



The Why and How of God's Word

BY: Chris Harper

"How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping Your word. I have sought You with all my heart; don't let me wander from Your commands. I have treasured Your word in my heart so that I may not sin against You. Lord, may You be praised; teach me Your statutes. With my lips I proclaim all the judgments from Your mouth. I rejoice in the way revealed by Your decrees as much as in all riches. I will meditate on Your precepts and think about Your ways. I will delight in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word." – Psalm 119:9-16

either David, Daniel or Ezra writing Psalm 119. Whomever the author, it is very clear that the word of God is their foremost thought and theme.

The writer of Psalm 119 makes it crystal-clear that God and His word are vital for their survival and their provision. God's word is where they glean His promises and place all their trust and hope.

I want to tell you church that what was so extraordinarily important to the saints of old must be extraordinarily

Upcoming events



Friday, 1/9

Homecoming (Alumni - Free Admission and Food)

B and G JV tips at 4:30 p.m.

G V at 6 p.m.

B V at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, 1/10

MS G and B vs. Lanesville, 10 a.m.

B JV/V @ West Washington, 6 p.m.

Monday, 1/12

MS B vs. WESB, 6 p.m.

Tuesday, 1/13

G JV/V vs. SW Hanover, 6 p.m.

Do you know the God of the Bible, or are you just pretending to know Him?

It is no coincidence that the longest Psalm in the Bible deals with, and speaks to, the word of God. At 176 verses, Psalm 119 is the longest Psalm in the Bible, and in virtually every verse the writer speaks about the word God.

Though the author is not specifically mentioned, most biblical scholars agree it was

importantly to the faithful now.

So I ask you today – is it?

Is the word of God the most important thing in your life? Can you say with the psalmist, "I treasure your word in my heart...I rejoice in your decrees...I delight in your statutes...your word that is

firmly fixed in heaven... the word that lasts forever?"

Can you say with the psalmist that, "it is God's word where you find hope, His word is your anchor; can you say here, in your word Father, is where I find life?"

Friends, it is my prayer this New Year that we would turn back to the word of God. It is my prayer that we would find treasure, hope and life in God's word.

I pray that, like the psalmist, we would cry out, "teach me Lord the meaning of your word...help me understand your word...help me stay on the path...turn my heart to your word."

But, I fear for many of us we can't or we don't. And it is not for a lack of trying.

If you are anything like me you want to read your Bible. Like many "decent" Christians, you have probably made some sort of New Year's resolution concerning your Bible. Maybe you are resolute in the fact that you are going to read your Bible daily. Perhaps for Christmas you received a new Bible or a new devotional. Maybe you even own a commentary. Whatever your resource, you are resolute that you will read your Bible more.

And though you earnestly set out to read your Bible, many of you will try, and many of you will fail.

Like I did, year after year, you end up practically memorizing Genesis chapters 1-10. For a few weeks personal ambition carries us, but, like all ambition, it soon fades and we are left without motivation - at best confused before we ever get to the book of Numbers. If this is you take heart because it is not just you, it's the entire western world:

Every year the Barna research group partners with the American Bible Society to do a comprehensive study on Americans and their attitudes and behaviors towards the Bible. The report, called the "State of the Bible," is published and made available to anyone. Though it is full of trends and statistics there was one this year that stood out instantly.

The report shows that though we live in America where 80% of its inhabitants claim to be followers of Christ - only 37% of people in America actually read the Bible once a week or more. Even more staggering is the fact that 63% of people read it less than once a week, if ever.

It is no wonder those who claim to know Him don't really know Him.

So where are you today? It is 2015, many of you have been coming to church for years. Where are you? Do you know Him?

Do you know the God of the Bible, or are you just pretending to know Him; name dropping as if He is your best friend when He really isn't.

Friends, unlike the saints of old, we have a great advantage today, we have a great revelation from God. We have God in us and His entire word for us. Shame on us if we never use it, search it, memorize it; shame on us if we don't plant it deep in our minds and hearts. Yet we, more than any other generation, WE FAIL TO KNOW GOD.

I contend today that there are two reasons, two factors, that have helped usher in this age of biblical ignorance:

- 1) Most people fail in reading God's word because they do not know **WHY** they should read it
- 2) Most people fail in reading God's word because they do not know **HOW** to read it.

Join me over the next few weeks as we venture the New Year and learn together the WHY and HOW of God's word. I hope it benefits you as much as it has benefited me.

Be well,

C. Harper