



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

BIBLE FOUNDATIONS

Common Bible Words Explained

Beginner Guide | Editable Master V1

Short answer

Common Bible words become clearer when we read them in their sentence, paragraph, book, and place in the whole story of Scripture. This guide provides accessible definitions, key passages, and responsible study practices that lead readers back to Jesus.

This companion was written to help new and growing readers understand the words they encounter in Scripture without becoming dependent on experts or technical tools. Read each definition with an open Bible, verify every passage in context, and let every truth deepen your trust in Christ.



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PART ONE

BEGINNER GUIDE

WHY THIS GUIDE MATTERS

The Bible contains words such as covenant, grace, righteousness, atonement, sanctification, and redemption.

Some of these words may be unfamiliar. Others are familiar but carry a deeper or different meaning in Scripture than they do in everyday conversation.

Understanding these words helps us understand:

- Who God is.
- What sin has done.
- What Jesus accomplished.
- How salvation is received.
- How the Holy Spirit works.
- What it means to follow Jesus.
- Where the biblical story is going.

Bible words are not secret codes reserved for scholars. God gave His Word to reveal Himself, make His saving work known, and lead people to Jesus.

Every page points to Jesus.



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HOW BIBLE WORDS WORK

Words receive their meaning from context. Context includes the sentence, surrounding paragraph, chapter and book, kind of writing, historical situation, the author's usage, and the wider message of Scripture.

A word does not necessarily carry every possible meaning each time it appears. World may refer to the created earth, the people living in it, humanity in general, or a rebellious system opposed to God. Save or salvation may refer to rescue from danger, deliverance from enemies, healing or preservation, forgiveness from sin, or the final completion of God's saving work.

The sentence and paragraph help us determine which meaning is intended.

MEMORY ANCHOR: A dictionary gives possible meanings. The passage tells us which meaning fits.



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BIBLE, SCRIPTURE, AND THE WORD OF GOD

BIBLE

Simple meaning:

The collection of writings Christians receive as God's written Word.

The word Bible comes from a word meaning books. The Bible is one unified story communicated through many books, authors, time periods, and kinds of writing. It contains the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Key passages: Luke 24:44-47; John 5:39-40; 2 Timothy 3:14-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

SCRIPTURE

Simple meaning:

Sacred writing recognized as authoritative because it communicates what God has revealed.

In the New Testament, Scripture commonly refers to the writings Christians call the Old Testament. The New Testament also begins recognizing apostolic writings as Scripture.

Key passages: Matthew 21:42; John 10:35; 1 Timothy 5:18; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 3:15-16.

WORD OF GOD

Simple meaning:

Something God has communicated or revealed.

Depending on context, the Word of God may refer to a message spoken by God, a message delivered through a prophet, the gospel, the written Scriptures, or Jesus Christ, the eternal Word who reveals the Father.

Jesus is called the Word in John 1. This does not mean Jesus is identical to a printed Bible. It means the eternal Son perfectly reveals God and makes Him known.

Key passages: Isaiah 55:10-11; Luke 8:11; John 1:1-18; Acts 6:7; Hebrews 4:12; Revelation 19:13.

MEMORY ANCHOR: The Bible is the collection. Scripture emphasizes its sacred authority. The Word of God refers to what God communicates and, uniquely, to Jesus as the eternal Word.



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TESTAMENT AND COVENANT

TESTAMENT

Simple meaning:

A formal declaration or covenant.

The titles Old Testament and New Testament describe the two major divisions of the Bible and connect them with God's covenant dealings.

COVENANT

Simple meaning:

A binding relationship established through promises and commitments.

Biblical covenants establish relationships, responsibilities, promises, signs, and consequences. Major covenants include God's covenant with Noah, Abraham, Israel through Moses, and David, along with the promised new covenant fulfilled in Jesus. Jesus establishes the new covenant through His sacrificial death.

Key passages: Genesis 9:8-17; Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 15; Exodus 19:1-6; 2 Samuel 7:8-16; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Luke 22:14-20; Hebrews 8-10.

MEMORY ANCHOR: A covenant establishes a committed relationship. The biblical covenants unfold God's saving promises and lead to Jesus and the new covenant.



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LORD, LORD, GOD, AND FATHER

LORD

When LORD appears in small capital letters in many English Old Testaments, it usually represents God's personal covenant name, written with the Hebrew letters YHWH and sometimes expressed as Yahweh. It is connected to God's declaration, "I AM WHO I AM," and emphasizes His eternal, self-existent, faithful character.

Key passages: Exodus 3:13-15; Exodus 6:2-8; Exodus 34:5-7; Psalm 103.

LORD OR LORD

When Lord is not printed in small capitals, it commonly translates a title meaning master, ruler, or sovereign. Context determines whether it refers to God, Jesus, or a human master. Calling Jesus Lord recognizes His authority and, in many New Testament passages, identifies Him with the divine Lord revealed in the Old Testament.

Key passages: Psalm 110:1; Luke 6:46; John 20:28; Romans 10:9-13; Philippians 2:9-11.

GOD AND FATHER

God is the supreme, eternal Creator and ruler of all things. The Bible teaches that there is one true God who eternally exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Father describes God's relationship within the Trinity and His loving relationship with His people. Through Jesus, believers are adopted into God's family. God's fatherhood is perfectly loving, holy, faithful, protective, and just; it should not be measured by the failures of human fathers.

Key passages: Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 6:9; Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 8:14-17; Galatians 4:4-7.

MEMORY ANCHOR: LORD usually represents God's covenant name. Lord emphasizes authority. God is the one true Creator. Through Jesus, believers know Him as Father.



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JESUS, CHRIST, MESSIAH, AND SON OF GOD

JESUS

The personal name given to the Son of God when He became human. Jesus is related to the Hebrew name Joshua and carries the meaning "The LORD saves." The angel told Joseph to name Him Jesus because He would save His people from their sins.

CHRIST AND MESSIAH

Christ is a title, not Jesus' last name. It means the Anointed One and corresponds to the Hebrew title Messiah. Jesus is the promised Messiah, King, Servant, Savior, and Son of David.

SON OF GOD

A title identifying Jesus' unique relationship with the Father and His divine identity. Jesus is not a created being or physical offspring of God. He is the eternal Son who shares the Father's divine nature and became human for our salvation.

Key passages: Psalm 2; Isaiah 9:6-7; Matthew 1:18-25; Mark 8:27-30; John 1:1-18; John 5:16-23; John 20:30-31; Hebrews 1:1-4.

MEMORY ANCHOR: Jesus is His name. Christ and Messiah are titles. He is the eternal Son of God who became human to save us.



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HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the third Person of the Trinity, not an impersonal force. He is fully divine and personally acts, speaks, teaches, guides, gives gifts, convicts, comforts, and can be grieved.

The Holy Spirit was active in creation, spoke through the prophets, empowered Jesus' earthly ministry, raised Jesus from the dead, convicts concerning sin, gives new birth, lives within believers, unites believers to Christ, produces spiritual fruit, gives gifts, helps believers pray, and leads God's people in truth and holiness.

Key passages: Genesis 1:1-2; Ezekiel 36:25-27; John 3:5-8; John 14:15-17, 25-26; John 16:7-15; Acts 5:3-4; Romans 8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-13; Galatians 5:16-25.

MEMORY ANCHOR: The Holy Spirit is God with and within His people - giving life, revealing truth, producing holiness, and magnifying Jesus.



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SIN, TRANSGRESSION, INIQUITY, AND TEMPTATION

SIN

Falling short of God's holy character and rebelling against His will. Sin includes wrong actions, words, desires, and attitudes; failing to do what is right; unbelief; and a condition of corruption affecting humanity. It is a moral and relational offense against God.

TRANSGRESSION AND INIQUITY

Transgression emphasizes crossing a boundary or violating a known command. Iniquity describes guilt, crookedness, or moral corruption.

TEMPTATION

A test, trial, or enticement to sin, depending on context. God may test in ways that reveal and strengthen faith, but He does not entice anyone to evil. Temptation itself is not sin; Jesus was tempted yet remained without sin.

Key passages: Genesis 3; Psalm 51; Isaiah 53:6; Matthew 4:1-11; Romans 3:9-23; Hebrews 4:14-16; James 1:2-15.

MEMORY ANCHOR: Sin rejects God's rightful rule. Transgression crosses His boundary. Iniquity describes sin's crookedness and guilt. Temptation invites sin, but temptation is not itself sin.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

REPENTANCE, CONFESSION, AND FORGIVENESS

REPENTANCE

Turning from sin toward God with a changed heart and direction. Repentance is more than regret; it includes recognizing sin, agreeing with God, turning away from it, and turning toward Him in trust and obedience.

CONFESSION

Acknowledging or openly agreeing with the truth. Confession may include acknowledging sin before God, confessing to another person when appropriate, publicly confessing Jesus as Lord, or declaring what one believes.

FORGIVENESS

The gracious release of guilt and cancellation of a debt or offense. God forgives through Jesus' death and resurrection. Forgiveness does not pretend sin was harmless. It does not always remove earthly consequences, instantly restore trust, or require remaining in an unsafe situation.

Key passages: Psalm 32:1-5; Psalm 103:8-14; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 24:46-47; Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 1:7; Ephesians 4:31-32; 1 John 1:8-10.

MEMORY ANCHOR: Repentance turns toward God. Confession agrees with His truth. Forgiveness releases the sinner from guilt because Jesus has dealt with sin.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

GRACE AND MERCY

Grace is God's undeserved favor and generous action toward those who cannot earn it. Through grace, God saves, forgives, welcomes, teaches, strengthens, and transforms His people. Mercy is God's compassionate response to people in guilt, suffering, or need.

A helpful distinction is that mercy does not give sinners the judgment they deserve, while grace gives them favor and life they could never earn. Scripture sometimes uses the ideas in overlapping ways.

Key passages: Exodus 34:5-7; John 1:14-17; Romans 3:21-24; Ephesians 2:1-10; Titus 2:11-14; Titus 3:3-7; Hebrews 4:14-16.

MEMORY ANCHOR: Mercy meets us in our guilt and misery. Grace gives us what we could never earn. Both flow from God's loving character.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

FAITH, BELIEVE, AND TRUST

Faith is trusting reliance upon God, His character, His promises, and His saving work in Jesus. It includes believing something is true but goes further by resting the weight of one's life upon God.

Believing in Jesus means more than believing He exists. It means entrusting oneself to Him as Savior and Lord. Saving faith is not confidence in the strength of our faith; it is confidence in Jesus.

Key passages: Genesis 15:1-6; John 3:16; John 20:30-31; Romans 3:21-28; Romans 4; Romans 10:9-13; Hebrews 11; James 2:14-26.

MEMORY ANCHOR: Faith knows God is trustworthy, believes His promise, and relies upon Jesus rather than self.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

GOSPEL AND GOOD NEWS

Gospel means good news. It is the announcement of what God has done through Jesus Christ: Jesus is the promised Messiah and Lord; He lived without sin, died for our sins, was buried, rose bodily, and reigns as King. Forgiveness and new life are offered through Him, everyone is called to repent and believe, and Jesus will return to complete God's saving work.

The gospel is not primarily advice about how people can improve themselves. It is news about what God has accomplished.

Key passages: Isaiah 52:7; Mark 1:14-15; Romans 1:1-6, 16-17; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Revelation 21:1-5.

MEMORY ANCHOR: The gospel is the good news that God saves and reigns through Jesus Christ, who died, rose, and is Lord.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

SAVE AND SALVATION

SAVE

To rescue, deliver, preserve, heal, or bring safely through. Save has a wide range in Scripture. It may describe rescue from enemies, physical danger, preservation of life, healing, rescue from sin and judgment, or final entrance into resurrection life.

Peter cries, "Lord, save me!" while sinking. Jesus tells a healed woman that her faith has saved or made her well. Paul teaches that people are saved by grace through faith. The New Testament also speaks of salvation as something believers have received, are experiencing, and will experience in final fullness.

SALVATION

God's rescue of people from sin, guilt, judgment, death, and the power of evil, bringing them into restored life under His rule. Salvation includes forgiveness, reconciliation, justification, adoption, new birth, the Holy Spirit, freedom from sin's ruling power, transformation, bodily resurrection, and life with God in the new creation.

Believers have been saved from sin's guilt, are being transformed and preserved, and will be saved in the final defeat of sin and death. These are dimensions of God's one saving work.

Key passages: Exodus 14:13-14; Matthew 14:28-31; Mark 5:25-34; John 3:16-18; Romans 5:9-10; Ephesians 2:1-10; Philippians 1:6; 1 Peter 1:3-9.

MEMORY ANCHOR: Save can describe many kinds of rescue. In the gospel, salvation is God's complete rescue of sinners through Jesus - from sin's guilt and power and, finally, from death itself.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

REDEMPTION, RANSOM, AND ATONEMENT

Redemption is freedom secured through the payment of a price. Ransom emphasizes the cost associated with release. Jesus gave His life as a ransom; Scripture does not teach that Satan received a payment. Atonement is God's gracious provision for dealing with sin so guilt is covered or cleansed and relationship with Him restored.

The Old Testament sacrificial system prepared readers to understand sin's seriousness and the need for cleansing and a substitute. Jesus fulfills and surpasses those sacrifices through His once-for-all offering.

Key passages: Exodus 6:6-8; Leviticus 16; Isaiah 53; Mark 10:45; Romans 3:21-26; Ephesians 1:7-10; Hebrews 9-10; 1 Peter 1:18-21.

MEMORY ANCHOR: Redemption emphasizes freedom. Ransom emphasizes the cost. Atonement explains how sin is dealt with. Jesus accomplishes all three.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

SACRIFICE, BLOOD, AND LAMB OF GOD

Sacrifice is an offering presented to God. Old Testament sacrifices served worship, thanksgiving, fellowship, cleansing, consecration, and atonement, and they pointed toward Jesus' final sacrifice.

In sacrificial contexts, blood represents life poured out in death and is associated with cleansing, covenant, forgiveness, and atonement. The power is not in blood as a magical substance; Jesus' blood refers to His sacrificial death.

Lamb of God identifies Jesus as the sacrificial and victorious Lamb who takes away sin, drawing from Passover, the sacrificial system, Isaiah's Servant, and Revelation's conquering Lamb.

Key passages: Exodus 12; Leviticus 17:10-14; Isaiah 53:4-7; John 1:29-36; Matthew 26:27-28; Hebrews 9-10; Revelation 5.

MEMORY ANCHOR: The sacrifices prepared the way. Jesus gave His life. The Lamb who was slain rose and reigns.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

RIGHTEOUSNESS, JUSTICE, JUSTIFICATION, AND SANCTIFICATION

Righteousness is what is right according to God's character and standard. It may describe God's character, right conduct, right relationships, or the right standing God gives through faith in Christ.

Justice is God's commitment to what is right, including judging evil, defending vulnerable people, correcting oppression, and acting without corrupt favoritism.

Justification is God's declaration that a sinner is righteous through faith in Jesus. It concerns standing before God and is received by faith, not earned by works.

Sanctification is being set apart for God and progressively transformed into holy living. Holiness describes God's complete purity and uniqueness and, for His people, belonging to Him and reflecting His character.

Key passages: Isaiah 6:1-7; Romans 3:21-28; Romans 5:1-2; Romans 6; Galatians 2:15-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 12:14; James 2:1-9.

MEMORY ANCHOR: Justification changes our standing. Sanctification changes our living. Holiness describes God's character and the life of those who belong to Him.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

NEW BIRTH, REGENERATION, ADOPTION, AND RECONCILIATION

New birth is the new spiritual life God gives through the Holy Spirit. Regeneration is the theological term commonly used for this act of giving new life.

Adoption is God receiving believers into His family as His children. Believers do not become divine; they receive a new relationship, identity, inheritance, and access to the Father.

Reconciliation is the restoration of relationship broken by hostility or sin. Peace with God is the new reality created through justification, while the peace of God describes the inward steadiness He gives His people.

Key passages: Ezekiel 36:25-27; John 3:1-8; Romans 5:1-11; Romans 8:14-17; 2 Corinthians 5:14-21; Galatians 4:4-7; Titus 3:3-7.

MEMORY ANCHOR: New birth gives new life. Adoption gives a new family. Reconciliation restores the relationship. All are gifts of God's grace through Jesus.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

KINGDOM OF GOD

God's active reign and saving rule. The kingdom is not primarily geographical territory. God has always ruled, but in Jesus His promised kingdom entered history in a new and decisive way.

The kingdom is already present because the King has come and is seen in Jesus' teaching, healing, deliverance, forgiveness, death, and resurrection. It is not yet present in final fullness and awaits Jesus' return, resurrection, judgment, and new creation.

Key passages: Psalm 103:19; Daniel 7:13-14; Mark 1:14-15; Matthew 6:9-10; Matthew 12:28; Colossians 1:13-14; Revelation 11:15; Revelation 21-22.

MEMORY ANCHOR: The kingdom is God's reign. It arrived through Jesus, is present among His people, and will be fully revealed when He returns.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

CHURCH AND THE BODY OF CHRIST

The church is the community of people called by God to belong to Jesus. It is not primarily a building. The New Testament may refer to a local congregation, multiple congregations, or the worldwide body of all who belong to Christ.

Body of Christ is an image showing the church's unity with Jesus and the interdependence of its members. Jesus is the head; believers are different members who receive different gifts but belong to one another.

CHURCH AND KINGDOM

The church and kingdom are closely connected but not identical. The kingdom is God's reign and saving rule. The church is the community of people who belong to King Jesus and live under His rule.

The church proclaims the kingdom, demonstrates kingdom values through love, holiness, justice, mercy, unity, and service, and waits for the kingdom's fullness. The church does not create God's kingdom, and the kingdom is larger than any congregation, denomination, or human institution.

Key passages: Matthew 6:9-10; Matthew 16:13-20; Acts 1:3-8; Acts 2:37-47; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27; Ephesians 2:11-22; 1 Peter 2:4-12.

MEMORY ANCHOR: The kingdom is God's reign. The church is the people of King Jesus, called to proclaim and demonstrate His reign while awaiting its fullness.



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BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Baptism is the Christian act of being immersed in or washed with water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It publicly identifies a person with Jesus, His death and resurrection, and His people. Traditions differ over recipients, mode, and how baptism relates to regeneration, but agree it was commanded by Jesus and points to the gospel.

The Lord's Supper, or Communion, is the meal Jesus gave His followers to remember and proclaim His sacrificial death and shared life in Him. Traditions differ about how Christ is present and how the elements should be understood. Scripture calls believers to receive it reverently and care for one another.

Key passages: Matthew 26:26-29; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 2:37-42; Romans 6:1-4; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

DISCIPLE, MINISTRY, AND CALLING

A disciple is a learner, follower, or apprentice. A disciple trusts Jesus, learns from Him, follows His teaching, becomes like Him, and participates in His mission.

Ministry means service performed for God and others and is not limited to paid church workers. Calling may refer to salvation, holiness, a responsibility or vocation, or faithful endurance. Not every desire should automatically be described as a direct calling; Scripture, wisdom, character, community, circumstances, and prayer help with discernment.

Key passages: Matthew 4:18-22; Matthew 11:28-30; Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 10:42-45; Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4:1-16; 1 Peter 4:10-11.

MEMORY ANCHOR: A disciple trusts, learns from, and follows Jesus. Jesus served us first, and every believer is gifted to serve.



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WORSHIP, PRAISE, GLORY, AND IDOLATRY

Worship is responding to God's supreme worth with reverence, love, trust, obedience, and adoration. It includes singing but embraces the whole life.

Praise declares and celebrates who God is and what He has done. Glory describes weight, honor, splendor, majesty, and radiant greatness. Glorifying God acknowledges and displays what is already true about Him.

Idolatry gives worship, trust, devotion, or ultimate allegiance to something other than God. It includes physical idols and treating money, power, approval, comfort, pleasure, politics, relationships, or self as ultimate.

Key passages: Exodus 20:1-6; Psalm 95; John 4:19-24; Romans 1:18-25; Romans 12:1-2; Colossians 3:5; Revelation 4:8-11.

MEMORY ANCHOR: Worship recognizes God's worth. Praise declares it. Glory describes His majesty. Idolatry gives His rightful place to something created.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

PRAYER, INTERCESSION, LAMENT, AND AMEN

Prayer is communicating with God in worship, confession, thanksgiving, petition, lament, and quiet dependence. It is relationship, not a method for controlling God.

Intercession is praying for another person or group. Lament is honest prayer expressing grief, confusion, pain, or protest while continuing to turn toward God. Amen means truly, surely, or let it be so and expresses agreement and trust.

Key passages: Psalm 13; Matthew 6:5-13; Romans 8:26-27, 34; Philippians 4:4-7; Hebrews 4:14-16; James 5:13-18; Revelation 22:20-21.

MEMORY ANCHOR: Prayer brings our whole lives before God. Intercession carries others before Him. Lament brings pain into His presence. Amen expresses agreement and trust.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

BLESSING, CURSE, AND THE FEAR OF THE LORD

Blessing is God's favor, gift, provision, protection, presence, or power to flourish according to His purposes. It does not always mean wealth, health, comfort, or freedom from suffering.

Curse describes God's judgment upon sin or the condition resulting from rebellion. Jesus bears the covenant curse for His people and will finally remove the curse from creation.

Fear of the LORD is reverent awe, humble submission, and serious recognition of God's holiness, authority, and judgment. For those who trust Him, it includes wonder, worship, obedience, hatred of evil, and confidence in mercy.

Key passages: Genesis 3:14-19; Genesis 12:1-3; Numbers 6:24-26; Matthew 5:1-12; Galatians 3:10-14; Proverbs 1:7; Revelation 22:1-5.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

WISDOM, KNOWLEDGE, AND FOOLISHNESS

Wisdom is the God-given ability to understand life and live faithfully according to His design. Knowledge is understanding or awareness and, in Scripture, may include personal relationship and lived experience. A fool is someone who rejects God's wisdom and lives as though His authority does not matter; biblical foolishness is primarily moral and spiritual.

Key passages: Psalm 14:1; Proverbs 1:1-7; Proverbs 2:1-11; Matthew 7:24-27; John 17:3; James 1:5; James 3:13-18.

MEMORY ANCHOR: Knowledge understands truth. Wisdom lives by it. Foolishness rejects God's truth even when information is available.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

HEART, SOUL, SPIRIT, MIND, AND BODY

Heart is the inner center of thought, desire, choice, affection, and moral direction. Soul may mean life, person, self, or inner life. Spirit may mean breath, wind, inner life, a spiritual being, or the Holy Spirit; capitalization may reflect an editor's decision. Mind is the capacity for understanding, reasoning, and judgment. Body is our physical, created existence.

The Bible does not treat the body as unimportant. Jesus took on a real human body, rose bodily, and promises bodily resurrection. The Bible describes whole people called to love God with heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Key passages: Genesis 2:7; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Proverbs 4:23; John 1:14; Romans 8:16; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 1 Corinthians 15:35-58.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

FLESH AND WORLD

Flesh may mean physical human existence or humanity weakened and corrupted by sin. Flesh does not always mean sinful: the Word became flesh means the Son became truly human. Paul sometimes uses flesh for life operating apart from God.

World may mean the created world, humanity, or the organized system of rebellion against God. God loves the world He created and the people in it, while believers are warned not to love the world's rebellious values. Context resolves the apparent tension.

Key passages: John 1:9-14; John 3:16-17; John 15:18-21; Romans 8:1-23; Galatians 5:13-25; 1 John 2:15-17.

MEMORY ANCHOR: Flesh and world do not mean the same thing in every verse. Read the paragraph before choosing a definition.



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LAW, COMMANDMENT, AND WORKS

Law may refer to the Law of Moses, the first five books, the whole Old Testament, a particular command, a controlling principle, or God's moral instruction.

A commandment is an authoritative instruction. Believers obey Jesus because they love Him and have been saved by grace, not to purchase salvation.

Works may refer to good or evil actions, works of the Mosaic Law, human effort seeking acceptance, evidence produced by faith, or God's works. Paul rejects earning right standing with God; James rejects a claim to faith that produces no changed life.

Key passages: Psalm 119; Matthew 5:17-20; Romans 3:19-31; Ephesians 2:8-10; Galatians 3:15-29; James 2:14-26.

MEMORY ANCHOR: We are not saved by good works. We are saved by grace for a life that produces good works.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

HOPE, JOY, AND PEACE

Hope is confident expectation based on God's character and promises, not uncertain wishful thinking. Joy is deep gladness rooted in God and His saving work and can exist alongside grief. Peace is wholeness, restored relationship, well-being, and rest under God's rule.

Key passages: Habakkuk 3:17-19; John 14:27; Romans 5:1-5; Romans 8:18-25; Romans 15:13; Philippians 4:4-9; 1 Peter 1:3-9.

MEMORY ANCHOR: Hope looks forward because God is faithful. Joy rests in God even through sorrow. Peace grows from restored relationship with Him.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

COMMON WORSHIP WORDS

Hallelujah means "Praise the LORD." Hosanna means "Save, please" and became an expression of praise connected to promised salvation. Selah is an untranslated term of uncertain meaning, perhaps a musical or liturgical pause. Amen means "Truly," "Surely," or "Let it be so."

Key passages: Psalm 104:35; Psalm 118:25-26; Psalm 150; Matthew 21:8-9; 2 Corinthians 1:20; Revelation 19:1-6; Revelation 22:20-21.



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A BEGINNER PROCESS FOR UNFAMILIAR WORDS

1. Read the whole sentence.
2. Read the whole paragraph.
3. Identify the kind of writing.
4. Compare dependable translations.
5. Check the translation footnote.
6. Use a dependable Bible dictionary.
7. Follow cross-references carefully and in context.
8. Write a simple definition: "In this passage, this word means..."
9. Check whether it fits the sentence, paragraph, book, and wider teaching of Scripture.
10. Look for the connection to Jesus.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

COMMON WORD-STUDY MISTAKES

MISTAKE 1: USING THE SAME DEFINITION EVERY TIME

Words such as flesh, world, law, spirit, salvation, and judgment carry different meanings in different contexts. Let the sentence and paragraph determine the meaning.

MISTAKE 2: POURING EVERY DICTIONARY DEFINITION INTO ONE VERSE

A word's possible meanings do not all apply at once. Choose the meaning that best fits the actual usage.

MISTAKE 3: ASSUMING THE ENGLISH WORD IS THE ORIGINAL WORD

One English word may translate several Hebrew or Greek words, and one original word may be translated in several ways.

MISTAKE 4: BUILDING DOCTRINE FROM A WORD'S ROOT

A word's history may be interesting, but current usage determines meaning. Butterfly does not mean a fly made of butter.

MISTAKE 5: CLAIMING "THE HEBREW REALLY MEANS" OR "THE GREEK REALLY MEANS"

Say, "The word can carry this sense in this context," and explain why. Ordinary translations are not hiding the truth.

MISTAKE 6: USING STRONG'S NUMBERS AS COMPLETE LANGUAGE TRAINING

Strong's numbers help locate words but do not explain grammar, syntax, context, or which definition applies. Use them as a doorway, not the final authority.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

SEVEN DAYS OF BEGINNER PRACTICE

DAY 1 - GRACE AND MERCY: Read Ephesians 2:1-10 and Titus 3:3-7. How do grace and mercy relate to salvation?

DAY 2 - FAITH AND WORKS: Read Romans 3:21-28, Ephesians 2:8-10, and James 2:14-26. What does genuine faith produce?

DAY 3 - JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION: Read Romans 5:1-2 and 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8. Which emphasizes standing, and which emphasizes transformed living?

DAY 4 - FLESH AND SPIRIT: Read Romans 8:1-17. How does Paul contrast life according to the flesh with life in the Spirit?

DAY 5 - KINGDOM OF GOD: Read Mark 1:14-15, Luke 11:20, and Revelation 11:15. What is already present? What is still coming?

DAY 6 - CHURCH, BODY, AND KINGDOM: Read Matthew 6:9-10, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, and 1 Peter 2:9-12. What does the body teach? How should the church bear witness to God's kingdom?

DAY 7 - GOSPEL AND SALVATION: Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 and Romans 10:9-13. What has God done through Jesus? How are people called to respond?



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

REVIEW AND REFLECTION

11. Why does context determine a word's meaning?
12. What is the difference between Bible and Scripture?
13. What does LORD in small capital letters usually represent?
14. Why is Christ a title rather than Jesus' last name?
15. Who is the Holy Spirit?
16. How are grace and mercy related?
17. What is biblical faith?
18. What is the gospel?
19. How are redemption, ransom, and atonement connected?
20. What is the difference between justification and sanctification?
21. What does the kingdom of God mean?
22. How are the church and kingdom related without being identical?
23. Why is the church more than a building?
24. What does the fear of the LORD mean?
25. Why can save, flesh, world, law, soul, and spirit have different meanings?
26. Which word helped you understand the gospel more clearly?



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PRAYER

Father, thank You for revealing Yourself through Your Word. Give me patience as I learn. Help me understand the words You have given, read them in context, and receive their truth with humility. Guard me from pride and confusion. Lead me by Your Spirit, help me recognize Jesus throughout Scripture, and transform my life through what You teach me. In Jesus' name, amen.



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PART TWO

WANT TO GO DEEPER?

INTERMEDIATE GUIDE

The beginner section gives clear starting definitions for many common Bible words. This section explains additional theological terms and introduces responsible principles for deeper word study. These concepts are intermediate because they require readers to compare passages, distinguish related doctrines, and recognize how meaning develops across Scripture.

INTERMEDIATE MEMORY ANCHOR: A dictionary gives possibilities. Grammar, context, author, covenant, and the whole Bible determine meaning.

REVELATION, INSPIRATION, AND ILLUMINATION

Revelation is God making Himself and His truth known. General revelation is what God reveals through creation and human conscience. Special revelation is God's more specific self-disclosure through His words, acts, prophets, Scripture, and supremely Jesus.

Inspiration is the Holy Spirit's work through human authors so Scripture communicates what God intended without erasing their personalities, vocabulary, experiences, or styles.

Illumination is the Spirit's work helping people understand, receive, and apply Scripture. It does not add meanings that contradict the text.

Key passages: Psalm 19:1-6; John 1:1-18; Luke 24:44-45; Romans 1:18-23; 1 Corinthians 2:10-16; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

MEMORY ANCHOR: Revelation is God making truth known. Inspiration concerns the giving of Scripture. Illumination concerns the Spirit helping readers receive it.



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CANON AND APOCRYPHA

Canon is the recognized collection of writings received as Holy Scripture. The church did not create the authority of biblical books; God's people gradually recognized writings already functioning as authoritative through prophetic or apostolic origin, faithfulness to received revelation, and widespread use.

The Apocrypha or Deuterocanonical books are Jewish writings included in Catholic and Orthodox Old Testaments but not in the Protestant Old Testament canon. Protestants may value them historically or devotionally without receiving them as equal in authority to Scripture. Orthodox collections vary. These differences should be described accurately and respectfully.

Key passages: Luke 24:44; 1 Timothy 5:18; 2 Peter 3:15-16.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

TRINITY AND INCARNATION

The Trinity means the one true God eternally exists as three distinct divine Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each is God; the Persons are distinct; there are not three gods but one God. The word Trinity does not appear in Scripture but summarizes its teaching.

The incarnation means the eternal Son took on a true human nature without ceasing to be God. Jesus is fully God and fully human. He experienced genuine human development, hunger, fatigue, sorrow, temptation, suffering, and death, yet remained without sin.

Key passages: Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 3:16-17; Matthew 28:18-20; John 1:1-3, 14; Philippians 2:5-11; Hebrews 2:14-18; 2 Corinthians 13:14.



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PROPITIATION, EXPIATION, AND UNION WITH CHRIST

Propitiation emphasizes Christ's sacrifice addressing God's righteous judgment against sin. Expiation emphasizes the removal or cleansing of sin and guilt. Biblical atonement language can carry both dimensions.

The Father is not a reluctant deity persuaded by a loving Son. Father, Son, and Spirit act together in salvation. God gives the Son, and the Son willingly lays down His life.

Union with Christ is the believer's spiritual participation in and relationship with Jesus. Believers are described as in Christ, with Christ, united with Him, crucified with Him, raised with Him, and seated with Him. Because believers belong to Jesus, His accomplishment is the basis of forgiveness, righteousness, adoption, new life, transformation, and resurrection.

Key passages: Leviticus 16; John 15:1-11; Romans 3:23-26; Romans 6:1-11; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 1:3-14; 1 John 4:9-10.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

IMPUTATION AND GLORIFICATION

Imputation describes something counted or credited to another person's account. Romans 4 uses accounting language when Abraham's faith is counted as righteousness. Christian theology commonly uses imputation for human sin counted to Christ in His sacrificial work and Christ's righteousness counted to believers. Traditions explain details differently, but believers are accepted because of Christ, not their moral record.

Glorification is the final transformation of believers into resurrected, perfected life with Christ. Believers will be raised bodily, freed fully from sin and death, and conformed to Christ's glorious likeness.

Key passages: Genesis 15:6; Isaiah 53:4-6; Romans 4:1-8; Romans 8:18-30; 1 Corinthians 15:42-57; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 3:7-9, 20-21.



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A SIMPLE SALVATION FRAMEWORK

Justification: God declares believers righteous through Christ.

Adoption: God receives believers into His family.

Sanctification: God sets believers apart and transforms them.

Glorification: God completes their transformation in resurrection life.

These are distinguishable aspects of one gracious salvation, not unrelated gifts.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

ELECTION AND PREDESTINATION

Election is God's choosing according to His purpose and grace. It may refer to Israel's calling, Jesus as chosen Servant, particular servants, believers chosen in Christ, or God's purposes in salvation and mission.

Predestination means God determining beforehand a purpose or destination. The New Testament connects it with conformity to Jesus, adoption, and God's saving purpose.

Faithful Christians disagree about how sovereignty, responsibility, foreknowledge, election, and the universal gospel invitation fit together. Scripture clearly teaches that God is sovereign; salvation is by grace; people are responsible; the gospel is genuinely offered to all; everyone who calls on the Lord will be saved; no believer may boast; and God's purpose magnifies His glory.

Key passages: Deuteronomy 7:6-8; John 6:37-40; Romans 8:28-30; Romans 9-11; Romans 10:9-13; Ephesians 1:3-14; 1 Peter 2:4-10.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

SOVEREIGNTY AND PROVIDENCE

Sovereignty is God's supreme authority and rule over creation. Nothing stands outside His ultimate authority, yet sovereignty does not mean God approves every human action or that people are not responsible.

Providence is God's continuing preservation, provision, and governance of creation. God can use someone's actions to accomplish His purpose without approving that person's motives. Isaiah 10 shows God using Assyria as an instrument and then judging its pride and cruelty.

Key passages: Genesis 50:20; Psalm 103:19; Isaiah 10:5-19; Isaiah 46:9-11; Acts 2:22-24; Romans 8:28; Colossians 1:15-17.

MEMORY ANCHOR: God is completely sovereign, people remain responsible, and God never becomes the author or approver of evil.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

T TYPOLOGY, ANTITYPE, AND ALLEGORY

A type is a real earlier person, event, office, or institution God uses as a pattern preparing for a later, greater fulfillment. Examples include Adam, Passover, sacrifice, priesthood, tabernacle, Davidic kingship, and Jonah's deliverance.

The antitype is the later corresponding reality. Jesus and His work are the greater realities to which many Old Testament patterns point.

Typology is not free-form allegory. It respects the original event, follows scriptural connections, recognizes similarities and differences, and moves toward greater fulfillment in Christ. Allegory is a story or image whose elements represent another set of realities. Scripture sometimes uses allegory explicitly, but readers should not turn every narrative detail into a hidden symbol.

Key passages: Romans 5:14; 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Corinthians 10:1-11; Galatians 4:21-31; Colossians 2:16-17; Hebrews 8-10.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

PROPHECY, FULFILLMENT, AND ALREADY/NOT YET

Prophecy is a message communicated through someone called by God and may include warning, correction, covenant accusation, encouragement, promise, prediction, repentance, or revelation of God's purposes.

Fulfillment is the completion or intended fullness of something promised, patterned, or written. It may be a prediction coming to pass, an earlier pattern reaching greater reality, a theme reaching its goal, Scripture being embodied, or a promise beginning now and awaiting completion.

Already and not yet describes how God's kingdom and salvation have genuinely begun through Jesus but await completion at His return. Jesus reigns and believers have forgiveness, eternal life, and the Spirit; yet death, sin, suffering, final judgment, resurrection, and new creation remain.

Key passages: Matthew 1:22-23; Matthew 5:17; Matthew 12:28; Luke 24:44-47; Romans 8:18-25; 1 Corinthians 15:20-28; Revelation 21:1-5.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

ANGEL, DEMON, SATAN, AND SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Angel means messenger and may describe a human or heavenly messenger. Angels are created beings, not deceased humans, and should not be worshiped.

Demons are evil spiritual beings opposed to God. Jesus possesses complete authority over them. Satan is the adversary and accuser, a created rebellious being who is not equal to God. Jesus defeated him decisively, and his final judgment is certain.

Spiritual warfare is the believer's struggle against spiritual evil, deception, temptation, and forces opposed to God. The New Testament emphasizes standing in God's strength, truth, righteousness, the gospel, faith, salvation, Scripture, prayer, resistance, watchfulness, and Christian community.

Not every illness, conflict, temptation, or hardship should be blamed on direct demonic activity. Discernment should remain grounded in Scripture, prayer, wisdom, appropriate medical care, trustworthy pastoral support, and protection from manipulation.

Key passages: Mark 1:21-28; Colossians 2:13-15; Ephesians 6:10-20; Hebrews 1:5-14; James 4:7-10; 1 Peter 5:8-9; Revelation 20:10.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

SHEOL, HADES, GEHENNA, AND THE LAKE OF FIRE

Sheol is the Hebrew term commonly referring to the realm of the dead, grave, or death's domain. Hades is the Greek term commonly referring to the realm of the dead and overlaps in some ways with Sheol.

Gehenna is a term Jesus uses in warnings about final judgment, connected to the Valley of Hinnom. The lake of fire is Revelation's image of final judgment, called the second death.

The English word hell may represent different original terms. We should not assume every occurrence refers to the same stage or aspect of death and judgment. Scripture's central warning remains: sin leads to judgment, Jesus alone saves, and everyone is called to repent and trust Him.

Key passages: Psalm 16:10; Matthew 10:28; Luke 16:19-31; Acts 2:25-32; Revelation 20:11-15.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

HEBREW, ARAMAIC, GREEK, AND SEPTUAGINT

Hebrew is the primary language of the Old Testament. Aramaic is a related language used in portions of Ezra and Daniel and a few expressions. The New Testament was written in Koine Greek.

The Septuagint, abbreviated LXX, is the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures. New Testament writers often quote wording reflecting it, which helps explain differences between a New Testament quotation and an English Old Testament translated mainly from Hebrew.

Knowing original languages can enrich study but is not required for faithfully knowing God through Scripture. Dependable English translations provide meaningful access. Original-language tools should produce humility, not superiority.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

A RESPONSIBLE WORD-STUDY PROCESS

27. Choose the word within a passage.
28. Identify the English translation and compare dependable translations.
29. Locate the original word carefully.
30. Study the sentence's grammar.
31. Identify the author's usage elsewhere.
32. Examine the range of possible meanings.
33. Let the context choose the fitting meaning.
34. Consider the historical period.
35. Compare related passages, especially explicit quotations and explanations.
36. State the conclusion modestly.
37. Return to the biblical message about God, Jesus, salvation, and faithful living.



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REUSABLE WORD-STUDY WORKSHEET

WORD OR PHRASE:

BIBLICAL PASSAGE:

38. What does the sentence say?
39. What is the paragraph's main point?
40. Who is speaking or writing?
41. Who is addressed?
42. What kind of writing is this?
43. How do dependable translations render the word?
44. Is there a translation footnote?
45. Which original word is present?
46. What meanings are possible?
47. Which meaning best fits this context?
48. How does the author use the word elsewhere?
49. Does the word develop across Scripture?
50. Is there a direct connection to Jesus or the gospel?
51. What common misunderstanding should be avoided?
52. How should this truth shape faith or life?

ONE-SENTENCE SUMMARY:

In this passage, _____ means _____ because _____.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

PRACTICE WORD: GRACE

Read Titus 2:11-14. Ask what grace has done, to whom it appeared, what it teaches believers to reject, what life it produces, what hope believers await, and what Jesus gave Himself to accomplish.

One possible faithful summary:

In Titus 2:11-14, grace is God's saving action revealed through Jesus that not only forgives but also trains His people to reject ungodliness, live faithfully, and wait for Christ's return.

Grace does not mean God is unconcerned about how believers live. The same grace that saves also teaches and transforms.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

PRACTICE WORD WITH A WIDE RANGE: SAVE

Read Exodus 14:13-14; Matthew 14:28-31; Mark 5:25-34; Ephesians 2:1-10; and 1 Peter 1:3-9.

Ask what kind of danger appears, whether the rescue is physical, spiritual, present, future, or more than one, who performs it, what the paragraph emphasizes, and whether the exact same definition fits every passage.

One possible faithful summary:

Save carries the general idea of rescue, but the nature and extent of that rescue depend upon the passage. It may describe deliverance from immediate physical danger, healing, rescue from sin and judgment, or the final completion of salvation when Jesus returns.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

FINAL REVIEW

Before finalizing a word study, ask:

- Does my definition fit the sentence, paragraph, and author's argument?
- Am I forcing every possible meaning into one occurrence?
- Am I depending too heavily on a word's root?
- Have I considered translation differences?
- Does the definition fit the wider teaching of Scripture?
- Am I claiming more certainty than the evidence allows?
- Does this study lead me back to the passage?
- Does it help me recognize Jesus and respond faithfully?



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

FINAL ENCOURAGEMENT

Bible words are not secret codes reserved for experts. They are doorways into truths God wants His people to know.

When you encounter an unfamiliar word: pause, read the sentence and paragraph, compare translations, use trustworthy help, return to Scripture, and let the meaning grow clearer over time.

You do not need to understand every theological term before coming to Jesus. You come to Jesus because you need Him.

He is the Savior.

He gives grace.

He forgives sin.

He reconciles us to God.

He gives the Holy Spirit.

He brings us into God's family.

He gives eternal life.

Every page points to Jesus.

FINAL MEMORY ANCHOR: Learn the word. Read the context. Follow the story. Trust Jesus.

KEY PASSAGES FOR FURTHER STUDY

- Exodus 3:13-15 - God reveals His covenant name.
- Exodus 34:5-7 - God declares His character.
- Jeremiah 31:31-34 - The promised new covenant.
- Isaiah 52:7-53:12 - Good news and the suffering Servant.
- Mark 1:14-15 - Jesus announces the gospel and kingdom.
- John 1:1-18 - The Word becomes flesh.
- John 3:1-21 - New birth, belief, salvation, and eternal life.
- Romans 3:21-28 - Righteousness, grace, redemption, and justification.
- Romans 5:1-11 - Justification, peace, hope, love, and reconciliation.
- Romans 8 - Life in the Spirit, adoption, hope, and future glory.
- Ephesians 1:3-14 - Salvation blessings in Christ.
- Ephesians 2:1-22 - Grace, salvation, good works, reconciliation, and the church.
- Colossians 1:13-23 - Kingdom, redemption, creation, and reconciliation.
- Hebrews 8-10 - Covenant, priesthood, sacrifice, and atonement.
- 1 Peter 1:3-25 - New birth, hope, holiness, redemption, and God's Word.
- Revelation 21-22 - Resurrection hope, new creation, and God's presence.



Rooted in Scripture - Pointing to Jesus

A CALL TO SALVATION

The words in this guide matter because they explain the good news of Jesus Christ.

The Bible teaches that all people have sinned and fall short of God's glory. Sin separates us from God, and we cannot rescue ourselves through good behavior, religious effort, church attendance, or Bible knowledge.

"The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23

God did not leave us without hope. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, lived without sin, died for our sins, was buried, and rose bodily from the dead.

"God commends his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 5:8

Salvation is God's gift. It is received by grace through faith, not earned by works. Read Ephesians 2:8-10.

Scripture calls us to repent, believe the gospel, confess Jesus as Lord, and trust that God raised Him from the dead. Read Mark 1:14-15; John 3:16-18; Romans 10:9-13; and 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.

IF YOU ARE READY TO TURN TO JESUS

You can speak honestly to God. Admit your sin. Believe that Jesus died and rose again. Ask for forgiveness. Place your trust in Him. Surrender your life to His loving authority.

A prayer is not a magic formula. Jesus saves. Prayer is one way to express genuine repentance and faith.

A SIMPLE PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I know that I have sinned and cannot save myself. I believe You died for my sins and rose again. Please forgive me, make me new, and teach me to follow You. I place my trust in You. Amen.

If you have trusted Jesus, begin reading His Word, pray, and connect with a faithful local church where Scripture is taught, the gospel is proclaimed, and Christ is honored.



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Each resource is intended to:

- Point people to God.
- Reveal the heart of the Father.
- Magnify Jesus.
- Be grounded in Scripture.
- Encourage readers to open their Bibles.
- Build confidence, not dependence.

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