

I WANT TO KNOW MY BIBLE

Why and How

TEXT: Psalm 19:7-14

INTRODUCTION:

The big ole book that mamma loves.

While the Sears catalog may no longer be the book that displaces the Bible in our homes and hearts, **a multitude of other things have displaced it (the Bible).**

- **Television** (2009 Nielsen report – average American – 5 hrs/day)
- **Facebook**
- **You Tube**
- **Electronic gaming**

The consequence of it all is that we Americans don't know our Bibles very well.

- This is not a joke. **10% of Americans believe Joan of Arc was Noah's wife.**
- **Only 50% can name one of the four gospels.**
- **Less than half can name the first book of the Bible.**

Source: Stephen Prothero, *Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know – And Doesn't*

Today I am going to begin to do something about this, and I am asking you to join me in it. Today I begin a new series of sermons I am calling I Want to Know My Bible. To help achieve that purpose, I am going to read through the Bible again, but this time a little differently than I have ever read through it before. I am going to read through the Bible over the next 52 weeks chronologically, so that I can read the passages in the order that they tell the account of God's working in this world from the beginning to the end.

That is what the insert is for in your Worship Folder. Pastor George Guthrie put together this chronological reading plan for the Bible that will enable us to do three things:

- **Read the passages of the Bible in chronological order**
- **Read through the whole Bible in just one year**
- **Accomplish this goal in just 20 to 30 minutes a day**

My message to you today is a plea. We just completed the Letter of Jude and we saw that it was a plea. Well, my sermon today is a plea to all of you to join me in a movement in St. Andrew Baptist Church, a movement of people who say, "I want to know my Bible." So let me lead you to examine a question ...

Why do I want to know my Bible better? I will answer for myself, but I suspect it will strike some common chords with you as well.

I. BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW IT WELL ENOUGH.

- A. I hope that during the first part of this message, none of us said, "You mean Joan of Arc wasn't Noah's wife?" But hey, if you did, it's OK. What we are about to do is for you.

We are starting with no pre-requisites and at the very beginning. So if you know nothing about the Bible, join us.

- B. But most of us know something about the Bible. Some know a lot of somethings about the Bible.

I have been seriously studying the Bible since God called me to preach when I was a senior in high school. I am far from a scholar, but I am a determined student. I am not proficient in either Greek or Hebrew, but I know enough of both languages to be able to work through passages written in either.

But the longer I study it, the deeper I dig into it, the more I discover there is to explore. The Bible is like the Grand Canyon, the main body being deep, wide, and long, but also having thousands of smaller canyons connected to the whole, each of which offers an adventure of its own.

The point is that no matter how much you do or you do not already know about the Bible, there is so much more to learn.

As for me, I want to know my Bible.

II. BECAUSE OF THE BLESSINGS THAT KNOWING IT BETTER WILL BRING.

This brings me to our text for the day, Psalm 19. In this psalm, the Spirit of God leads David to extol the blessings that come from the Word of God. He calls the Scriptures

- **The Law of the Lord**
- **The Testimony**
- **The Statutes**
- **The Commandments**
- **The Fear of the Lord**
- **The Judgments**

Stand and read with me the blessings that God's Word brings to our lives.

Psalm 19:7-14

⁷ The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul;
The testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple;
⁸ The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart;
The commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes;
⁹ The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring forever;
The judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether.
¹⁰ More to be desired *are they* than gold,
Yea, than much fine gold;
Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.
¹¹ Moreover by them Your servant is warned,
And in keeping them *there is* great reward.

¹² Who can understand *his* errors?
Cleanse me from secret *faults*.
¹³ Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous *sins*;
Let them not have dominion over me.
Then I shall be blameless,
And I shall be innocent of great transgression.

¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
Be acceptable in Your sight,
O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.

Psalm 19

<p>⁷ The law of the LORD <i>is</i> perfect, converting the soul;</p> <p>The testimony of the LORD <i>is</i> sure, making wise the simple;</p>	<p>Blameless, without blemish, undefiled, complete</p> <p>Also means restoring the soul</p> <p>Faithful, enduring, trusted</p>
<p>⁸ The statutes of the LORD <i>are</i> right, rejoicing the heart;</p> <p>The commandment of the LORD <i>is</i> pure, enlightening the eyes;</p>	<p>Straight, upright, righteous</p> <p>Making glad</p> <p>Making bright</p>
<p>⁹ The fear of the LORD <i>is</i> clean, enduring forever;</p> <p>The judgments of the LORD <i>are</i> true <i>and</i> righteous altogether.</p>	<p>Continually true, permanently reliable</p>
<p>¹⁰ More to be desired <i>are</i> <i>they</i> than gold,</p> <p>Yea, than much fine gold;</p> <p>Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.</p>	<p>Better than riches</p> <p>Better than dessert</p>
<p>¹¹ Moreover by them Your servant <i>is</i> warned,</p> <p><i>And</i> in keeping them <i>there is</i> great reward.</p>	<p>Keeps trouble away</p> <p>Good consequences, positive result</p>

- A. The blessings of Psalm 19 are only some of the blessings of reading the Word of God. **When we read the Bible,**
1. **We discover the Person and character of God.**
 2. **We learn His thoughts.**
 3. **We see His ways.**
 4. **We find out how to enter into a personal relationship with our Creator.**
 5. **We learn how to live in fellowship with God.**
 6. **We discover how to live well in this world.**

7. **We find out how to receive God's**
 - **Grace**
 - **Peace**
 - **Joy**
 - **Hope**
8. **We learn how to help others do all of the above as well.**

So, how are we going to do this?

How can I come to know my Bible better?

III. BY READING IT FAITHFULLY.

- A. **Simply read according to the plan.**
- B. **20-30 minutes a day**
- C. **No new passages on Sunday to allow for "catch up."**
- D. **Additional Reading Plans are at the Welcome Desk.**
- E. **The next week's passage list will also be in the Worship Folder and on the website: www.sabc.org**

The key is read.

Don't think about it, consider it, wish for it, or plan to do it.

Just read it!

How can I come to know my Bible better?

IV. BY GAINING AN UNDERSTANDING OF ITS STORY AND THEMES.

- A. **As we read through the Bible chronologically together, I will preach on Sunday from the passages that we read during the week.**
 1. Therefore, next week, the text for my sermon will come from one of the first 11 chapters of Genesis, the first part of John, or one of the Psalms in our reading.
 2. We will do this every week. When I am away on mission, the preacher substituting for me will choose his text from that week's readings.
 3. I cannot wait to see what the text will be the Sunday before Christmas and on Mothers' Day! Whatever it is, I'm sure it will be better than when as a young pastor I preached on Jezebel on Mothers' Day. Maybe not the best choice of texts for the day!
- B. **In so doing, I will help you connect the dots and follow the primary story line as it develops in the Scriptures.**

C. I will also be able to preach on the major themes of God's Word as they are introduced and developed.

D. On Sunday nights, when I get to preach, I will do a "Digging Deeper" sermon that will go deeper into a part of that same week's text.

- 1. For instance, tonight I am doing a message on the other part of Psalm 19 that we did not read today about natural revelation.**
- 2. Does God give revelation to people who do not have the Bible?**
- 3. Does God, Who is altogether righteous and just, hold people accountable for the standards in the Bible when they do not have the Bible?**
- 4. Can a person be saved by means of natural revelation?**

CONCLUSION: I want to know my Bible.

Do you want to know your Bible?

I hope you do. I pray you do. You can.

- **Just read the Bible with us, 20 to 30 minutes a day.**
- **Come faithfully on Sundays and when you miss, listen to the CD.**

INVITATION: Folks, I may surprise you because I am not going to ask you to make a public commitment today to read the Bible through in a year with us. There would not be anything wrong with that, I just do not sense that the Lord has led me to do it.

You will decide, if not today at least by tomorrow because the reading begins. I believe God is going to do a really great thing among us as we read through his Word together and then focus on the primary accounts and themes. I just want you to be a part of what God does so very badly.

But only you can decide.