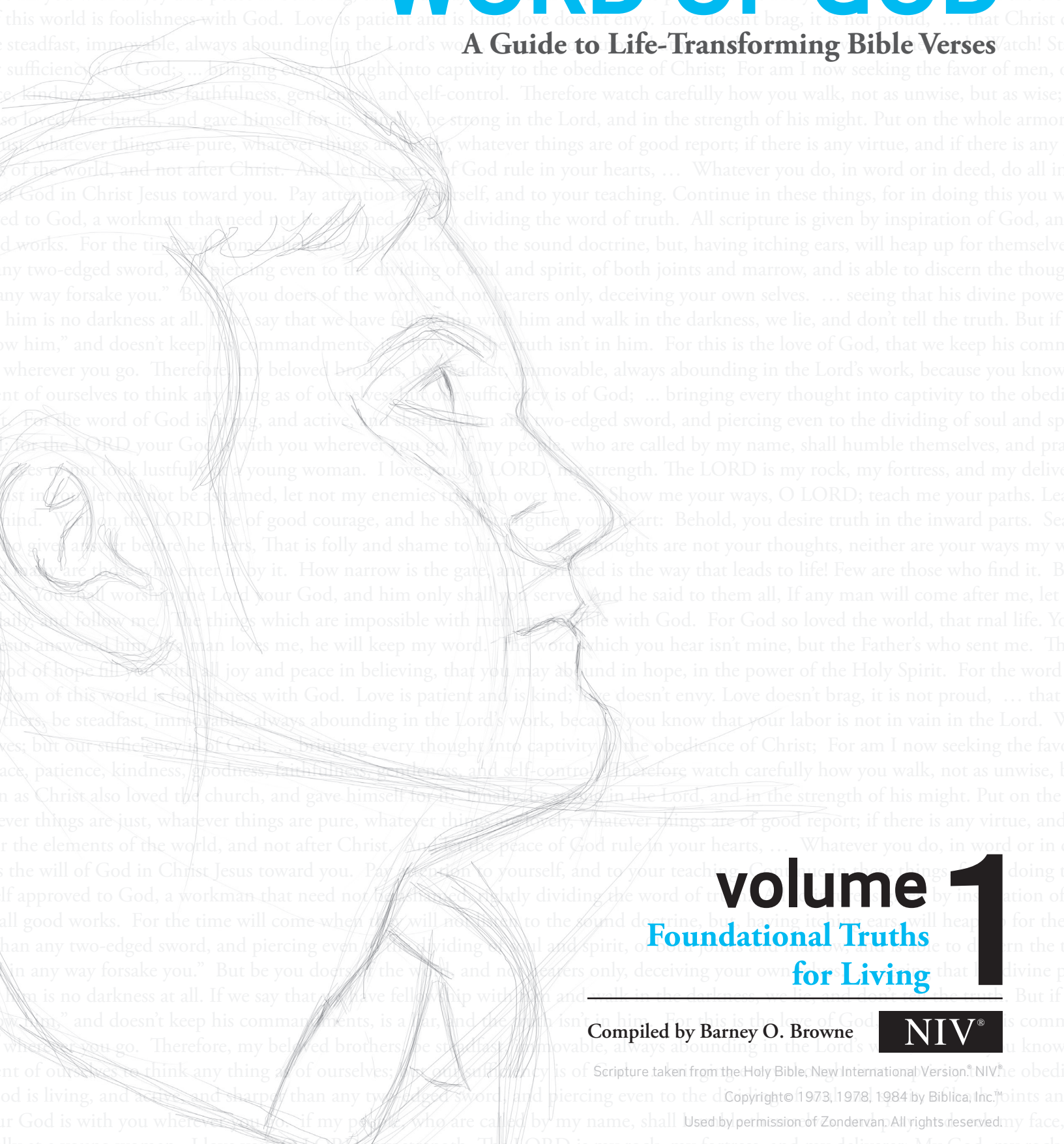


EQUIP YOUR MIND WITH THE WORD OF GOD

A Guide to Life-Transforming Bible Verses



volume 1
Foundational Truths
for Living

Compiled by **Barney O. Browne**



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Equip Your Mind with the Word of God

Volume 1 Foundational Truths for Living

NIV[®] Edition

Barney O. Browne

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Volume 1
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Dedication

To Jesus Christ
My Lord
My Savior
The Messiah
The Son of God
The Lamb of God
The First and the Last
The Alpha and the Omega
The Beginning and the End
The King of Kings and Lord of Lords

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53:4–6

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

Matthew 3:16–17

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 7:21

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“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

Matthew 11:28–30

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18–20

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

Luke 19:10

He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.” Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

Luke 24:44–48

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

John 1:29

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.

John 3:16–18

Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God’s wrath remains on him.”

John 3:36

For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:38–40

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

John 8:12

"You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

John 18:37

But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith.

Philippians 3:7–9

When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

Revelation 1:17–18

Preface

At the age of forty I became a Christian and began to study the Bible. Slowly but surely my view of the Bible began to change. I came to the realization that the Bible was much more than I originally thought it to be. I became aware of the overwhelming evidence proving beyond any reasonable doubt that the Bible is truly of supernatural origin and that its content has been almost perfectly preserved from ancient times to the present. I learned that although we are separated from the original manuscripts of the Bible by thousands of years, cultural differences, and language differences, we have available to us reliable and accurate Bibles that communicate what God wants us to know.

The following evidences convinced me that the Bible is truly the Word of God:

1. *Regarding integrity:* Although the Bible was written by approximately forty individuals over a period of more than 1,500 years, its consistent message, verifiable accuracy, and timeless wisdom clearly reflect integrity of design. This amazing feat is not something that human beings could accomplish without God's divine involvement.
2. *Regarding science:* Though not a book on science, the Bible's teachings are consistent with what we observe in the physical world around us. Neither biblical creation nor the theory of evolution has been proven by science. However, new discoveries that are scientifically verifiable are far more consistent with the Bible's account of creation than with the theory of evolution. Appendix 5 looks deeper into the scientifically outdated theory of evolution that continues to be widely promoted and vehemently defended in our culture.
3. *Regarding human beings:* The more that I study the Bible, observe people, and look within myself, the more that I discover that the Bible explains human nature and behavior far more accurately than man's wisdom does.
4. *Regarding predictive prophecy:* Only the Bible accurately describes events hundreds and sometimes thousands of years before they occur. The Bible's prophecies fall into two categories: those that have already been fulfilled and those that have yet to be fulfilled. Unlike the prophecies of man, none of the Bible's prophecies have been proven wrong. Only someone who is not

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bound by the dimension of time as we are and who is able to see the future could have authored the hundreds of precisely fulfilled prophecies of the Bible. God is that someone. He tells us in the book of Isaiah:

“Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please. From the east I summon a bird of prey; from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose. What I have said, that will I bring about; what I have planned, that will I do.” *Isaiah 46:9–11*

5. *Regarding archeology:* Again and again new discoveries demonstrate the accuracy of the Bible’s accounts of historical people, places, and events. Because of the Bible’s proven accuracy, many archeologists rely on the Bible to guide them to sites of historical interest.
6. *Regarding wisdom:* The more that I trust the Bible’s teachings, the more that I realize that the Bible provides the best framework for understanding this world, human nature, myself, and what to expect in life. The more that I observe and experience how life on earth really works, the more apparent it is that the wisdom of the Bible is far superior to the wisdom of man.

God uses the above evidences to authenticate His involvement in authoring the Bible and to demonstrate the Bible’s accuracy and trustworthiness. When I finally realized these things, I made the decision that I would strive to trust what the Bible says beyond the wisdom of this world and even beyond my own thinking. Although I was a skeptic when I originally began investigating the Bible, I gradually discovered, and continue to experience, that the Bible is fully trustworthy.

Realizing the trustworthiness of the Bible and committing my life to the Lord Jesus Christ has been life-transforming for me in several ways:

- *First*, the Bible taught me about myself, God, how God views sin (the breaking of His laws), and His great love for me and all people. I have found that the Bible’s teachings about human beings are fully consistent with the reality that I observe in the world around me and within me. I cannot say the same for those ideas of man that are contrary to the Bible. God demonstrated His amazing love for us when He sent His Son, Jesus Christ,

into the world to pay the full penalty for our sins. The Bible clearly teaches that in order to spend eternity with God we each must place our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, repent of our sins, and become obedient to Jesus Christ. Realizing these truths changed how I viewed everything.

- *Second*, I learned that the Bible presents a picture of reality—God’s *big picture*—that is consistent with the real world and explains, in a coherent way, all that I observe and experience in life. This biblical way of approaching and understanding the world—a *biblical worldview*—allows one to make sense out of this imperfect and trouble-filled reality in which we live. It also allows true followers of Jesus Christ to be joyful, thankful, and hopeful in the midst of troubles because God’s big picture—true reality—does not end with our physical death.
- *Third*, I learned that for those who choose to put their faith in and follow the Lord Jesus Christ, there is a confident expectation that God will fulfill His promises regarding eternal life with Him. God has been faithful in keeping His promises and fulfilling His prophecies in the past. Christ-followers can trust that God will be true to His Word in keeping all that He has promised them. They can also be confident that God, in His perfect timing, will bring to pass His yet-unfulfilled prophecies.
- *Fourth*, I learned that the Bible contains everything we need for living our lives in the way that God knows is best, both for us and for the people whose lives we touch. We each must decide whom we will trust for wisdom and guidance. I have observed, experienced, and finally learned that any worldly wisdom that is contrary to the Bible leads to foolishness and is harmful to one’s soul. I now strive to trust the Bible above the wisdom of this world and above my own thinking.

This book did not start with a vision to publish a book. It began with a problem. A major struggle I faced as I began studying the Bible and applying it to my life involved my memory. I was continually losing track of many Bible verses that I wanted to remember and apply. This book began as a personal project to help me learn and apply those Bible verses that had special meaning to me. I found it very helpful to use my personal computer as a tool to help me topically organize, retrieve, review, and study my growing collection of Bible verses. The next step was to print a loose-leaf paper version of my Bible-verse collection. This allowed me to easily read and meditate on the Bible verses I had collected. Although my

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family and some friends expressed interest in what I had assembled, I did not seriously consider the publishing path. My plan was simply to continue adding verses and topics to aid me in my Bible study. If left to myself, this is where my Bible-verse collection would be today.

Looking back, I believe that God worked through life's circumstances, my family, and several friends to change my thinking and provide me with the encouragement, support, help, and prayers that made another path possible. During the summer of 2002 my wife, Heidi, and I made the decision to turn my Bible-verse collection into a self-published book. Our plan was to publish a book that presented Bible verses in a format that could be used in a variety of ways. I have listed many of these ways on the back cover of this book. Our desire is that many people will find this book to be a valuable companion to their Bibles and that it will help them to develop a biblical worldview and to grow in spiritual maturity—thinking and living more like Jesus Christ and less like this world.

Barney Browne
April 2009

If you would like to send me your comments regarding this book, please go to my website below and select the *Contact* tab near the top of the screen.

Thank you.
Barney Browne

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Introduction

Welcome to the *Equip Your Mind with the Word of God* book series. Each book in this series presents Bible verses within topics that are of utmost importance to every human being. The goal of each chapter's page design is to present Scripture text that is easy on the eyes to read, encourages focusing and meditating on the Scripture paragraphs, and has ample space for personal notes. These design features enable this book to be used as a topical Bible-verse reference, as a devotional book, or as a small-group Bible-study resource. My desire is that this book will be a helpful window into the timeless truths of the Word of God.

The primary goal of this Introduction is to define several important terms and concepts. Accurately understanding these terms and concepts is foundational to understanding and properly applying the truths found within this book.

The God of the Bible

This book, Volume 1, focuses on what the Bible says about itself, God, and human beings. When I use the word *God* with a capital "G" in this book, I am always referring to the one true God, the God of the Bible. His attributes are clearly revealed throughout the Bible. Section 2 of this book focuses on what the Bible says about God. In this world it is quite common for people to use the word *God* to refer to someone other than the God of the Bible. If the attributes of the one they are referring to as *God* are the same as God's attributes as presented in the Bible, then they are in fact speaking about the God of the Bible. If, on the other hand, the attributes are not the same, then when they use the word *God* they are in reality speaking about someone else. For this reason, it is very important in our communications with others that we clarify what we mean when we use the word *God*.

The Lord Jesus Christ

In this book I often refer to Jesus Christ as the *Lord Jesus Christ* to acknowledge His ruling position over all creation. *Noah Webster's 1828 First Edition of the American Dictionary of the English Language*¹ first defines *Lord* as follows: "1. A master; a person possessing supreme power and authority; a ruler; a governor." Christians view Jesus Christ not only as their Savior, but also as their Lord and Master.

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The following Bible verses help us to understand how God wants us to view the Lordship of Jesus Christ:

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. *Hebrews 1:1-3*

On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. *Revelation 19:16*

Terms Referring to the Word of God

For the benefit of those who are new to reading the Bible, I need to mention the different terms often used to refer to the *Word of God*. In this book the following terms are used interchangeably: *Bible*, *Scriptures*, *Word of God*, *God's Word*, and *His Word*. When I refer to several adjacent verses, I interchangeably use the terms *Bible verses* or *Bible passage*.

Wisdom of God vs. Wisdom of This World

The terms *wisdom of God*, *wisdom of this world*, and *wisdom of man* are used frequently throughout this book. I use the phrase *wisdom of God* to refer to God's principles, ways, and wisdom as presented in the Bible. I use the phrases *wisdom of this world* and *wisdom of man* interchangeably. These refer to man's ideas, reasonings, and speculations that conflict with God's principles, ways, and wisdom. The word *world*, when used in the context of the wisdom of this world, refers to the secular and ungodly thinking of mankind and cultures throughout history. At any point in time our thinking will be based on either the wisdom of God or the wisdom of this world. Many problems, temptations, and difficult choices that Christians face in life can be avoided by trusting in the wisdom of God found in the Bible rather than trusting in the wisdom of this world.

Please keep in mind that I am not a Bible scholar. Rather, I am one who has learned to trust the Bible through the faithful teaching of many Bible teachers who themselves truly trust the Bible. In addition, my confidence and trust in the Bible has grown through my own study of the Bible and through my coming to realize that the Bible explains the world we live in and human beings far better than any other source. I acknowledge that I am continually learning what the Bible says and how to properly apply it to my life. I definitely do not have all the answers. That is why I continue to study the Bible and look to it above all else to find out how God wants me to view Him, this world, others, and myself. Please use my comments at the beginning of each chapter simply as starting points to introduce the chapter's topic. What is of primary importance is what God is saying through the Bible verses that are the essence of each chapter.

About the Quoted Bible Verses and Their Punctuation

I have chosen to use the following conventions when quoting Bible verses in this book. All quoted Bible verses are presented with their punctuation as it appears in the Bible. Those verses which are quoted within a paragraph, including their original punctuation marks, are enclosed within extra quotation marks. The verses themselves, along with all other quoted material embedded within text paragraphs, are italicized for readability. Those verses which are quoted as indented, stand-alone paragraphs are not enclosed in extra quotation marks. Their punctuation reflects exactly what is in the Bible. Where my quoted verse or passage represents only a portion of a quote in the Bible, you may notice quotation marks in the beginning of the quoted verse but not at the end. This indicates that the actual quote continues into the next Bible verse, which was beyond what I chose to include in my book. For those verses that are quoted as stand-alone paragraphs, only the verse address is italicized. Finally, I have chosen to not split quoted Bible verses or passages across page boundaries. I want each quoted Bible verse or passage to be fully visible on a single page. It is my hope that these conventions will enhance the readability of this book.

Overview of the Appendices

I would like to introduce you to the appendices in the back of this book. The title of this book—*Equip Your Mind with the Word of God*—is worded as a call to personal action. It is partially based upon the following Bible verses:

Equip Your Mind with the Word of God

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. *2 Timothy 3:16–17*

Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. *Ephesians 6:13–18*

I have included the following appendices for three reasons. First, I want to encourage all who read this book to be increasingly committed to equipping their minds with the Word of God. Second, I have designed these appendices with the goal of helping people equip their minds with the Word of God. Third, I hope that these appendices will be a useful resource to help readers protect themselves from self deception and from the deception that is so prevalent in the world around us. Both kinds of deception work to undermine people's trust in the Bible. This leads to havoc in people's lives, in families, and in nations. For these reasons I encourage you to explore each of these appendices.

Appendix 1: What It Means to Equip Your Mind with the Word of God—
I share my perspective on this subject by answering five questions.

Appendix 2: Why It Is Important to Equip Your Mind with the Word of God—
This appendix presents ten reasons why Christians should want their minds to be equipped with the Word of God.

Appendix 3: How to Equip Your Mind with the Word of God—
In this appendix you will find eighteen action items to help you to successfully equip your mind with the Word of God.

Appendix 4: How the Word of God Can Teach You—
Here you will find a list of ten ways that the Holy Spirit can use the Word of God in your life. In addition, this appendix presents a practical example of just one of the many ways that God can use His Word to equip and fortify your

mind with important biblical truths and principles. I explain how viewing and meditating on a theme-based collection of Bible verses can grow your understanding of the Bible's timeless truths. Seven theme-based collections of Bible verses from this and future volumes of this book series are included as usable examples.

Appendix 5: Do Not Be Misled by Darwin's Theory of Evolution—Why would I include a discussion on the theory of evolution in a Bible-verse reference book? The reason is because Darwin's theory of evolution has been used very effectively since 1859 to undermine people's confidence in the Bible. In this appendix you will learn why the theory of evolution is scientifically outdated and why believing in evolution is just as faith-based as believing in the Genesis account of creation. In addition, I share with you several valuable tools and resources. These can help you to discover for yourself why the biblical creation account is consistent with the physical evidence and why the theory of evolution is not.

Appendix 6: Trusting the Bible—A Self-Test for Christians—This appendix is intended for everyone who proclaims to trust the Bible. An introduction briefly introduces and positions the "Self-Test." The test itself is labeled *Thirty Important Questions*. It is designed to help Christians to better understand to what extent they are allowing the Word of God to guide their thoughts, words, and actions. This "Self-Test" questionnaire is designed to be used individually or within a small-group setting.

This Book is Another Window into the Bible

Please consider this book to be another window into the Word of God. Please do not allow this book to take time away from your regular reading and studying of the Bible. Rather, may this book encourage you to read and study the Bible even more. It is my hope that this book will help you to discover more of God's timeless truths, equip your mind with them, and share them with others.

Section 1

The Bible



The Bible claims to be the actual Word of God. It teaches us about the holy God of the Bible, the human beings He created, and this world we live in. The Bible teaches us about God's love for us, man's sinful nature, the consequences of sin, and God's loving provision for bringing repentant human beings into an eternal relationship with Him. It explains the reality of heaven and hell, angels and demons, the widespread evil in this fallen world, and the great spiritual battle for the heart, mind, and soul of every human being. The Bible teaches us about the Lord Jesus Christ and His earthly mission to offer salvation to mankind. It gives us wisdom for living that is timeless and far wiser than the wisdom of man. The Bible teaches that God's Word is true and stands forever. Jesus prayed to God the Father in John 17:17b: "*your word is truth.*"

Many people in our culture, including some who call themselves Christians, do not believe much of what the Bible says. Up until the age of forty, I believed that the Bible was simply a mixture of ancient history, myths, rigid rules, outdated values, human wisdom, and wishful thinking. When I finally began to earnestly study the Bible and investigate the evidence for its reliability, I realized how wrong I had been. The more that I study the Bible the more that I find it to be trustworthy.

God—the all-knowing, all-powerful, Creator of the universe—calls us to trust in Him and in His Word. It is then that we can begin to understand the holiness, righteousness, justice, and love of God. The Bible reveals to us our sin nature and how God views sin—the breaking of His laws. It teaches us how sinful people can be forgiven by God and welcomed into heaven if they put their faith in Jesus Christ who has paid the just penalty for their sins. Only by trusting the Bible's teachings can you truly come to know the loving God who created you. I pray that this book will help you to view God, yourself, other people, this world, life's troubles, and salvation through the lens of the Bible—the Word of God.

Chapter 1

What the Bible Says About Itself



**All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching,
rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, . . .**

2 Timothy 3:16

In the verse above, God is telling us that all Scripture—the entire Bible—is God-breathed. Although men wrote the words of the Bible, they were supernaturally directed by the Holy Spirit to pen what God wanted them to write. God wants us to confidently believe what the Bible says about itself—that it is truly the Word of God. Then the Holy Spirit will use the Bible to open the eyes of our understanding, transform our lives, and draw us deeper into a loving relationship with Him for eternity.

How we view and treat the Bible will significantly influence our understanding of God and our relationship with Him. It will determine how we view ourselves and other people. Our trust in the Bible will determine how we view this world and our understanding of how life on earth works. Our attitude toward the Bible will be foundational to how we make moment-by-moment choices. How we view and treat the Bible will determine the direction of our lives, how we touch the lives of everyone within our sphere of influence, and the role we allow God to have in our lives. This chapter presents Bible verses that tell us how God wants us to understand and view His Word.

Section 1 The Bible

Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.

Deuteronomy 4:2

Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Deuteronomy 6:5–7

**the word of the LORD
is flawless.**

He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

Deuteronomy 8:3

“As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in him.

2 Samuel 22:31

And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times.

Psalms 12:6

As for God, his way is perfect; the word of the LORD is flawless. He is a shield for all who take refuge in him.

Psalms 18:30

The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the LORD are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the LORD are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the LORD is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

Psalm 19:7–11

For the word of the Lord is right and true; he is faithful in all he does. The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love.

Psalm 33:4–5

**For the word
of the Lord
is right and true;**

Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the LORD. Blessed are they who keep his statutes and seek him with all their heart.

Psalm 119:1–2

Your word, O LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens. Your faithfulness continues through all generations; you established the earth, and it endures. Your laws endure to this day, for all things serve you.

Psalm 119:89–91

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.

Psalm 119:105

Section 1 The Bible

The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.

Psalm 119:130

Righteous are you, O LORD, and your laws are right. The statutes you have laid down are righteous; they are fully trustworthy.

Psalm 119:137–138

Your righteousness is everlasting and your law is true.

Psalm 119:142

Your statutes are forever right; give me understanding that I may live.

**All your words are true;
all your righteous laws
are eternal.**

Psalm 119:144

Yet you are near, O LORD, and all your commands are true. Long ago I learned from your statutes that you established them to last forever.

Psalm 119:151–152

All your words are true; all your righteous laws are eternal.

Psalm 119:160

I will bow down toward your holy temple and will praise your name for your love and your faithfulness, for you have exalted above all things your name and your word.

Psalm 138:2

“To you, O men, I call out; I raise my voice to all mankind. You who are simple, gain prudence; you who are foolish, gain understanding. Listen, for I have worthy things to say; I open my lips to speak what is right. My mouth speaks what is true, for my lips detest wickedness. All the words of my mouth are just; none of them is crooked or perverse. To the discerning all of them are right; they are faultless to those who have knowledge. Choose my instruction instead of silver, knowledge rather than choice gold, for wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire can compare with her.

Proverbs 8:4–11

Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but blessed is he who keeps the law.

Proverbs 29:18

**The grass withers
and the flowers fall,
but the word of our God
stands forever.”**

“Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.

Proverbs 30:5–6

The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever.”

Isaiah 40:8

As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

Isaiah 55:10–11

Jesus answered, “It is written: ‘Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

Matthew 4:4

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

Matthew 5:17–18

**Jesus replied,
“You are in error
because you do not
know the Scriptures
or the power of God.**

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

Matthew 7:24–25

But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.”

Matthew 7:26–27

Jesus replied, “You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God.

Matthew 22:29

Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.

Matthew 24:35

If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

Mark 8:38

Jesus replied, "Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?"

Mark 12:24

The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone.'"

Luke 4:3-4

**Heaven and earth
will pass away,
but my words
will never pass away.**

"Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say? I will show you what he is like who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice. He is like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built.

Luke 6:46-48

But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete."

Luke 6:49

He replied, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.”

Luke 11:28

He said to them, “How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

Luke 24:25–27

**In the beginning
was the Word,
and the Word
was with God,
and the Word
was God.**

He said to them, “This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.” Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.”

Luke 24:44–48

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

John 1:1–5

If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me. But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?”

John 5:46–47

“You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

John 6:67–68

“As for the person who hears my words but does not keep them, I do not judge him. For I did not come to judge the world, but to save it. There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say.”

John 12:47–50

**Sanctify them
by the truth;
your word is truth.**

After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: “Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. . . . Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

John 17:1, 17

Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

Acts 17:11

Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.

Romans 10:17

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Romans 15:4

We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.

1 Corinthians 2:12–13

**Consequently,
faith comes from
hearing the message,
and the message
is heard through
the word of Christ.**

Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

2 Corinthians 4:1–2

And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.

1 Thessalonians 2:13

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not put out the Spirit's fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil.

1 Thessalonians 5:16–22

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16–17

For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12

**For the word of God
is living and active.
...
it judges the
thoughts and attitudes
of the heart.**

For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God. For, "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of the Lord stands forever." And this is the word that was preached to you.

1 Peter 1:23–25

And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.

2 Peter 1:19

Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

2 Peter 1:20–21

The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw—that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

Revelation 1:1–3

**Blessed is the one
who reads the words
of this prophecy,
and blessed are those
who hear it and
take to heart
what is written in it,**

Then the angel said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!’” And he added, “These are the true words of God.” At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

Revelation 19:9–10

I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

Revelation 22:18–19

Chapter 2

The Wisdom and Power of God's Word



All your words are true; all your righteous laws are eternal.

Psalm 119:160

God has given us minds to reason with and amazing physical senses for experiencing and exploring our world. With these we are able to gain knowledge and wisdom regarding many things in life. However, in spite of man's extensive accumulated knowledge, it is clear that there are many areas where man's understanding is very limited. A few examples include: why the laws of nature are what they are, exactly how life functions at all levels, the complexity of the human mind, and the origin of DNA.

Man's wisdom is also very limited. As humans, we have a tendency to believe that our accomplishments are the result of our own efforts apart from God. Our tendency is also to trust our own thinking and that of "experts" above the Word of God. A truly wise person humbly recognizes that his or her abilities come from God and that God's wisdom is far beyond man's wisdom. A truly wise Christian is one who earnestly studies the Bible, prays for God's guidance, and then uses the Bible to test his or her thinking. For such a Christian, God then uses His Word to reveal His truth, impart His wisdom, and provide guidance for everyday living in this imperfect world.

The Bible not only contains God's truth and wisdom, but also is powerful in that God uses Scripture to accomplish amazing things in the lives of people. God uses His Word to reveal to people how they have sinned against Him by breaking His laws and what the penalty is for their sins. God uses the Bible to introduce people to the Lord Jesus Christ and to explain to them how they can be saved through Him. God uses His Word in the lives of Christians to teach, rebuke, correct, equip, strengthen, guide, protect, comfort, transform, mature, and bless them. To what extent are you allowing God to do these amazing things in your life through His Word?

Chapter 3

The Sufficiency of God's Word



His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

2 Peter 1:3

In the verse above, God is proclaiming to us that He has made available to Christians everything they need for life and godliness. This includes, but is not limited to, God's mercy and grace, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit who dwells in all Christians, the fruits of the Spirit, the armor of God, the Bible, and prayer. Through these, God teaches, rebukes, corrects, equips, strengthens, guides, protects, comforts, encourages, transforms, matures, and blesses Christians.

God's Word contains all the truth and wisdom we need for living our lives in a way that is pleasing to Him. There are some subjects about which the Bible does not speak. However, where the Bible does speak about a subject, God calls Christians to trust what it says. We may at times find that a Bible passage is confusing, counterintuitive, or simply a message that we do not want to hear. However, nowhere in God's Word are we told that this justifies trusting the wisdom of this world or our own feelings above trusting the Bible. We may at times need help from spiritually mature Christians in understanding what the Bible means or in applying it correctly to our lives. Be sure to seek help from those who truly take the Bible seriously, who revere it, and who handle it faithfully and accurately. May the verses in this chapter lead you to trust the Word of God above the wisdom of man.

Chapter 4

Trusting and Obeying God's Word



This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome,

1 John 5:3

The Bible verses in this chapter represent a call to every person to trust and obey the Bible. God, through the Bible, reveals to us who He is and what He stands for. He reveals to us His love for us, His values, His standards, His commands, His wisdom, and His desire for what is best for us. God tells us in the Bible how He wants us to view and treat His Word. He provides ample evidence that the Bible is, in fact, the Word of God and that it is true and accurate. I have listed some excellent resources in Appendix 5, item 10 for those who would like to explore the evidences supporting the trustworthiness of the Bible.

God reveals to us through the Bible everything we need to know in order to become Christians—spiritually reborn followers of the Lord Jesus Christ (I further explain what I mean by the term *Christian* in the introduction to this book). God clearly states in the Bible how He wants Christians to view Him, love Him, love others, and live their lives. If we truly desire to know God more fully, serve Him more faithfully, and glorify Him in how we live our lives, then we need to earnestly trust, study, and obey the Word of God. May God use the verses in this chapter to draw you closer to Him.

Section 2

What the Bible Says About God



The God of Christianity is the God of the Bible. Throughout the Bible God teaches us about His character traits, His values, His standards, His laws, His power, and the nature and extent of His love for all people. God reveals to us in the Bible the kind of personal relationship that He desires to have with every human being for eternity.

The “God of the Old Testament” is the same as the “God of the New Testament”. God is unchanging, and His character traits are consistently reflected in both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible.

Many people claim to know and follow God. However, if what they believe about God contradicts what He says about Himself in the Bible, then in reality they are following something else or someone else. It is unreasonable and self-deceiving for people to consider themselves followers of the God of the Bible and then to base their understanding of God on alternative sources that contradict the Bible.

Do you desire to know who the God of the Bible really is? Do you desire to enter into a personal relationship with your Creator for eternity even if it means submitting your life to Jesus Christ? Are you already a spiritually reborn follower of Jesus Christ who desires to more faithfully honor, serve, and represent Him? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then it is essential that you trust what God says about Himself in the Bible. It is my desire that the chapters in this section will be helpful to everyone who truly desires to know God better and draw closer to Him.

Chapter 6

God—Jesus Christ



For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve.

1 Corinthians 15:3–5

The following three questions are perhaps the most important questions that a human being can ask:

1. Who is Jesus Christ?
2. What does the Lord Jesus Christ desire for me and from me?
3. What role will I allow the Lord Jesus Christ to have in my life?

Questions 1 and 2 are not asking for people’s opinions. They represent a call to discover the truth—the unchanging reality—about Jesus Christ. They cannot be correctly answered by relying on human feelings or wishful thinking. The true answers to these two questions do not come from within you but from outside of you. God has already answered these questions for you in the Bible. Do not believe any answers to questions 1 and 2 that differ from what the Bible says. God’s Word alone is the source of truth regarding Jesus Christ.

Question 3 is different from questions 1 and 2 in that the answer comes from within you. How you decide to answer question 3 will depend upon the current condition of your spiritual heart. Your answer to question 3 will determine the direction of your life and will significantly affect all those in your sphere of influence. How you answer question 3 will determine whether Jesus Christ will someday say to you, “Welcome into my kingdom,” or whether He will say to you “I never knew you! Depart from me!” This chapter will help you to answer questions 1 and 2 accurately so that you may view question 3 from a foundation of truth. The Creator God of the universe allows you to answer question 3 any way you choose. May you choose wisely.

Chapter 9

What Jesus Christ Says About Himself



Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

John 11:25–26

The purpose of this chapter is to present in one place a representative selection of statements from Jesus Christ about Himself. His words leave no doubt that He proclaims to be the Son of God—God in human form. Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man. His words tell us that He came to earth to bring us salvation and enable us to walk in the light of God’s truth rather than in the darkness of sin and deception. Sin is the breaking of God’s laws, and the penalty for sin is spiritual death—eternal separation from God. Jesus Christ’s words tell us that He came to earth to save us from the death penalty we deserve for sinning against the holy God of the Bible. Jesus Christ—the unblemished “Lamb of God”—is the only human being who has never sinned against God. He alone was qualified to be the perfect, sinless sacrifice needed to pay the full penalty for our past, present, and future sins. He did this by receiving the punishment that we deserve—God’s wrath against sin. Jesus Christ, after going to the cross for us and accomplishing His mission on earth, was physically resurrected from the dead three days later. The Word of God tells us that Jesus Christ—the “King of Kings and Lord of Lords”—will return to earth to gather those who belong to Him so that they may live with Him for eternity. God always keeps His promises.

If you have any doubts as to whether Jesus Christ really is who He proclaims to be in the Bible, ask God to show you the truth about Him. Then as you read this chapter, I invite you to set aside your preconceptions while you ponder what Jesus Christ proclaims about Himself. May your understanding of Jesus Christ and your relationship with Him be totally consistent with what He reveals about Himself in the Bible.

Section 3

What the Bible Says About Human Beings



The Bible verses in the chapters of this section reveal to us God's foundational truths about human beings. It is on these truths that God wants us to base our understanding of ourselves, others, and our need for a right relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Through these foundational truths God speaks to us regarding the following:

1. How God has designed you
2. How God views you
3. The reality of sin in your life and its consequences
4. The personal relationship that God desires to have with you
5. Your free will and the importance of your choices
6. How God wants you to view and think about yourself
7. How God wants you to view, love, and care for others

May the Bible verses in these chapters help you to more accurately understand who you really are and why God created you.

Chapter 34

God Values All Human Life



This is good, and pleases God our Savior, who wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

1 Timothy 2:3–4

God created human beings in His image. He desires a loving relationship with each one of us for eternity. He still desires this, even though we have all sinned (Romans 3:23). God calls all human beings to be responsive to His prompting, to choose to earnestly seek Him, to repent of sin, and then to believe in and follow Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. God promises us in Jeremiah 29:13 “*You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.*”

In addition to valuing human life, God also values righteousness and justice. God’s holy nature requires that the just penalty for sin must be paid. The fact that God must execute perfect justice for those guilty of sin does not mean that He does not value human life. Out of love for human beings, God has provided a single way for the penalty for our sins to be paid and for us to be forgiven. John 14:6 tells us: “*Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’*” God offers each of us His Son, Jesus Christ—the Lamb of God—as the perfect, sinless sacrifice to pay the full penalty for our sins. God’s solution for our sins allows Him to have a personal, loving, and eternal relationship with human beings, while at the same time not compromising His holy justice. Whether or not one accepts God’s offer is a personal choice every individual must make. To deny one’s sinful nature and to refuse to repent of one’s sins equals rejecting the Lord Jesus Christ and sentencing oneself to God’s perfect justice and punishment for sin. That punishment is eternal separation from God in a place called hell. To accept God’s offer of salvation means to repent of one’s sins and to place one’s faith in Jesus Christ. It also means to become an obedient follower of the Lord Jesus Christ. The fact that Jesus Christ came to be our sin-bearer, Savior, and Lord demonstrates how much God values and loves every human soul.

Appendix 2

Why It Is Important to Equip Your Mind with the Word of God

1. God Communicates His Truths Through the Bible

Equipping your mind with the Word of God is important because the Word of God is the primary language-based way that God uses to communicate His truths to human beings. The Bible, when trusted and used properly, is a guidance system for Christian thinking that is of infinite value. God has given us the Bible to teach us how to rightly view Him, other people, this world, the circumstances of daily life, and ourselves. The Word of God teaches us about who God is, who we are, what this world is all about, and what happens when we physically die and leave this world. The Bible teaches us the truth about our sinful nature that separates us from God. The Bible teaches us the truth about Jesus Christ and how He alone can save us from the penalty for having sinned against God. Only through Jesus Christ can we enter into a right relationship with God for eternity. The Bible teaches us how to live our lives in ways that are pleasing to Him and spiritually fulfilling for us. The Word of God is the truth that teaches us the reality of all these things. The Lord Jesus Christ tells us in John 17:17 “*Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.*”

2. The Holy Spirit Speaks Through the Bible

Equipping your mind with the Word of God is important because the Holy Spirit often speaks through God’s Word to communicate with and transform Christians. It is often when you are carefully reading and meditating on a Bible passage that the Holy Spirit reveals to you biblical truths, insights, and wisdom. The Holy Spirit also uses times when you are pondering Bible verses and applying them in your life to grow you spiritually.

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. *John 16:13–14*

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. *Galatians 5:22–25*

On the other hand, if you spend little or no time reading, studying, and pondering the Word of God, then you are suppressing the work of the Holy Spirit in your life. To the extent that you are not regularly setting your mind on the Word of God, your mind will drift toward the desires of your sinful nature and worldly things. Equipping your mind with the Word of God helps protect you from this spiritual pitfall.

Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. *Romans 8:5–8*

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. *Colossians 3:1–2*

3. Applying God's Word Requires Knowing God's Word

Equipping your mind with the Word of God is important because it is essential to being able to accurately and consistently apply Scripture to how you think and live. What happens when our minds are not equipped with the Word of God? Our ability to discern truth from untruth, good from evil, right from wrong, and wise from foolish will be weak even though we sincerely wish to be faithful Christians. We will tend to think more like the world thinks and make worldly decisions. Our perspectives and choices will initially seem to be wise,

Why It Is Important to Equip Your Mind with the Word of God

but the results will often prove to be disappointing and sometimes harmful. Our relationship with God and our relationships with other people will suffer in spite of our desire for them to flourish.

4. Minds That Are Not Equipped with the Word of God Will Follow the Ways of this World

Equipping your mind with the Word of God is important because we humans have a tendency to want to go our own self-centered ways and justify whatever we feel like doing. Christians are not immune from this. If we are not continually equipping our minds with the Bible, then the Word of God will not be fresh in our minds and will have less influence on our moment-by-moment thinking. Instead, what will be fresher in our minds will be the myriad of messages and images continually coming our way from the world around us. Many of these messages and images are expertly designed to influence our thinking and appeal to our selfish desires. When our minds are not equipped with God's Word, we will lack discernment in many areas important to our lives. We will then be more likely to deceive ourselves and rationalize that an ungodly path is actually not a problem. The next self-deception is the human tendency to seek the approval of like-minded people whom we believe will agree with our selfish position. Christians who want to faithfully follow the Lord Jesus Christ must be equipped with the Word of God.

5. Knowing the Word of God is Essential to Putting on the Armor of God

Equipping your mind with the Word of God is important because it affects your ability to put on the full armor of God for spiritual protection (Ephesians 6:10–18). Spiritual protection means protecting your heart and mind from succumbing to such things as deception, doubts about God, doubts about the Bible, discouragement, distractions, pridefulness, unwillingness to forgive, bitterness, discontent, sinful lusts, greed, and selfishness. All around us and within us there is a great spiritual battle raging. The hearts and minds of human beings are the targets. This spiritual battle involves your heart and mind initially, but through your thinking and your choices this battle also affects your physical being as well as everyone within your sphere of influence. Your submission to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, your prayer life, and how well equipped you are with the Word of God will determine how protected you will be with the armor of God. When you are under spiritual attack, will you emerge from the battle

standing firm for Jesus Christ, or will you instead be defeated? Will you be standing firm so that you will be able to help those you care about as they face spiritual battles of their own? Or, will you be deceived for lack of God's armor and then discover in retrospect that during many of the spiritual battles you had been manipulated by Satan's forces into furthering his cause? For Christians, there is no escaping this great spiritual battle. We need to be equipped with the Word of God to be able to stand firm for Jesus Christ in this fallen, deceptive world.

6. Christians Are Called to Make Choices Based on the Word of God

Equipping your mind with the Word of God is important because each day we face spiritual choices that are part of the great spiritual battle, whether we realize it or not. God calls us in the Bible to trust and obey Him above anyone or anything else. Each time we face a decision between following God's wisdom or following man's wisdom we are involved in the great spiritual battle between God and Satan. What we choose will affect our current spiritual life as well as the person we are in the process of becoming. As in physical-world battlefields, things that at first seem insignificant can turn out to be monumental. It is vital in both the physical and spiritual realms that we recognize the difference between what is significant and what is insignificant. Knowing and trusting what the Bible says is essential to being able to discern which personal choices could have serious consequences for our lives or for others. Christians who are not equipped with the Word of God have hearts and minds that are highly vulnerable to spiritual attacks by Satan, his forces, and those humans they manipulate.

7. The Word of God Is Foundational for Discerning Good from Evil, Right from Wrong, and Truth from Error

Equipping your mind with the Word of God is important because when we know and trust God's Word, the Holy Spirit uses it to expose evil and to warn us when we are heading down the wrong path. Equipping your mind with the Word of God will enable you to properly use the Bible to test your own thoughts and feelings, test the advice and wisdom of other people, and test all that you see and hear in the world around you. You will be better able to recognize your blind spots so that you can make God-honoring course corrections. God's Word will always be consistent with the Holy Spirit's leading and with sound, godly counsel from other Christians. If the Bible is at odds with an alleged leading of the Holy

Why It Is Important to Equip Your Mind with the Word of God

Spirit, with the counsel of another Christian, or with your own thinking, God calls you to trust and obey the Bible instead. As a Christian, God calls you to trust and obey His Word even when you don't feel like it. Equipping your mind with the Word of God is part of God's plan to protect you from spiritual dangers, to bring spiritual blessings into your life, and to develop you into a mature, faithful disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.

8. The Word of God is Essential to Being a Faithful Ambassador for Jesus Christ

Equipping your mind with the Word of God is important because it is essential if you are to be a faithful and fruitful ambassador for the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ commands Christians to make disciples:

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." *Matthew 28:18–20*

If our minds are not equipped with the Word of God, then our lives will not be consistent with the Word of God. If our lives are not consistent with the Word of God, then we will not properly reflect Jesus Christ to others. If we are not properly reflecting Jesus Christ, then we will be ineffective at being His ambassadors to this world and at making disciples of others. If you want to be a faithful and fruitful ambassador for the Lord Jesus Christ, then the Word of God must be central to your life.

9. Equipping Your Mind with the Word of God is an Essential Part of Renewing Your Mind and Being Transformed by God

God calls us in Romans 12:2 to be transformed: "*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*" Renewing your mind involves submitting your life to God, trusting in Him, and trusting the Word of God above the wisdom of this world. It involves viewing the world and our lives according to God's values, principles, and truths which He reveals to us in the Bible. Renewing your mind means setting your mind on things that are pleasing to God instead of on things that are

displeasing to Him. All of these things are crucial for us as Christians who must still face life's troubles, temptations, the anti-God influences of our culture, and the attacks of Satan and those he controls. Satan's forces are continually working to deceive us, destroy our trust and confidence in the Bible, and undermine our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Standing firm against these influences and being transformed through the renewing of your mind requires having a mind that is equipped with the Word of God.

10. How You View and Treat the Bible Will Influence Every Area of Your Life

How you view and treat the Bible will determine how you think about God, view and relate to Jesus Christ, treat other people, view yourself, view this world, and think about truth. In addition, how you view and treat the Bible will determine what you believe about life, death, heaven, hell, and what is required for entrance into an eternal relationship with God. Finally, how you view and treat the Bible will determine your moral values, life priorities, daily priorities and what you think, say, and do each day. God cares deeply about your thoughts and attitudes in each of these areas. God knows that your thoughts and attitudes reflect the condition of your heart and will determine your words and actions.

God calls you to trust and obey Him—which means trusting in and obeying His Word. God tells us in the Bible how He wants us to view and treat His Word. Chapters 1–4 of Volume 1 of this book series presents how God calls us to view and treat the Bible. If the Bible is truly central to your life, God's principles and wisdom will be at home in your heart and will be reflected in your thoughts, words, and deeds. You will increasingly have what is called a *biblical worldview*. Developing a God-honoring biblical worldview and equipping your mind with the Word of God go hand in hand

The Bible is God's precious gift that He uses to teach us His truth, guide our thinking, and transform our lives. When the minds of Christians are well equipped with the Word of God, they are better able to discern God's truth and principles from man's contrary philosophies, myths, and deceptions. Equipping your mind with the Word of God is vitally important for developing a God-honoring biblical worldview and for growing in *spiritual maturity*—thinking and living more like Jesus Christ and less like this world.

EQUIP YOUR MIND WITH THE WORD OF GOD

The *Equip Your Mind with the Word of God* book series is a window into the Bible—the inspired Word of God. Each book’s chapters focus on a topic of interest and present Bible verses related to that topic. The chapter pages are formatted for excellent readability with ample space for personal notes. *Volume 1: Foundational Truths for Living* explores what the Bible says about the Word of God, the God of the Bible, and human beings.

Who will find this book valuable?

- Anyone who is exploring a relationship with Jesus Christ
- Anyone seeking to know God better
- Those seeking to grow in spiritual maturity
- Anyone seeking to better understand themselves and others
- Those serving as biblical counselors or mentors
- Leaders and participants of small-group Bible studies
- Parents who are active in teaching their children what the Bible says
- Anyone seeking to better understand the truth about this world
- Those serving as Bible teachers or Christian leaders

How can this book be used?

- As a personal or family devotional book
- As a resource for biblical counseling and mentoring
- To encourage someone you care about during life’s difficult times
- As a resource or study book for small-group Bible studies
- As a resource for learning what the Bible says
- To help someone you care about see the Bible in a new way
- As a resource for growing in spiritual maturity
- As a resource for applying the Bible to everyday living

Barney O. Browne grew up with a strong interest in science and the natural world that led him to initially pursue geology in college. He later changed his major to business and received a BBA and an MBA from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. This led to a twenty-eight-year career with IBM where Barney learned to apply critical-thinking and systems-thinking skills. It is with this background that, in his late thirties, Barney became aware of a growing number of problems regarding several so-called facts that he had believed for decades. The more that he tested these so-called facts and their underlying assumptions, the more he found them to be inaccurate or weakly supported and in reality mere opinions. This pursuit of truth led Barney to investigate the Bible, to realize that the God of the Bible is real, and to believe in Jesus Christ as his Savior and Lord at age forty. Barney currently works with a team of men who lead Bible studies that focus on teaching a biblical worldview and developing biblical spiritual maturity. One of his favorite quotes is from George Washington: “There is but one straight course, and that is to seek truth and pursue it steadily.”

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