

## The Owner's Manual

Just like every piece of machinery, tool or automobile has an owner's manual, you as a human-being have one too—God's Word. Like a car, if you want to run right, know what your limitations and capabilities are, you have to first read it and then apply it.

You wouldn't put your car on cruise control and then lay down to take a nap—baaaad things happen. Many times though we can get in cruise mode with our lives. Then the current of the world takes us wherever it wants. We have no direction or purpose. The Bible can bring all that under control. God's Word will reveal to you all you need to know to run right in a world where the values and principles of living are upside down (a me first, self-satisfying mentality). I pray the following will encourage you and provide helpful information or even just a review about what God is saying to you regarding His powerful Word.

*"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* (John 1:1). Jesus is the Word. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are all revealed to you through His written Word. Jesus also reveals Himself to you in other ways, but His Word is your foundation. He says in Matthew 7:26, that if we hear His words and don't put them into practice we are like the foolish man who built his house on sand. In Matthew 24:35, He says, *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."* His words are timeless. They are as true now as they were over 2,000 years ago.

*"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly ..."* (Colossians 3:16). God's Word will teach you to be an effective Christian to your world and how to be obedient to God. In order to grow spiritually, to love and serve others and to recognize Satan's deceptions, you have to be a sponge and soak up the living water of God's Word.

*"For the word of God is living and active ..."* (Hebrews 4:12). *"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 55:11). God's Word reveals who He is. As He speaks to you through His Word, you will discover what He wants you to do and what He has determined you are ready to learn. Dr Charles Stanley pointed out, "The reason we hear different things from the same message is because we are at different stages of our spiritual walk. He reveals to us what we are ready for and able to understand." That's why a Bible verse will suddenly jump out at you when you have read it so many times before without the same effect.

*"Is not my word like fire, declares the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?"* (Jeremiah 23:29). His words aren't just words. They are truth, filled with Him and full of life-changing ability to those who apply them. As He is the vine and we are the branches. He reminds us in John 15:7 that if you remain connected to Him, and His words remain in you, you can ask whatever you wish and it will be given to you because you will only be asking for things in line with His will for you.

*"Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."* (Deuteronomy 11:18-19)

To function properly in the world you must saturate yourself and your children with His Word. Pastor Mark Furlong, Crosspoint Church, once said, "God's Word is the oil that keeps our engines running smoothly. Without it we seize up and have problems we wouldn't otherwise have."

*"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says ..."* (James 1:22). *"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."* (Psalm 119:11). By applying what you hear and memorizing scripture, you build it into your life. His Word becomes a natural, automatic part of who you are and how you live your life each day.

Dr Stanley explained that, “Our thoughts turn into actions, our actions become habits, our habits develop character and our character determines our destiny.” When your first thoughts about a situation are of God and His Word, you will be well on your way to developing the character God wants and avoiding Satan’s pit.

Simon Peter answered him, *“Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God”* (John 6:68-69). Many deserted Jesus because they would not accept His teaching or believe He was the Son of God. They didn’t believe He was the only way to heaven. You will never understand all the things of God; that is why you have to accept Him by faith. This same faith will enable you to trust and believe every word that comes from Him. His words in the Bible are not just stories, they are true. Until you accept that, you will never be able to trust Him or grow spiritually.

Billy Graham gave an example of saying we believe versus knowing in our hearts we believe. A man would push a wheelbarrow across Niagara Falls on a tightrope many times in front of a crowd. Then he put 200 pounds of dirt in it and went across several times. He asked the crowd if they thought He could push a man across and they all believed he could. So he told a man in the front row to get in the wheelbarrow. After that you couldn’t see the man for the cloud of dust as he was running away. Do you believe God’s Word in your heart? Do you trust what He says He can do?

Jesus answered, *“It is written: Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God”* (Deuteronomy 8:3, Matthew 4:4). Jesus used this on Satan when tempted with things of the world. You must do the same.

*“Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth”* (John 17:17). In this part of scripture Jesus was praying for His disciples’ protection from Satan after He returned to heaven. He emphasized in this verse the importance and protection they would find through His Word. Staying in His Word regularly will give you the knowledge of His truth and the protection you need to survive in this fallen world.

*“Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”* (Ephesians 6:17). God’s Word is an important part of the armor of God. In His Word, you find that the helmet represents our salvation and forgiveness of sins through the death of Jesus. His Word is also used as a sword as you memorize and repeat specific verses to combat Satan’s temptations and attacks.

The living, active, life changing, life giving, sin cleansing, grace filled, love saturated, endlessly powerful Word of God is the most important book you could ever read. Multiple college degrees or a bookshelf full of other literature can never compare to or exceed the knowledge, wisdom and truth found in ONE book---the only book God wrote--His Word--The Bible.

*Heavenly Father, how grateful I am that You provided me with a book that wasn’t even available to Your Apostles. Please continue to reveal Yourself to me through Your Word and give me an unquestioning trust and faith in what it says. Finally Lord, help me to read and apply Your Word every day and sink Your words deep into my heart. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.*

As you continue to develop the consistency to search out the promises God has in His Word and hear them in church sermons, you also need to apply them in your life. In order for God’s Word to take root, it must sink deep into the soil of your heart. In order to sink into your heart, you have to trust what God tells you in His Word.