of Acts, that one of the basic functions of the early church was they continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine. That was one of the basic functions of the early church, the teaching of the word of God.

We will find out as we move a little further into the book of Acts, that the apostles considered this of primary importance as they said that prayer and the word of God was their top priority. It isn't right that we should leave prayer and the word of God in order to wait on tables. And we see the place of the word in the early church in Acts 6, two.

Then the 12 called the multitude of the disciples under them and they said, it is not reason that we should leave the word of God to serve tables. And we read as the result in Acts 6, seven, the word of God increased and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. It was the word of God that attracted and drew the people.

And it was because of the teaching of the word of God that the church multiplied. Today, there are all kinds of church growth seminars being promoted across the country. If you've taken any kind of a religious magazine, you will see in them all of these church growth seminars across the country.

You can pay \$175 for the five-day seminar and so forth and learn how to increase your church and all of these great church leaders and so forth are lecturing in these seminars on how to grow a church. Well,

you can save your 175 bucks and just start teaching the word of God and God will magnify his word above his name. And in the early church, it was just they had the right priority.

We're gonna give ourselves to the prayer and to the teaching of the word and the church multiplied as the result of the prayer and the teaching of the word. We read that when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received what? They had received the word of God. They sent unto them Peter and John.

Acts 10.36, the word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ for he is Lord of all. Acts 11.1, and the apostles and the brethren that were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. Acts 12.24, but the word of God grew and multiplied.

Acts 13.5, and when they were at Samaria, they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews and they also had John as their minister. Acts 13.7, which was with the deputy of the country, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man who called for Barnabas and Saul and desired to hear the word of God. The next Sabbath, Acts 13.44, came almost the whole city together to hear the word of God.

The Bible is exciting. The Bible is thrilling. The Bible is the word of God.

Why would we leave the word of God to try and teach psychology? Why would we leave that which is powerful, that which is alive, that which can transform lives? I don't understand it. And people, pastors across the country, are wondering why the churches are empty. People are hungry for the word of God when it is truly taught.

In Acts 13.46, then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold and they said it was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you, but seeing you put it from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, we're turning to the Gentiles. Acts 17.13, but when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at Berea, they came hither also and stood up to the people. Acts 18.11, and he continued there a year and six months teaching the word of God among them.

Paul's ministry in Ephesus. He continued there, teaching the word of God. Acts 19.20, so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

Now, how to study the Bible. First of all, I think that it is important that you have a Bible survey, that you get a basic overall understanding of the whole Bible. And thus, I recommend a good survey of the Bible to take you through and give you sort of the highlights of each book of the Bible.

The highlights of even each chapter of the Bible. G. Campbell Morgan has a great exposition of each chapter of the Bible. And to go through and get the overall picture.

And I think it's very important that you get the overall picture of the whole Bible. And then you can understand the different parts. But it's very difficult to understand many times an isolated scripture unless you see it within its context.

And so many times when people come with questions and problems with the Bible, it's because they've been looking at just an isolated passage. A single scripture. And so often, if you'll just read it in its context, the context explains it.

Or if you read it in the context of the whole teaching of the scriptures, then you get an understanding of it. So it's important that you have, first of all, a grasp of the whole picture, what the Bible is about. And then you can understand the various parts of it much better when you can see how it fits into the whole picture.

As we've used the illustration of a jigsaw puzzle to try to understand just one piece of the puzzle can be a near impossibility. But when you see that piece as it fits into the whole picture of the puzzle, then you can understand that picture so clearly, that piece so clearly, because you see the whole picture. And you can see that the picture isn't complete without this piece.

And so the Bible stands as a whole picture made up of many pieces. And oftentimes a single piece of the puzzle is a mystery unless you can see it and put it together with the whole picture. So get a good grasp of the whole picture that is given to us in the Bible concerning God, concerning redemption, concerning Jesus Christ, concerning sin and the need of a savior and things of this nature.

And then you'll understand so much better the individual parts. But then I do believe that we need to seek the guidance and the help of the Holy Spirit in the understanding of the Bible. Paul tells us in Corinthians that the natural man does not understand the things of the Spirit, neither can he know them, for they are spiritually discerned.

And so we need the help of the Holy Spirit in understanding the scriptures. Jesus said, but the comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all of the things that I have commanded you. So the promise of the Holy Spirit from Jesus is that he would be the one who would teach us all things.

And so we need the help of the Holy Spirit in the understanding of the scriptures. And so I strongly recommend that before you start to read, you would just stop and offer a prayer and ask the Lord by the Holy Spirit to help you to understand and to speak to you through the Word. Don't try and come to it with just the natural mind, for the natural man does not understand, neither can he know them, they are spiritually discerned.

But it is wonderful how the Holy Spirit will just open up the Word of God to our hearts, make it rich, make it alive, and just speak to us individually. And how many times the Word of God has just spoken to my heart. As I was reading it, it just grabbed hold of my heart and spoke to me as the Spirit made the application and as the Spirit opened up my understanding to a passage and gave me enlightenment on a glorious experience.

John said, the anointing which you have received of Him abides in you. And you need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teaches you of all things and is truth and is no lie, even as it has taught you that you shall abide in Him. So if you want to be used of God, you desire to really be fruitful and have a fruitful ministry, then get a good working knowledge of the Scriptures.

As Paul said to Timothy, study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth. And if you get a good working knowledge of the Scriptures, God will give you many opportunities to use that working knowledge of the Scriptures in ministering to others. People are hungry for the Word of God.

God has put that hunger in their hearts. And if we are faithful in teaching the Word, God will honor His Word. You see, what I say doesn't really have any promise of having lasting value.

But what God's Word says promises lasting value that will come to people from it. And that is why, and I think that throughout the Calvary Chapel movement, we have so many interesting illustrations of how God honors His Word. And just the reading of the Word and the teaching of the Word, God will honor it.

And so, those that God uses are people of prayer, people of faith, people who are not looking for glory for themselves, and people of the Word. Now, there is one more extremely important characteristic of the people that God uses in effective ministries. And we'll be looking at this final characteristic in our study next Wednesday night.

Let's pray. Father, how we thank You for Your Word, a lamp unto our feet, a light unto our path, and that we can walk in the light of Your truth, not stumbling, Lord, not fumbling around, but being led, Lord, by the Word of God. And Father, we thank You that You have given to us Your Word.

And Lord, we thank You that we have it in such convenient form, that You have blessed us so that we don't have to have a bunch of bulky scrolls. Lord, we just have it available and we have all of the handy references and the ability, Lord, to look up various passages so easily. Lord, You've been good to us.

And we realize to whom much is given, much is required. And so help us, Lord, to be men and women of the Word, hiding it away in our hearts that we might not sin against You, and that we might be strong in the faith and in our ability, Lord, to share the truth of Your Word with others. Bless, we pray, Your people.

Make us, Lord, effective in our ministries for You. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/11/SID11016.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/chuck-smith/people-god-uses-04-knowing-the-word-of-god/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**