

EXTREME PROVISION GOD'S LOVE LETTER...to YOU!

If you received a special letter or email from Jesus...telling you how much He loves you...and giving you the guidance and direction you need for your daily issues.....

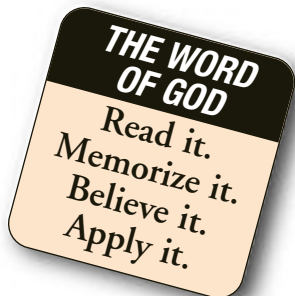
would you read it? Would you keep it, cherish it, memorize it, and continually think about it?

That's exactly what the Bible is...it's God's love letter to you! God's Word is as important to your Christian growth as milk is to a new baby. It is a vital "piece" of the "puzzle".

BEFORE YOU START

Begin this study by getting a Bible with good references and helps. You may find a modern translation easier to understand.

Begin memorizing key Scripture verses from *Beginning with Christ*. These are promises you will want with you daily! And to better understand the Bible, read *What the Bible is all about*, by Henrietta Mears.



YOUR ROAD MAP

If you were trying to drive to a distant small town you had never been to before...would you drive by your emotions and instincts... or would you look at a road map?

THE BIBLE IS GOD'S "ROAD MAP" FOR YOUR LIFE.

"The road of life can be a baffling route indeed: smooth at times, but sometimes full of potholes...one day a well marked expressway, the next a maze of detours. But your heavenly Father has provided a road map—the Bible—to keep you moving in the right direction."

Closer Walk New Testament

While the road map won't tell you what's around the curve, or how bumpy the road is...it will keep you from heading in the wrong direction, giving you guidance for daily living.

The Bible also gives you God's wonderful promises for each step of the way. In this booklet you will learn how to use your map to help you grow and become more mature in Christ.

CHANGING HABITS

Every day you do things out of habit. You get up, eat breakfast, shower, get dressed, go to school, go to work, etc.

In order to make God's Word part of your life—you need to make it a daily habit. Pick a time, (mornings are usually best), then pick a quiet spot...and spend time reading the Bible and thinking about how it applies to your life. Once you have done it for thirty days, you will have established a habit that will change your life!

GOD'S VIEWPOINT

God's Word gives you God's answers to all of life's most important questions:

GOD'S NATURE
YOUR PURPOSE
HOW TO GROW IN CHRIST
MORAL DECISIONS
RELATIONSHIPS/ SEX
EMOTIONS/ COMFORT
TRIALS/ DEATH

*"For the Word of God is full of living power...
It exposes us for what we really are."*

Hebrews 4:12

YOUR MIND...A "VAT"

Every moment of every day, your mind is flooded with information... most of it the world's viewpoint.

Your life, and the decisions you make are greatly influenced by what goes into your VAT!

In order for God's viewpoint to prevail in your life, you must get a good "dose" of God's Word...not just a few minutes each day.



Studies have shown that the average teen spends between two and three hours a day watching the "tube". Whether it's TV, the computer, or some other form of entertainment, you have time each day to spend on your favorite things.

Author, Matthew Henry, said:
“If you want to get close to God, you must study His Word”

Q How does Col 3:16 apply to you personally?

GETTING FED

There are five basic ways for you to get fed on God's Word:

- 1 HEAR IT TAUGHT**
- 2 READ IT**
- 3 STUDY IT**
- 4 MEMORIZE KEY VERSES**
- 5 MEDITATE ON ITS PROMISES**

All of these ways to make God's Word a bigger part of your life are important. Let's look at each of them.

1 HOW TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

There are several ways to hear God's Word taught:

- At Church
- Bible Teachers/ Schools
- Christian Seminars
- Bible Web Pages
- Bible Studies
- Bible Tapes/CD's/DVD's
- Christian Radio
- Christian Books

Q How are you hearing God's Word taught, and what can you do to increase hearing it?

Q Hearing God's Word should make you want to read and study it for yourself. What does Acts 17:11 say?

Whenever you hear God's Word taught, attempt to learn what the Holy Spirit is trying to teach you personally, taking good notes, and writing down your thoughts.

2

HOW TO READ GOD'S WORD

When reading the Bible, it's best to read it slowly and thoughtfully. Have a good pen or marking pencil handy to write down your thoughts, and underline key verses.

Make it fun. Go on a "hunt" to find promises God has for you. Then write down the reference so you can locate it later.

If this is your first adventure in reading the Bible, it's best to start in the New Testament, reading at least one of the four Gospels. Many teachers recommend starting with John.

The book of Acts tells about the actions of the early Christians. Acts is must reading for all Christians.

After Acts, are the letters to the first Christian churches, which give instructions and guidance for daily living. And finally, in the book of Revelation, you will see how Christ is going to end all things in this world, and begin ruling as "King of kings and Lord of lords." It's awesome!

"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. It is God's way of preparing us in every way, fully equipping for every good thing God wants us to do." 2 Tim. 3:16,17

Q What book in the Bible are you reading?

There are several ways you can study the Bible:

Study an Individual Book. (eg. Acts)

Study a Passage or Chapter. (eg. 2 Cor. 5)

Study a Biblical Theme. (eg. Love)

Study a Verse. (eg. 2 Cor. 5:17)

Study a Biblical Doctrine. (eg. Redemption)

The reason to study God's Word is to gain insight into who God is, and what He wants to do in your life.

Example: A Study of "Discouragement" (from Bert Harned)

"Do you get 'discouraged, depressed'? I have found an instant cure for it! YES! It is in Psalm 118. 6-8. The NLT says,

'The Lord is for me so I will not be afraid.

What can mere mortals do to me.

Yes the Lord is for me. He will help me.'

It was a beautiful cloudless morning when I noticed these verses, and took the time to think on them. I wrote one word at a time down on the left margin, and took time to think as deeply as I could about each word, making notes as I went. Start like this:

THE LORD:	<i>the mighty, almighty, creator, sovereign, loving, glorious God. That's who is for me!</i>
IS:	<i>means right now...presently, an absolute certainty!</i>
FOR:	<i>means He knows me, has my best interests at heart, is not against me, He is on my side, and knows what is best for me.</i>
ME:	<i>means BH, personally, not in general, but specifically, by name. It is awesome and exciting to contemplate "me" having such intimacy...with God Himself!!</i>

When studying the Bible, use tools such as a concordance, the Amplified Bible, a Bible handbook, or a good study Bible. Also use Christian books such as Secrets of the Vine, to help you understand important concepts, like "abiding."

One reason to memorize Scripture is because our memories are short. After 24 hours you may accurately remember:

- 5% of what you hear.
- 15% of what you read.
- 35% of what you study.
- 57% of what you see and hear.
- 100% of what you memorize!**

Noted author, and counselor, Henry Brandt, in his book, *The Heart of the Problem* says:

“I still consider Bible memorization the single most important aid in my Christian life and in my counseling”

Make Scripture Memory Fun!

It's actually easy to memorize verses:

- Start with one verse.
- Repeat it several times.
- Explain it in your own words.
- Say it to a friend.
- Test and challenge each other to apply it.

Once memorized, review it without looking for 30 days. It will be yours to take with you wherever you go!



“How can a young person stay pure? By obeying Your Word and following its rules... I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You.”

Psalms 119:9,11

There is no better way to abide in Christ than to meditate on God's promises throughout the day. Whenever something stressful happens (and it will), think about a verse that applies to your situation.

Q What does Phil.4:6&7 say?

POWER OVER BONDAGE

In 1977, New York City was in turmoil because a troubled twenty four year old man, David Berkowitz, who the media labeled, "Son of Sam", went on a killing spree. His target was young women, and before he was finally caught, five young women and one man were dead.

During his time in prison, he was approached by a young prisoner named Ricky Lopez, who told David that regardless of what he had done, Jesus loved him and died for him.

Ricky gave David a Bible. As David Berkowitz read the Bible, God's power began breaking him of his addiction and bondage. In time, the Word of God brought him to a point of complete repentance—and the "Son of Sam" surrendered his life completely to Christ.

Today, David Berkowitz is the Chaplain's Assistant at Sullivan Correctional Facility. (Read this, and other stories of God's transforming power in Fresh Power, by Jim Cymbala.)

David Berkowitz was transformed because he replaced man's viewpoint with God's viewpoint. And, He believed God's viewpoint! He put the right "stuff" in his VAT.


SO...ARE YOU LETTING GOD'S WORD CHANGE YOUR VAT...AND YOUR LIFE?

Getting rid of the “junk” in your VAT, and replacing it with God's Word takes time. The amount of time you commit to the Bible is probably the single best indicator of your walk with Christ, and the best predictor of your future growth in Christ.

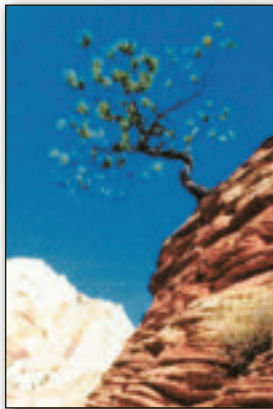
“Let the words of Christ, in all their richness, live in your hearts, and make you wise. Use His words to teach and counsel each other....”

Col. 3:16

All the “pieces” of the “puzzle” required to make your life in Christ awesome...depend on your commitment to God's Word.



As you run the race God has set ahead of you, make sure your roots are deeply planted in God's Word...just like this tree that survives and grows out of this dry rock...because its roots tap deep into the soil below.



Q Read Psalm 1.1-3, and write your thoughts:

Q How are your roots doing?
