

**- Order of Service -**

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**Sending prayer**

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**July 29, Walk for Life**

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**You may notice we don't pass an offering plate**

We invite you to participate in the ministry, and the offering box in the foyer is for your gifts and offerings for the Lord's work.

**- 2 Corinthians 9:7-8, Galatians 6:6 -**

**Grace Bible Fellowship**

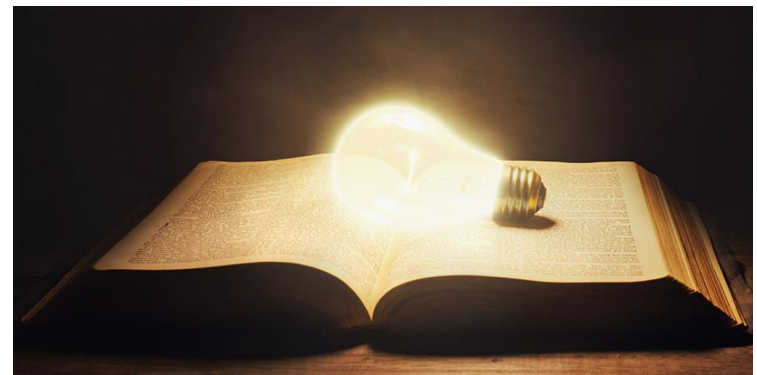
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*“We are identified with Jesus Christ in his  
crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection,  
ascension, and heavenly seating”*



**- Teaching -**

**Eric Peterman**

**God's Word is meant to be understood - Part II**

**The clarity of God's Word**

**James 1:22-25**

**- July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023 -**

## God's Word is meant to be understood – Part II

### The clarity of God's Word

#### **James 1:22-25**

*The fires of our lives as believers in Christ are either stoked by the fuel of God's Word, regularly consumed and meditated on, or they are stoked by some fleshly and worldly fuels. There's a wise old saying that goes, "You are what you eat." This is true of our bodies and it is true of our spiritual selves. The Word of God is like a mighty rushing river that has its headwaters in two worlds: The heavenly or spiritual one, and in this mundane world having been written by men in our human languages. And because of its two waters mixed, it has a powerful effect in both worlds for those that regularly drink its waters. It delivers God's eternal life, and it makes life here productive, sensible and meaningful. The secret to its amazing and transforming benefits lies in a simply truth: The Living Water must be drunk. It must be read, heard and taken in.*

Let's quickly review: **Scripture affirms that it is able to be understood**

**but (1) not all at once**

**and (2) not without effort**

**and (3) not without ordinary means**

**and (4) not without the reader's willingness to obey it**

**and (5) not without the help of the Holy Spirit**

**and (6) not without human misunderstanding**

**and (7) never completely.**

(with a nod of thanks to Wayne Grudem for the idea)

**and (3) not without ordinary means** (what does "ordinary means" mean?)

The Westminster Confession of Faith says that "in a due use of the **ordinary means**" even "the unlearned" may "attain unto a sufficient understanding" of those things in Scripture "which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation" (WCF 1.7)

1- **A translation of the Bible in one's own language.** (1 Cor 14:6-11)

**Note:** Scripture is able to be understood everywhere where we are able to translate it accurately; There are a *very few yet-unknown words in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek*, so relatively few in comparison to the whole scope of Scripture, and that even where the meaning of a word is unknown, the sense of the passage as a whole is usually quite understandable.

The use of an English Dictionary is sometimes helpful too.

2- **Listening to teachers of the Word**, as God has given the gift of teaching to the church (1 Cor. 12:28)

3- **Reading of commentaries and study Bible notes**, where available, for these are *merely the written form of what is taught by teachers in the church.* (Acts 8:26-35)

4- Some **awareness of the wisdom/knowledge contained in the history** of interpretation of the church. The Holy Spirit has not been silent in the past and only woken up for you. He has taught believers in the past.

5- **Seeking understanding in fellowship with others**, talk about a passage of the Bible and its meaning. As in small group Bible studies/Sunday school, talking with fellow believers, mentoring relationships, conferences and debates. (Acts 15:5-6, 17:11)

6- **The use of helpful tools**, Concordances, maps, Hebrew and Greek Lexicons, Bible times culture and history background books. (Jonah 1:1-3)

**4) Not without the reader's' willingness to obey it.** A willingness to obey should also be considered necessary to the right understanding of Scripture. (James 1:22-25, Psalm 119:34, John 8:43, 1 Cor 3:1-3)

**5) Not without the help of the Holy Spirit**  
(Psalm 119: 18, 27, 34, 73, Luke 24:44-45, 1 Cor 2:12-14)

**6) Not without some human misunderstanding** Perspicuity is a *property of Scripture*, not a *property of its readers*. Perspicuity (clarity) affirms that *Scripture is able* to be understood rightly, not that it *will always* be understood rightly. The clarity of Scripture guarantees that *it is capable of being understood rightly*, not that all believers will understand it rightly. The clarity of Scripture is a doctrine about its understandability, not about how various people actually understand it.  
(Luke 19:44-45, John 12:13-16, 2 Peter 3:16)

**7) Never completely** There is always something more to be understood, no matter how long or carefully we study the Word. There's an initial level of understanding available to first readers of the Bible and available to some extent to children, and there are deeper levels of understanding that come with further reading and growth in Christian maturity.  
*We can apprehend increasingly as we study, but never utterly, totally.*  
(Hebrews 5:11-14)