

Scripture: Bibliology

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 05 September 2013

Preacher: Daniel Swanson

[0 : 00] My name is Daniel Swanson. I got to teach here a little bit last year. It was so much fun, and I really learned a lot. So it's kind of cool to dig into Scripture, dig into what other people are saying, and to kind of approach you guys and be like, okay, this is what I've learned.

So, what do we mean Nathan came up here and said, we're talking about bibliology tonight?

There's really like five things that goes under that when we talk about bibliology.

We say that we're talking about the authority of Scripture, the inerrancy of Scripture, the clarity of Scripture, the sufficiency of Scripture, and the necessity of Scripture.

Don't be intimidated by those words. Those are like kind of long and lengthy, and the reason why is because there's more than three syllables. That's why. The two pitfalls that you could really fall into when you hear that is, okay, it's time for me to check out I'm smarter than you because I can say words and I know what they mean or whatever.

You know, this is boring theology because words like this, like authority or sufficiency or inerrancy, whatever these words, you know, they're just kind of lengthy, and I think that's why we get intimidated.

[1 : 13] An example of that is, has anyone here been to like a UGA graduation or a Georgia Tech graduation? Okay, so a couple things that happens is there's this thing that there's like this phenomenon that happens when the whole crowd is listening as they're calling up the degrees and like, here comes James Hood with a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry and Molecular Engineering.

And like the whole crowd goes, ooh. Ooh. Or, here's one from Georgia Tech, a Master of Science in Quantitative and Computational Finance. And finally, a Bachelor of Science in Nuclear and Radiological Engineering.

Which, I mean, you could sum up all those different degrees in different ways, but they just sound really smart, and they are. But why do we use big words so that we can understand principles of Scripture?

So these words are important. So I'm going to explain them real quickly what we're going to be talking about tonight. So when I say God's authority, so the authority of Scripture, what I say and what Christ's family affirms is that we're saying, we believe that the Bible is our highest guide and truth.

The second one, you don't have to write all these down. I'm going to kind of come back to them. We say the inerrancy. We say it's completely free from error or fault. And then clarity.

[2 : 29] We say we believe that the Bible is able to be understood by everyone regardless of your intellect or social standing. Fill in the rest. The necessity of the Bible. We believe that the Bible is necessary to know God, His salvation, and His will.

Sufficiency. We have everything we need to know about godly living from the Bible, and nothing is absent from it that we need to know. So does that make sense? Like head nods. Like what we just said, those words, okay?

This is what we're talking about tonight. Those are big claims when you think about it. What other book do you know makes those claims? Not many.

What's a bigger claim is if those claims are actually true, right? Like it's a big deal. Those are bold and I would say audacious claims. But if the Bible is correct and the Bible is all those things, then man, the Bible should be anything but mild.

It should be anything but another book that we have on our coffee table. So what are my goals for tonight? Where do I want to see us going?

[3 : 37] I really hope that after tonight we walk away, every single person here walks away swelled up with joy because of your passion and love for the Word. Maybe for some of us that's brand new. Maybe for some of us that's renewed. Maybe you've come in here and you've been to Bible studies. You've participated in Bible studies on campus or whatever is in your own time, reading books or reading Scripture over and over again.

But it's run dry. I pray that tonight you really walk away renewed. And if you've viewed the Bible as something that is just another book, that tonight your view of it would be raised.

That we would look at the Bible as something completely unlike any other book that we have. You know, I hope that the foundations of your faith are solidified so that your confidence in the Word increases.

So when we're taking this Word and we're talking to people and we're saying why it's so important for you to follow the Word and for you to know Christ is because our confidence in that the Bible is inerrant, just as one example, is so true.

[4 : 43] And we know that in our hearts. And I'm like, yes, I know that this book, and Clay kind of talked about that last week. You know, what we're saying when we say that it's inerrant, that man didn't bring in his faults and he didn't bring in his mistakes and all the things that we do into this book.

Like, that's a big claim. Finally, I hope that you leave tonight with a craving to read and to study the Word because you realize that it's important as your daily food.

Like, I mean, like if you've ever gotten to that point when you're so hungry that you get hangry. Does anyone know what I mean by that? Like, you get so, you're like, do not talk to me right now. I'm starving.

Like, last night we were at community group and I did not say a word. I was so hungry. And I just can't, like, I don't have the energy to, like, say anything. So some people, I get angry too, but I mean, like, I'll just shut up.

So, but that's what I'm saying is that, you know, that when you go through a day and you're like, man, I have not spent good time on the Word. I haven't meditated on the Word. And it hasn't meant anything to me today.

[5 : 46] And it makes all these claims to do so. And I haven't done that. And because of that, I feel so empty. And then even when you talk to not, like, I mean, you'll talk to non-believers and you say that, like, hey, you know, Wes, how are you doing today?

Dude, I feel so weird. I haven't gotten in the Word at all. Like, I haven't actually spent quality time in the Word. And that's, like, a reality of our life. It's not Christian lingo that we just, you know, say to other people.

But it's truth. So that's the direction that we're going for tonight. And I pray, I've been praying that the Holy Spirit would come and, you know, do all those things.

Because I can't persuade you. Clay can't persuade you. None of us can say enough to have that joy for the Word, to have that reverence for the Word. Like, we need more than anything right now, right? That the Holy Spirit would come and teach our hearts and would open our hearts to receive this truth.

More than anything. So, the text that we just read, 2 Timothy 3.14, I'm going to kind of address these things that we talked about as far as the authority and inerrancy, all those other things.

[6 : 52] We're going to, I really believe that a lot of that is found in this passage. And we're going to go through this passage. We're going to find those different things. I'm going to talk about it for a second. And then we're going to kind of go in a little bit of a similar direction at the end of the night.

So, picking up in verse 14. So, he says, But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you have learned it, and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation in Christ Jesus. Okay, let's stop right there. Before we even go any further. There are two things that Paul does. The first thing is Paul kind of really addresses the clarity of Scripture, right? Let's look at this text.

He says, okay, Timothy, like the things that you've learned from when you were younger, from childhood that you've been acquainted with, these things are going to make you wise for salvation. He says childhood. And I think there's different debates on it as far as how old Timothy is. But regardless, we still know that he says, okay, when you were a young kid, you were familiar with these writings.

[7 : 58] And you were able to understand them. Which is kind of a crazy statement. Because when I was a child, I was dressing up like Robin Hood and running around the house with a blanket over my head, chasing my brothers and going to the ER multiple, multiple times.

And Paul is saying that in the midst of all that, in the midst of all that craziness, and I've got my mind on a million other things, you're still able as a child to understand this?

Like, that's a crazy statement. You know, how often when we're reading the Word and we come upon like a bit of hard truth, like a bit of Scripture that's like, whoa, that's confusing.

What in the world does he mean by that? Has anyone encountered those verses? Head nods. Can I get an amen or something? Okay. So, we come across those hard verses, right?

And then, a question I'd really like to ask you, because I want your wheels to start turning tonight.

And so you just start thinking critically, not me just telling you things. That's the most important thing, is that you're thinking for yourself tonight.

[8 : 57] But, my question to you is, when you do come across those Scriptures, there's a couple responses, but one of the ones that are most likely is that we read it, we're like, oh, that's confusing, I might read it one more time, now I'm going to go straight to a commentary and see what some other dude says about that text.

Instead of saying, okay, what do I know about Scripture to be true? What other references do I have in Scripture to look this up? Am I praying over Scripture? Am I trying to understand this? Are we just so quick to go to other commentaries or read other books on that subject?

Like, yeah, there's confusion over Scripture. Like, sometimes it can be a little hazy and hard to understand. But I would actually say that's a good thing, right? We're talking about the complexity of Scripture.

And Jesus, you know, oftentimes, if you've read the Gospels, Jesus oftentimes, whenever there's someone that comes up and they're like, I don't understand this, or he's correcting the Pharisees, he says over and over again, have you not read?

Have you not understood? Has it not been told to you from long ago? He says that over at least a dozen times. So he's constantly saying, okay, the problem with your misunderstanding of Scripture isn't with the Scripture, but it's with you because you're not understanding it correctly.

[10 : 11] I want to read to you a quote by a guy named Brian McLaren. This is on the complexity of Scripture.

He says, okay, if God wants the Bible to be a book that interests and challenges people around the globe for their whole lives, that guides them into life's deep mysteries, that trains us to see the world from diverse points of view, and in so doing, stretches us not to be so limited by our inherited point of view, then of course, it can't be like a phone book, a government code, a high school biology textbook, easy reference, fully indexed, conveniently formatted for a quick and easy use.

Nor can it be one red book after which we say, the Bible? Oh yes, I've read that years ago, implying that we'll never need to look at it or think about it ever again. If God wants the book to be an authentic medium for spiritual enlightenment and instruction, then how can it be a book that we fully grasp, have control over, take pride in our knowledge of, and feel competent in our regards to? Mustn't it be an untamed book that humbles us, that entices us, higher up and deeper in, that renders us children rather than experts, that will soon master us before we master it?

Is that quote kind of registering with you guys? Thinking about, okay, yeah, scripture is really complex, definitely. But, I think that's a good thing because we serve a complex God.

[11 : 47] You probably don't live a nice, neat life. You probably live a very messy life like I do where you have, you know, heartbreaks here, failures here, successes there, confusing times there.

And the Bible, like, kind of goes along with that same pattern. Like, it's not this easily formatted book that we can fully grasp just upon reading it once. And I would say that the word is remarkable because it's simple enough to be understood by a child yet complex enough to be studied by a scholar and has the ability to make that scholar feel like a child.

Paul also kind of says in this text, like, going on, so he says, you know, you were acquainted with it from childhood. And then he says that it's sacred writings. So, so Paul is immediately doing something and he's taking it off the list of the New York Times bestseller list and he's putting it in this completely different category, right?

Like, this isn't, this isn't, you know, up there with how to win friends and influence people. Like, this is a completely different book of its own. The second thing that Paul does in this text is he points out the sufficiency of scripture.

So, he says, but as for you, continue on what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

[13:15] You know, like, the big question that comes behind sufficiency of scripture being sufficient for us is the question of is scripture enough for us to know what God wants us to think or do?

I'm actually going to have a little bit of participation. Can I have someone turn to Proverbs 30 and read verses 5 and 6? Yeah.

There we go. That's it. Yeah, that'd be great. Okay.

That's such such a big claim. He says, every word of God proves true. He says, he's a shield to those who take refuge in him. Such big claims there.

I guess my question is, you know, scripture telling us, okay, don't add anything to this. You don't need anything else. Okay, scripture is enough. You know, it's kind of, there's kind of some bad signals that get sent.

[14:35] Sometimes that we think that in order to be a scholar of the word, to completely, fully understand the word, you need to go where? After college? Yes. Okay. I'm not saying it's bad, but I'm just saying that we kind of get in this mindset that the only way you can be a scholar, that if you have a real question, the person you go to is Nathan.

And the thing is, is that, man, if you know anything about history and how the church kind of fell into this time of the pre-reformation, so we were becoming illiterate, or we were illiterate, and we were asking for other people to interpret scripture for ourselves.

When the Bible is so bold enough to say, you read me and you interpret me for yourself, see if what I'm saying is true. And then, I mean, what other books can say that?

You know, we have books like the Book of Mormon that has added on to scripture, or we have books like the Watchtower Bible, and it's adding on to that, taking away. You know, books that claim that the Bible, what they're really saying is that the Bible isn't enough to know what you need to know about salvation.

That can go down to a million other things, too. Like, okay, what are those gray areas where God, you know, hasn't specifically told us about. But God's Word is saying, no, I've given you enough. I've told you exactly what you need to know.

[15:53] Do we approach it in that way? Moving right along to the second verse in 2 Timothy. So, picking up in verse 16, Paul says, all scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.

righteousness. So, in right there, he's kind of saying, okay, scripture is breathed out by God. So, the word that we're using there is inerrant. We're saying that the word is free from error. That man hasn't added his own twist to scripture.

That for his own advancement, he's added things. We say that this book is literally, it's the word of God. a really cool passage that I want to turn to because I don't have a ton of time to really go over all these things.

But, I want you all to turn to numbers 23 really quickly. Really quickly. Okay, so the situation while you guys are turning there, this is the Old Testament, so God's people, the nation of Israel, they're wandering through the wilderness.

They haven't yet come into the Promised Land, and they're going through certain countries on their way to the Promised Land. And so they go through this certain area, and they ask this king named Balak if they can go through.

[17:36] And Balak says no, because he wants to wage war against them. So what Balak does is he consults this guy named Balaam, who's kind of a mystic of sorts.

Balak is saying, okay, what I need you to do for me, Balaam, is curse the people of God. They've got all these victories, and I've seen them do a lot of things, but I need you to curse them so that there's some type of spiritual force that's applied here.

And so Balaam gets a word from God where God says, no, the people of Israel that you think that you're about to curse, those are my people. And so Balaam tells Balak, the king, I can't curse God's people.

God has revealed this to me that these are his people. He's revealed that to me through his words. And so Balak gets frustrated at that, and he says, no, I need you to curse them. You don't understand. And this is what he says, which is super interesting. 18. So remember, Balaam is not what we would classify as a believer, or in that time, he's not a part of the actual people of Israel.

[18:38] He's not a Jew. So Balaam, in verse 18. And Balaam took up his discourse and said, rise, Balak, and hear. Give ear to me, O son of Zippor.

God is not man that he should lie, or a son of man that he should change his mind. Has he said and will he not do it? Or has he spoken and will not fulfill it? That's a super cool passage, right?

You have this guy who's not, wouldn't call himself a Christian, or, you know, at the time, a believer, in the one true God. And yet he says, don't you know, Balak, that God doesn't lie?

His words are true. We can trust them. That comes out of a mouth that doesn't worship the same God as Israel did at the time. That's remarkable. So we're saying that it's completely free from error, and the word is attesting to itself and saying, you can search me, but you won't find errors.

You can think you have contradictions, but I'll prove you wrong. History has yet to disprove the Bible. How many other books do you know of that can do the same thing, that can say the same thing, that can say, you know, we're consistent with history, with archaeological finds, with reason, with logic, with all these things.

[20:01] You can search me all you want. You can exhaust yourself, and I promise you, you will come up short. That's so huge. What other book do you know that does that? Right? And this is the Bible that you have in your lap right now.

The fourth thing that Paul does, he attests to the authority of Scripture. So, he says, all Scripture is breathed out by God, and it's profitable for what?

For teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. Again, I'm kind of asking the same question, but what book do you submit your life to, other than the Bible that says that?

You know, what book says, I'm good for teaching, I'm good for you to reprove your friends, to correct your friends, for training in righteousness. Like, why should you, tell me why you should submit your life to this Bible, to this book.

Why should you allow your life, your decisions, your direction in life, why should you let all that be influenced by this book? Right?

[21:04] Why? Why? I mean, so what we're saying is that, okay, if this is not God's Word, then you all are wasting your time right now. If you are basing your life direction off of the Word, and it's not God's Word, then you're wasting your time.

But, if this book is God's Word, then you're not wasting anything, but you're gaining everything, right? Like, you're gaining everything.

If someone can turn to John 17, verse 17, and read that. That's going to be my text on this point. I'll do it. Verse 17? Verse 17. Give everyone one second. So this is Jesus' context.

Jesus is praying to His Father right before He's about to be crucified. And this is what people would call the high priestly prayer. Let's pick it up, Lauren. Sanctify them in the truth. Your word is truth.

[22:16] Okay. Whoa. That could, you could be reading Scripture and then completely miss that. Because it sounds so nice. But it's, it's an insane claim.

When you think about that. Okay. So, Jesus says, sanctify them in your truth. Your word is true. No. He says truth. So, true is an adjective, and truth is a noun.

So, He's saying that your word isn't described by truth. It's not, it's not an attribute of true. It is truth. It is our ultimate, highest authority that we submit to everything to this because this book is truth.

Does that make sense? It's not an attribute, but it's the actual definition. And Jesus is claiming that. He's saying that, Father God, your word is truth. That's such a big claim.

And it's outrageous that we accept that so mildly. Like, we should have a couple reactions to it other than like, because if, because if I said that, I was like, my word isn't true.

[23:19] I'm not saying true things, but I promise you it's the definition of truth. You guys, hopefully, would run me out of this building. Right? I mean, like, that's such a big claim. And that's why Christ gets crucified, because He's saying these crazy things like this.

But if He's true, then He's worthy of all our worship and praise. Lastly, He says, okay, that same text in 2 Timothy 3, 17, He says, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

That it's necessary. That's kind of one that we need to stress too, is that we're saying that the word of God is necessary. You know, how do you come about knowing God's will for your life? That actually is a question. How do you know God's will for your life? Yes, that's a question. Okay. So, the word of God. No, that's gone. I'm getting rid of, I'm doing it with a hand motion. It's had its run. So, the word of God.

[24 : 35] Matt, you're saying it's the word of God. That tells us God's will for our life. What about salvation? How do you know, how do you know that you know that you know that you know that you know that you're saved?

Question. You know what it is. You know what the steps are because of the word. Okay. Yeah. And I'm not going to, I'm not going to ask this for an actual response, but, do you know passages that tell you that?

That you know that you're saved? What passages, what promises of God are in scripture that you're like, hey, when you're around, I mean, I'm just going to use Jay Whetstone as a good example of this, but when he's around Muslims and, you know, he says, you know, well, hey, do you know where you're going to, you're going to spend eternal life, where you're going to be in the afterlife?

And, I'm trying to correct me if I'm wrong, but your dad says that they always say, ah, no one knows but Allah, right? And then Jay says, but I know. I can tell you where I'm going to go.

Like, I mean, we're surrounded by that kind of terminology all the time, but it kind of loses its punch. That you can say, I know that I know that I know that Christ is the way, the truth, and the life, and that if I believe in him, if I'm trusting him, if I'm walking, I'm in faith in him, that I get to spend eternal life with Christ.

[25 : 59] Muslims cannot say that. And a lot of people, if you press them hard enough, can't. But, you can say, I know scripture, but I have a question for you, redundant, but do you know that scripture?

If someone said, what promises of God are you clinging to for eternal life? And, you know, would you be like, oh man, I know it's in there somewhere, like, if you'll just give me like five minutes, I'll find it.

But is it like, no, like, I'm clinging to these promises, and these promises are giving me joy and confidence. So, just be thinking about that tonight and right now as far as, you know, do I know these passages that God gives me promises for that I can cling to and say, man, I know I'm saved like what you're saying.

And I know what God's will is for my life. Those are such big claims and no one else can say that. But you have the word of God which allows you to say that. Okay.

So, this is what scripture says about itself. Right? That's what bibliology is. That's bot. So, what the word says about itself, we know what the word says about itself.

[27 : 09] We're saying that it's authoritative. It's clear, it's necessary, it's sufficient, and it's authoritative. What are, what do other men say about the Bible? I'm going to start with personal words from the Bible and I'm going to kind of move outward.

If y'all would return to Psalm 42, can someone read that for me? Not the whole thing, I promise. Verse 1 through 3, please.

Yeah, go for that. Matt Chandler constantly give people grief for putting this, these words on like nice paintings or coffee cups.

So, I kind of have to do the same thing. But, this is such, when you're really reading this, like, what is the psalmist, what is the guy who's writing this saying? He's saying, like a deer that is so dehydrated that it feels like it's about to die.

He's saying, my soul pants for you, God. So, there's this deep thirst for the word of God that David has. He's so thirsty for the word. He's like, like, you don't understand, like, I'm going to die.

[28 : 40] Like, that's how far away I feel from you. Man, isn't it kind of scary when you, like, realize that you don't feel anything anymore? Like, things that should convict you don't convict you.

Words in scripture that one time had a huge punch now are like, you read it and you're like, ah, yeah, like, as a deer pants for flowing stream, so my soul pants for you, oh God.

Like, that is so sad, man. It happens to me all the time. I feel like, man, Lord, like, I know your word is supposed to have more of a punch to it, but it's just been so domesticated by me. Another one is Matthew 4, 4, you guys can just write that one down.

But, so, in the scene, Jesus, who is about to start his ministry, is in the desert. And then Satan comes along, he's been fasting for 40 days, I've never done that, could not do that, I would never say a word for 40 years, I'd be so hungry.

And, Satan comes along, and so he starts tempting Jesus. He says, if you're really God, turn these stones into loaves of bread. He said, do you not know that God's word says that man does not live off of bread alone, but off of every word that comes from God's mouth.

[29 : 57] So, Jesus, like, I like, I can't even, it's hard for me to really put it in a sermon because it's just like, it makes it kind of plastic, right? But, I mean, like, this dude, Jesus, has been without food for 40 days.

I can't do that, man. It's so, that's insane for me to even wrap my mind around. And then, Satan comes and he's like, you could, like, if you know those, like, cartoons when it's like a mirage and it's like, they're looking at, like, a palm tree and it turns into, like, a big slice of pizza and they're like, ah! And, like, start freaking out. You guys know what I'm talking about there, that imagery making sense? Like, Satan able to do the same thing to Jesus and he's like, these stones right here, these giant boulders, like, this could be, like, some wonderful French bread.

And then God, and then Jesus, like, responds with, like, what in the world? Responds with, don't you know, like, man does not live off of bread alone, but he lives off of every word that proceeds from God's mouth.

So he's relating physical necessity for food and spiritual necessity for God's word almost on the same level. And, again, just a question I'm trying to get you to think about is, can you say the same thing for yourself as far as what David's saying, as far as what Christ is saying?

[31 : 12] Can you say the same thing? Do we feel that? I think, something that I find myself so guilty of is what happens is that Scripture affects me on an intellectual level and a theological level, but rarely an emotional level.

Like, I know God's truth. Like, maybe just as a guy it's harder, and maybe some of you guys can relate to me in that. But it's like, I mean, don't you ever feel that when you're like, yeah, I know this is true, but there's not, like one of the biggest things that you struggle with is joy in your life or happiness.

And like, man, I mean, God's word says that the man who knows his word is happy. It should make us joyful. But, I promise you guys, like, man, like, I have the hardest time with that.

I have the hardest time kind of crossing that theological and intellectual bridge onto the emotional where it's like, it's something that grips me and like, keeps me awake at night to where like, I have friends that aren't saved and I'm like, totally unemotional about that.

Like, there should be this sense of like, grieving and like, man, you don't know God. Like, there should be this. I remember at one point, like, my friend, my roommate throughout college, like, wasn't a believer and man, I just remember, I remember being here on a Thursday night and I just went home and I was just like, bawling in his room.

[32 : 39] I went into his room, like, shut the door and I just started crying in front of him and I was like, man, like, I'm so sorry. Like, I haven't done a good job like, sharing Christ with you. These things are true that I see that apart from Christ, man, like, we're going to spend eternity away from him.

And that was just something that's like, man, I broke in and cried in front of my roommate and I don't, the same thing doesn't happen to me anymore. Like, that's, and that's not okay. At least, it doesn't happen to me as often.

So, what, another guy, I kind of want to go a little bit out of scripture here. What are other guys that have longed after God's, what else are they saying?

So, St. Augustine or Augustine, however you want to say, they're the same. Okay, so, St.

Augustine, he says this quote, he says, how sweet all at once it was for me to be rid of those fruitless joys which I once feared to lose and was now glad to reject.

You drove them from me, you who are the true, the sovereign joy. You drove them from me and took their place, you who are sweeter than all pleasure. They're not to flesh and blood, you who outshine all light yet are hidden deeper than any secret in our hearts.

[34 : 00] You who surpass all honor through not in the eyes of men who see all honor in themselves. Oh, Lord, my God, my light, my wealth, and my salvation. If you know anything about Augustine, he was basically what we would classify today as like a sex addict.

Like, man, like the dude just had struggles. And it's like, and then you hear, you hear this coming from a guy who is addicted to sex, he's addicted to a million other things and yet he says this, he says you, so what are those, those are the things that we're talking about when he says you drove those fruitless joys.

Like, Augustine had everything he wanted to. He had everything he wanted and he's like, those are fruitless joys, I don't even want them. Like, what makes people like Paul say, like, all those things that I had, like, all the intellect, all the prestige, all those things I just counted as a complete loss for the sake of knowing Christ.

Like, oh, man, that's like, it makes my mouth dry because it's like, like, I've walked down these halls where there's great men of scripture and great men of faith who are saying like, pay attention to this book.

saying like, like, don't you read this book? Like, do not pass this. Don't get caught going to conferences and reading Christian pop books and being in small groups yet all the while missing the word and not valuing it and not treasuring it and not knowing me.

[35 : 23] Like, don't miss that. That's what they're saying. It's like, I can't get past it. Like, I keep running into dudes like this who keep saying these things and I keep finding myself on the other end of the spectrum where it's like, God, I'm not treasuring your word like that.

Like, I need to. And it's like, it's haunting. It's haunting to have guys like that. And it's so rough because I feel like we're a generation that's characterized by 15 minute devotions.

Like, does anyone else feel that? Like, man, like, how do we get there? There's so many different reasons that I would say why. I mean, you could analyze that all day. But, I would say that a big part of it is that, man, like, that deep introspection.

I was talking to John Overton about this today and I was asking him, like, man, why do you think that is? And he was like, man, and I agree with him is that, you guys know what introspection means? Like, the act of, like, looking into yourself and looking at your soul and looking at the things that you care about, the things that you spend your money on, the things that you spend your time in, all those things.

And we don't examine ourselves. We don't spend the necessary time trying to understand those things better and see where, like, God is with all those things. And it's like, man, we just, isn't it so, aren't we so characterized by, like, reading the Word like it's a textbook?

[36 : 46] Like, you have your devotion and I say that the poor man's, the poor man's devotion is always Psalms. Like, if you have five minutes, it's like, go to Psalms and get what you can out of it because the day is gone.

And it's like, man, we spend like 15 minutes in Psalms and we read it like a textbook and we read these words and like, okay, this is what it means, this is what it says, I understand that. But we're not saying, we're not meditating on the Word as I think is a big thing there.

Because we're saying that the Word is so applicable for your life. And I mean every single individual. I mean, like, as a group, I mean, like, you who's come here, like, this book is so applicable for your life, but it was written so many years ago.

And that's insane. That's insanity. And like, no other book can claim that, but yet we spend 15 minutes in a devotion and we don't meditate on the Word. We're not saying like, okay, I read the Scripture and I understand what it says.

Now God, I'm not going to leave until you tell me what it means for my life right now. What does this mean? What does this mean? What does this mean to me? What does this mean to me? Like, we don't do that. It's like, alright God, I've got this time and you're going to have to make this work in this.

[37 : 53] Does anyone here run? Like, distances for exercise? What mile, who raised their hand?

Okay. Lauren, what mile, everyone else is feeling terrible since I didn't raise their hand. I promise I'm healthy. Lauren, what mile is it for you when you get that runner's high?

When you can, as soon as you get past this mile, you can just run like another six miles. Okay, three. Anyone else? What else? Just quick shout outs. Which mile is it that's like the worst that you hate?

But you're like, if I just get over mile three, what mile is it? Two? Okay. Seven. Some people are like, the whole thing! All of it! Like, why am I doing this?

I should be running from something and I'm not. And, um, but it's like that. Okay, so we, um, we have that mile that's like, man, what mile is it that as soon as I get past this mile, I'm good and I can

just run and that's when I can start thinking about things and that's when it doesn't hurt as bad and that's when really the dopamine starts kicking into your body and your body starts releasing these hormones that makes it okay.

[39 : 11] Um, and, and really from my own life, I've found that scripture is so much like that. Um, that as long as I'm approaching scripture and I'm saying, Lord, I need you to teach me something in 15 minutes, there's like, for me at least, there's very little that I get out of it.

There's very little that I, that I walk away and I'm like, man, like the Lord just spoke to me so much in that time. But it's, for me, it's like that, a lot of times it's like that 30 minute range, like, okay, like as soon as I can get over that 30 minutes, like, man, it's just, it's so great after that.

But so little of us are wanting to put in that time to really get over that, um, apex, it's so difficult. I think Nathan even talked about, like, when climbing, like, getting to that point where it's the hardest point in the climb, but if you can nail that point, you can get past the whole climb.

Um, and I would just say that, man, like, I, for me, um, I've found that I've had to be so patient in the word, um, and just approaching scripture and saying, Lord, I'm not going to try to fit you in my schedule, but my schedule is fitting around you.

So because of that, I'm going to go to bed at 11 o'clock and I'm going to wake up at 7 a.m. every day so that I can spend, like, a solid hour just praying and reading. Um, what is that for you? Um, so many times we approach scripture like, there's this formulaic method to how you are to get something out of it.

[40 : 27] Um, and I think a lot of us have probably been run dry by that, right? Like, you've been to a lot of conferences and you've read a lot of terrible books that have told you, you know, as long as you do it in this method, read Psalms, meditate on that, pray that, now go into Old Testament, and I'll go into Old Testament.

And like, some of those things are, like, can be helpful and good. But I'm just saying, you know, what is it when you're approaching scripture and you're saying, like, Lord, I want to know your word more and I'll do anything to do that. So if that's five minutes, if that's ten minutes, if that's thirty minutes, if that's an hour, I'm going to do that.

Um, there's, I know there's a time in my life um, when, like, especially this past year, um, I had so many questions about what's my direction?

Um, I feel like a lot of us are asking that, you know, like, God, I have no idea what my major is, or, you know, God, like, I have no idea what I'm going to do after college. Like, we're asking those questions, and, um, like, that's, it's, especially it's terrible when it's your senior year and you're like, oh man, what am I doing here?

Um, our lives. But, I got to that point this whole past year, um, and especially over the summer, I was just like wrestling, like, Lord, what, what is it that you want me to do?

[41 : 41] Um, and what's my answer? Like, yeah, like, I read a book, um, and it was good, but it wasn't on the subject of it, but, man, I spent time, I spent the whole summer just going through, um, the Old Testament, just being like, all right, Lord, like, I know that you have something to teach me here, and the thing that kept popping up over and over again was Israel's reliance on God, how God is kind of the God that leads them by, you know, fire by night and smoke by day.

It's like, man, that's the God who's like, all right, I'm just going to provide enough for you so that you trust me today. I'm going to provide that manna for you today, but don't try to hoard it over because it'll spoil overnight and you won't have any for tomorrow, so you've got to trust me that I'm going to have enough manna for you in the morning.

Um, that is, and I just spent time on that and, like, meditating on that all the time. So, what I'm just trying to say is that, like, man, when we're approaching Scripture, I don't want you to let me tell you how you need to read Scripture or, you know, what you need to move to because it could be for you that you're in a time in your life when you need to spend the entire, you know, next three months in songs, repeating the same thing over and over again because it hasn't sunk down deep enough. Um, so, the text that I'm going to leave us with is Hebrews 4. Hebrews 4 says, For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of the soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

Um, it's, this passage is saying that God's Word is something that's applicable for you and your situation right now. And I don't know what that is. Um, I can't know all of your situations.

[43 : 27] I can't know, like, man, what is so hard for you right now whether that's making decisions about careers or, you know, majors or, you know, am I going to get into this program or that

program or do I need to continue in this relationship or whatever it is.

Um, but the thing is is that God's Word is saying right now that His Word is living and active. Um, He says it's, so He says the soul, the spirit, He says the thoughts which are your heart and then, I mean your mind and then the intentions of the heart.

So, He's really saying that the Word addresses all these things. Every thought that you have, like your emotions, your deepest concerns, your deepest struggles and the things that you, you know, desire most. There is a God who knows all those things and I can't know all these things and that's what makes God's Word so incredible, um, so powerful.

Um, and so I think more than anything we need to be people that are characterized by loving the Word for, for revisiting truths like this.

Like, man, what does the Bible say about itself that no other book can claim? That's in, that's totally insane to me. Um, so I hope this increases your joy, that it gives you confidence in the Word that, that even tomorrow morning we're fighting for that time of like, Lord, I will do anything to know you more.

[44 : 49] I don't care what the sacrifice is, I'll put it down like, because I know that you're the reason why I get in the Word, you're the reason why I want to know you more. Um, let me just pray for us real quickly and Alex, if you want to come back up.

Let me just pray if you want to if you want to let me just pray if you want to if you want to let me just pray if you want to let me just pray if you want to if you want to let me just pray if I need to let me just pray if I need to let me just pray if I need to let me just pray if I need to let me just pray if I need to let me just pray if I need to let me just pray!

Let me just pray!