Keys to Understanding the Bible

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[0:00] Well, this morning, you know, we have been going through a series on the Ten Commandments.! The last couple of weeks, actually, we were looking at honoring your mother and your father.

You know, if I was a better planner, I probably could have landed the Honor Your Mother and Father on Mother's Day. As it worked out, today, we were supposed to do You Shall Not Murder on Mother's Day.
And I was thinking about it last week, and I thought, you know, maybe that's not a great idea. Maybe I should switch that up.
And so we are going to switch that up. We'll delay the Sixth Commandment until next week, which we'll look at that. But, yeah, we'll save it for Father's Day, is what I heard.
And, by the way, I got a little surprise this morning. So, you know, you grow up with one mother, but then when you get married, you get to gain another mother. And my mother-in-law is here this morning.
[1:06] Thanks so much for coming. And she has been such a tremendous blessing in my life, as well as in Jamie's. And what did you ask me? Do you get credit for me being a knucklehead?

Yes, you do. It went... So, anyway. So, anyway, this morning, I just wanted to bring an encouraging word.
I thought it would be an opportunity. We'll take a little break from our Ten Commandments series and just provide some encouragement regarding the Word of God and feeding on and reading the Word of God on a regular basis.
It's just such a fundamental and important aspect of the Christian life is feeding on God's Word. Reading the Scriptures. Both, by the way, the New Testament, right, which is...
We've talked about this. The New Testament has more things that are relevant to us today, but also the Old Testament, just as we're going through the Ten Commandments.
[2:09] All of it is God's Word. I wanted to look at a couple of Scriptures from the Old Testament about God's Word. You know, the first Scriptures actually came with the Ten Commandments.

That's where, really, the law or the Scriptures that were written down started, with those commandments written on stone. And those were given to Moses. Moses, well, Moses eventually passed away after a generation.
And the reins were handed over to a man named Joshua. And if you've got a Bible, you can open up to the book of Joshua. It's about, what, number six? The sixth book in the Bible.
So if you start in the very beginning, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. And then you get into Joshua. And the Lord was giving some instruction to Joshua in his role here, taking over as leader of this fledgling nation.
It says in Joshua 1, verse 8, this is God speaking to Joshua. He says this, Hey, if you spend daily time in God's Word, in this Scripture that God has given.
[3:43] And it wasn't complete at that time, right? It was just the start of the Scriptures that God had given. But if you will meditate in it day and night, you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Later on, several, many generations later, during the time of King David, King David wrote many psalms or songs that were inspired to become Scripture for us.
And the very first psalm that we find in our Bible, you can turn to there, psalms is right about in the middle of the Bible, psalm chapter 1. It says this, and this is about all believers.
Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful.

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But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law he meditates day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither, and whatever he does shall prosper.
[4:51] Again, when you invest in feeding on God's word, in this case it was the law, we have more additional Scriptures that we can meditate on today.

Back then it was just the law of Moses primarily. Your life will prosper. Later on in the New Testament, the Apostle Paul, he's actually writing letters to different churches that he helped establish.
And he has actually been given revelation from God and what to teach these churches and how they ought to live the Christian life and what God has accomplished for them through the cross of Jesus Christ.
And at the end of many of his letters, he says something like this. He says, I want you to read this letter to all the believers.
I want them all to hear it. When he's writing to Timothy, who was one of his, he was a mentor or a father figure in the ministry to Timothy, and he said this about the Scriptures, 2 Timothy 3.16, All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instructions in righteousness.
[6:15] And he says this is why, so that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. That word complete, we might translate that, and some translations do, as mature, so that you can grow up to be a mature Christian.

And that's something that you can't really do if you don't, on a regular basis, invest in reading and studying God's word. Jesus himself said, and this was when he was being tempted, he was tempted in the wilderness three times by Satan, and in one of those temptations, he was tempted to turn a rock or a stone into bread, to eat it, because he had been fasting for a long time.
And his response was actually something from the law of Moses. And he responded to Satan with this, he said, man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.
You know, we recognize that food sustains us, and if you don't eat, you will, eventually your body will shrivel up, and you'll die.
If you don't eat enough, if you don't eat the right kinds of food, and good nutrition, you won't live a healthy physical life. And it's the same way with God's word.
[7:36] God's word is spiritual food for us, food for our soul. And we can't live a spiritually healthy life if we are not, on a regular basis, feeding from his word.

I want to, from here, look at five different, I'll call it perspectives, or ways to view God's word, or understand God's word, that will maybe be an encouragement to reading the Bible on a regular basis.
There are certain perspectives that people have about the Bible, I think, that prevents them from reading or getting all that they can from God's word.
And then, after those five perspectives, I'll finish up with just some practical tips on building up a good habit, a daily habit of reading God's word.
All right, the first kind of perspective here is that when it comes to the Bible, the Bible is meant to be read. Now, I realize that might seem very obvious on the face of it, right?
[8:45] For any book, it seems, right, the purpose of the book is that people would read it. But unfortunately, because of religion and ritual over the years, many times the Bible is just seen as some kind of holy icon, you know, that we can reverence and revere.

We might even put it at the front of the church here, right? Have you seen that? You'll have a table and maybe even have, in fact, I remember years ago we had that, we had a big Bible here, right, on a table and some churches will have that.
Or maybe at home you have a coffee table and right on the coffee table is a nice big Bible. Show your reverence and respect for the Bible. But, that's not what the Bible is intended for.
The Bible's not intended for us just to revere and respect. God gave us the scriptures for us to read, to read them. And so, we ought to avoid kind of the religious thinking about the scriptures.
And of course, it's fine to put a Bible on your coffee table or at the front of the church and we should revere the scriptures. scriptures. But the number one thing that God wants us to do with the Bible is to read it.

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[10:03] You know, every church has a name. The name of our church is Grace Bible Church and we call it that because the Bible is the central, you know, part of the foundation of this church.

And again, it's not just that we revere the Bible but it is that reading and understanding and studying the Bible is the foundation of our church. When somebody asks me, hey, do you know of, you know, maybe I live in Texas or Oklahoma or Alaska or whatever and do you have any recommendations on like what kind of church I should go to?
And there's so many denominations and there are pros and cons to every denomination, you know. None of them can be as perfect as our church, right? But usually what I tell people as I say, go find a church where people bring their Bible to church and when the pastor teaches or preaches, he's doing it from the Bible.
You know, not every church does that. But if you do that, if you find a church like that, you'll be on pretty solid ground. Another thing when it comes to reading the Bible, though, is kind of what we're looking to get out of the Bible.
There's a lot of people and they think of the Bible as like a self-help book or something that's going to be like an inspirational type book to help me with motivation in life, inspiration.
[11:35] And don't get me wrong, the Bible is that. The Bible can be inspirational. It can help us with how to live our lives.

But the Bible isn't just that. And if we approach the Bible as just a book of inspiration, then we won't get everything out of the Bible that God wants us to get from it.
The Bible is a book of history. There's wars and conflict. There's violence and pain and suffering. There's wisdom and beauty.
There's romance in the Bible. Love and there's sacrifice. It's a book that's about God and about men. It's about God's wrath and his judgment and it's about his holiness.
It's about his mercy and his forgiveness and his love for mankind. When it comes to us, it's a book about our sin and our failure yet also the worth that we have in God's sight because he made us in his image and the potential that we have if we will just come to him on his terms.
[12:50] It's a book about our past, where we came from, and it's a book about our future, where God wants to take us. It's a book about life and about death.

It's a book about heaven and hell. And really, when it comes to the bottom of it, the Bible is a book about reality. It's about how things are in the world.
But even further than that, it's a book about how things ought to be. And so, if we're just looking at, you know, maybe reading a devotional each week that provides us an encouraging word, you know, that has value in and of itself.
But God wants us to read the whole counsel of his word. And not all of it is encouraging. Sometimes, when you read the Bible, it's kind of depressing. But it is the reality of how things are. And God wants us to understand all of reality. The second kind of perspective to consider when it comes to the Bible is that the Bible is for everyone.
[14:01] Some people have this idea, well, the Bible is kind of a complicated book. You know, there's words in there that I don't understand. And so, the Bible is something that is for the professional.

It's for the pastor or the theologian, the Bible teacher. And you know what? I'm just going to go to church and I'll just listen to what they have to say about the Bible.
And, you know, that's good enough for me. But the Bible is not intended just for the professional. Now, there have been times in the past, even in church history, where that was the view of the general church.
In fact, it was so bad at times that the regular people who were not theologians, pastors, priests, if you were just a regular lay person, a regular Christian, you were not allowed to read the Bible. You know why? It's too risky. It's too risky. You might misunderstand something because you don't have the academic prowess to understand clearly what's being said in there.
[15:15] But that is not what God intended for the Bible. The Bible was meant to be a book that was made available to all. And you know what? Over, if you read through church history, there's so many stories of many men who even gave of their own lives to make the Bible available to every single person.

I think about Martin Luther. I think about John Wycliffe. So many others who worked tirelessly at a time when the Bible was not accessible to everyone to make the Bible available through translation

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work, through sometimes printing Bibles in secret against, when it was against the law, to make it available to all of us.
During Paul's travels in his ministry, he was traveling around and he was sharing the gospel message. He was sharing about Jesus Christ who had come according to what the prophets had spoken and had offered his life as a sacrifice for the sins of the world and this was new information to many people, even the Jewish people.
They had heard about a Messiah written in the scriptures but many of them had never heard of Jesus. They didn't know who he was and so he was going around proclaiming the life, death, and death of Jesus.
He went to a place called Berea and he was sharing about this man Jesus and what he had accomplished and said, hey, this is the Messiah that our prophets and our scriptures spoke of.
[16:57] And it says this about them, this is Acts chapter 17 verse 11. It says that these Jews were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica in that they received the word with all readiness so they were willing to hear but they were not too willing to hear, they were willing to listen but here's what it says, and they searched the scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

They didn't just trust the professional, right? Paul was a Pharisee, he had some credentials but they didn't trust, they went back to the scriptures themselves to verify that what those things that he was telling them was so.
That is also what all of us should do. when I come up here each week to share with you to teach the word of God which is a very biblical thing to do.
Each and every one of you should take opportunities to do the same thing, to search the scriptures is what he is saying is that found in the scriptures. God makes the, God wants the Bible available to all of us so that we can all search the scriptures to make sure that all those things that we might be hearing to make sure that they are so.
The next thing, the next kind of perspective on the scriptures is that the Bible is not just meant to be read only, it's actually meant to be studied, to really dig in, to do work when it comes to reading the Bible.
[18:40] Paul again says to Timothy, this is another instruction to his apprentice so to speak. He says this, 2 Timothy chapter 2, 15, be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

You've got these scriptures and you need to work diligently, actually the King James says to study, to show yourself approved unto God, a workman, somebody who works hard.
So when it comes to reading the scriptures, we can just read and that's fine in and of itself, but we should also at times dig in, wrestle with the scriptures, work to understand everything that we're reading.
Put in that effort. If you find, if you come across a word that you don't understand, do a little bit of digging. Look it up. Look it up in a dictionary, maybe a Bible dictionary. Just do a quick Google search or I guess Google's even kind of out of date now, right?
Do a chat GPT or whatever. Of course, you always have to be careful about those things. And then if there are references to people you don't know or places you don't know or there's references to other passages that you may not be familiar with, take the time, dig in, look those things up.
[20:04] And of course, you can study on your own but another way to study the scriptures is with a group of people, right? And so we have something that we call today a Bible study where people will get together and they will study the scriptures together.

Sometimes there's a leader, sometimes there's just maybe a facilitator. Everybody's just working through the scriptures together and all of that is good and positive. We have a Sunday school here each Sunday morning.
Roger's been leading that and it's more interactive. You know, here it's harder in a setting like this to have interaction, right? But in a Sunday school class where there's more like 10, 15, sometimes 20 people, you can ask questions or give comments.
And all of that is so helpful as we study and try to understand the scriptures. You can have a Bible study at church but it doesn't have to be at church. You can have a Bible study with your family. You can have a Bible study between you and your spouse.
You can have one with, you know, mom and dad and the kids. You can have it with extended family. You can have a Bible study in your neighborhood, a neighborhood Bible study or maybe one at work where you have other Christians who are at work and you can study the Bible together

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maybe one morning each week or a school group.
[21:22] I had Bible studies when I was in school back in high school. We would get together once a week and study the Bible together as students. Also, you can study topics.

You know, the Bible speaks to every area of life. I mean, just about anything that you can think of, the Bible speaks to it. Maybe not completely directly but in some kind of way, the Bible speaks to just about everything that you can imagine.
And so, if there's something in your life or something that you're curious about, well, I wonder if the Bible has anything to say about this. You can do a Bible study and do a search.
Do a search on the internet, whatever it might be, and find, there's Bible tools, for example, like there's a reference resource that you can find online.
That's probably the easiest way today, but we also have it in our library, Knaves Topical Bible. It's a list of topics, everything, all kinds of things that you can imagine. And it has just a list of references of verses on that topic.
[22:23] And you can dig in. What does the Bible say about money or relationships or angels or demons or law and crime and punishment or suffering or raising children or fatherhood or motherhood?

It's all in there in the scriptures. And we can constantly and ought to constantly ask ourselves this question that we find in the book of Romans.
What sayeth the scriptures? What do the scriptures say about this topic? And we can spend the time to look it up. The fourth perspective when it comes to the scriptures or the Bible is that the Bible is not just meant to be read.
It's not just meant to be studied. The Bible is meant to be understood. And really you cannot get the benefit that God wants you to get from it until you understand.
And reading is a necessary part to understanding and studying is a necessary part to understanding. But where we want to get to is that understanding. In the book of Acts, Philip, we call him Philip the Evangelist, he noticed this guy.
[23:41] He was a Jew, but he was from Ethiopia. He was a eunuch. And he saw him reading from the prophet Isaiah.

He was reading the Bible. And he went up to him and he asked him this question. He says, do you understand what you're reading? And he asked him that because that's so important.
And what he was reading actually happened to be about Jesus Christ. What the prophets had said about Jesus. And so understanding what you're reading is so important.
And I know that all of us, me included, have experience where we're reading the Bible and we just don't get it. I have no idea what I just read. And you know what?
That's okay. Sometimes you just don't get it. But you continue reading and you continue working and you ask questions and you go to Bible studies or you listen to sermons.
[24:41] The Bible says that God has set teachers in the church to help us with our understanding. But I want to say this, that some people, sometimes I think that people get the idea that reading the Bible is just a spiritual exercise for the purpose of maybe feeling better about myself.

That I'm a good Christian. Or maybe about impressing my friends or impressing my pastor or maybe even impressing God. Hey God, look, I'm reading the Bible every day.
But that's not what God's looking for. You know what? He's not impressed. Okay, everybody. He's not impressed. He wants us to get something out of it. He wants our lives to be changed by his word.
And so we need to go to the Bible not just to kind of get spiritual credit, right? But we want to understand what it is that we're reading. You know, some people have this view of the Bible that it's just kind of a mystery book.
And because there are some things that are very easy to understand as you read through the Bible, and there's some things that are much harder. But the Bible is not meant, it's not designed to be a mystery book. Now, there are mysteries in the Bible.
[25:54] There are some things that are shrouded in mystery and are intended to be so. But for the most part, most of the Bible is meant to reveal things to us, not to conceal things from us.

Paul, when he is praying for the Ephesians, he's writing a letter to the Ephesians, to this church in Ephesus, and he tells them what his prayer is for them. And he says this, his prayer is that the eyes of your understanding would be enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling,

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what are the riches of the glory of the inheritance in his saints.
And he goes on and on. God wants us to know things, to understand things about him and about us. You know, I've seen some people quote this scripture in a way kind of to justify all the things that they don't know.
And it's a scripture from Isaiah, Isaiah chapter, let me see, 55 verse 8. And it says this, this is God speaking through the prophet Isaiah, for my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord.
For the heavens are higher than the earth, and so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts are higher than your thoughts. And so some people think, well, you know, God's thoughts and ideas are just beyond my comprehension.
[27:15] Now, I think certainly that's true, right? God has ideas that maybe we can't understand. God understands things, mysteries about the universe that maybe we will never understand, though we have started to through scientific investigation.

But do you know that this scripture is not about that idea, that we can never attain to knowing what's in God's mind? Actually, this is a passage to not faithful believers, it's a passage to those who are rebelling against God.
And he's saying, hey, your thoughts are not after my thoughts, you're thinking some other thoughts, rebellious thoughts, wicked thoughts. God gave us the scriptures so that we would know his thoughts, and so that we would make his thoughts our thoughts.
God's mind. So we would know his ways, and we would make his ways our ways. In the book of 1st Corinthians, Paul is talking about knowing God's mind, and he says this, for who has known the mind of the Lord?
Who has known the mind of the Lord? Right? And we know that God's intellectual capacity, if you will, his wisdom is so much beyond ours.
[28:38] But, he finishes up with this, but we as Christians have the mind of Christ. God revealed to us what was in his mind when he sent Jesus Christ to live and die in this world on our behalf.

life. In Philippians chapter 2, Paul says this, in encouraging Christians to live a humble life, he says this, let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.
So we need to understand what was in Jesus' mind in his earthly ministry, and what was in his mind when he went to the cross to lay down his life as an act of love for us.
Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus. But, if we have trouble understanding what we're reading, then we have tools, we have resources.
Going back to the, uh, Philip the evangelist, he went to the, the Ethiopian eunuch, and he asked him, do you understand what you read? And here's what the, here's what the man said.
[29:45] He said, how can I unless someone guides me? And so sometimes, right, we need guidance. We need somebody to guide us along the way. And it says that he asked Philip to come up into his chariot, and to come up and sit with him.

And Philip took the opportunity to explain the scriptures to him, and how all these things were fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Sometimes the Bible is hard to understand, and we need help.
God, the Bible says that God has set teachers in the church, those who are skilled at teaching, at explaining things. And teachers come in many forms. Of course, you have your pastor. You have Bible professors at Bible colleges or universities.
You have people who write books about the scriptures. They can teach us things just by going on Amazon and purchasing that book and reading through it. We have Bible commentators. You can get a book, you can find it online on an app on your phone or in our church library.
And it's just somebody who shared, you have a scripture listed, a certain verse, and it explains certain things about that verse that you might not have understood otherwise, providing context and cultural insights.
[30:57] You can listen to sermons, you can read books, you can take classes, you can read those commentaries. By the way, if you are a young person, especially if you're still at home, you can take advantage of your parents.

Your mom or your dad may know a little bit more than you about the Bible, and you might read something in there that you don't understand. You say, hey mom, can you explain this to me?
Do you know what this means? Sometimes they'll say, I don't know what that means either. But maybe you can work through it together. Kind of the last perspective that I want to look at regarding

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the Bible is that the Bible, it's meant to be understood, but the purpose of understanding the Bible is so that it can transform our lives.
As we grow in our understanding of the scriptures, our lives will be transformed. You know, with the scriptures that we started with from Joshua and Psalms, it talks about that when we meditate on the word day and night on a regular basis, it's said that you will have success in your life, you will prosper.
But when Paul, he also encourages reading the scriptures, but he speaks to it in a little bit of a different way. In Romans chapter 12 verse 2, he says this, and do not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but instead be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may prove out what is the good and the acceptable and the perfect will of God.
[32:42] You know, as we get to know the author of the Bible, we get to know him through his word, then God will do a work in us. We will be transformed to be like the author of the book.

And that's really the ultimate purpose of studying the Bible, of understanding the scriptures, that our lives would be transformed, that we would be more like him.
All right, I'm going to transition here into just a few practical tips, right? Sometimes motivation, encouragement, a rallying cry, hey, let's pick up our Bible reading habits, is not sufficient. Sometimes we just need some tools to help us to make these things happen. And so I'm going to provide just a few tips that hopefully are helpful to you.
One is, if this isn't something especially that you already have a habit of, start small. Don't make a commitment that I'm going to start reading my Bible an hour a day.
[33:49] You know why? Because you're going to fail pretty quickly. You're going to get discouraged and you're going to say, I can't do that. Start small. Start with just five minutes. Just five minutes.

If you try to start too big, you're just going to burn out. Another thing is, develop a routine in your life. Build a daily habit. We all have different things that we do just every day, right? We eat every day, right? Most of us brush our teeth every day. If you're not doing that, by the way, you should brush your teeth every day.
Lots of habits. Sometimes some of us have coffee every morning. We have things that are just part of our regular routine. Well, let's figure out a way where we can add reading the Bible to that routine.
There's a book, Atomic Habits. It's a great book, by the way, about building good habits and about breaking bad ones. But he mentions a technique or a strategy called habit stacking.
[34:48] And the idea is, hey, you already have habits in your life. So if you want to add a new one, one of the things you can do is just pair it with an existing one. And we can do that with reading the scriptures.

Hey, do you have a coffee every morning? Well, while you're drinking your coffee, take that time to read the scriptures. Maybe you check your phone every morning.
Check your email or Facebook or something like that. And you can decide, hey, you know what? Before I do that, I'm going to read the Bible. So you can compare it with something like that.
Or maybe it's after you brush your teeth at night. Right after I brush my teeth in the evening, I'm going to read the scriptures. Or maybe it's while you're eating breakfast.
Whatever it might be, whatever works for you, pair that with something else. Make it a part of your regular daily routine. And by the way, for parents, this is something that we can instill in our kids when they're young.
[35:46] We can help them build routines in their life. And one of the routines that we should help them out with is that regular Bible reading habit. Let's have a time, maybe as a family, where we're all, maybe it's not that we're studying the Bible together, but we have some individual time where each one of us is all reading the Bible.

The next tip is to really have a plan. Instead of just picking up the Bible and opening it up to any page and just, you know, reading a chapter or a verse, let's maybe attack a book.
Hey, this is a book that I'm really interested in. I want to study this. I want to read this. Some people do an annual, go through the whole Bible in a year, or maybe you can do the whole Bible in two years.
There's all kinds of different plans that you can find out there. But have a plan, have a strategy. So today I'm going to read one chapter from the book of Romans. And then tomorrow, I don't have to,

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you know, make a big decision about what I'm going to do.
Tomorrow I'm going to read Romans chapter 2. And then the day after that I'm going to read Romans chapter 3. And having a plan like that helps with your routines. Consider taking notes.
[36:57] You know, some people have a journal that as they read through maybe a chapter of the Bible, they'll write a note about what comes to mind. Those things can be helpful. Some people have Bibles where, in fact, mine has fairly wide margins.

And so as I'm reading, I can actually write right there in the margins, right there in the Bible, something that came to mind as I was reading. Another thing that you can do is do this with other people.
I just talked about as a family, you can have maybe family time where, hey, all of us are reading the Bible. We're doing it individually, but we're all doing it together or at the same time. But you can maybe commit to another friend or maybe your brother or sister and say, hey, I really need to work on my Bible reading habit.
Would you do it with me? We'll do this together. together. And so we'll check in maybe once a week or on a regular basis and how's that going? Have that accountability. You can do that with friends, siblings.
You can do that with your spouse. And then the last real tip is after we've finished reading those scriptures, let's find an opportunity to talk to somebody about it.
[38:08] It doesn't have to be a long conversation. You can just mention it at the breakfast table, at their dinner table. Hey, this is what I read. What do you think about it? Or this is a question that came up. Does anybody have any thoughts about this?

Talk to other people about our Bible reading, about what we're reading in the scripture. Share your perspective. Ask other people about their perspective. What do you think? And encourage one another to continue to read God's word on a regular basis.
I'll finish up with this. You know, if Bible reading is not a part of your regular routine, I would ask you to consider this morning to commit to making it a regular part of your day.
And for some people, it may have been a routine in our life for years and years, but you know what? Over the last few weeks, or maybe it's the last few months, or it could even be the last few years, you've fallen off the wagon, so to speak.
And so, now's the time this morning to say, you know what? This is an important part of my Christian life, and so I need to make this a habit in my life again. It may seem, by the way, with any discipline, you might call it, like reading the scriptures, it may not seem that it's really having an impact in your life.
[39:29] You know, sometimes we change our diet. You know, we're going from eating unhealthy food to eating healthy food. And you know what? It doesn't taste as good. And you're like, man, is this really having an impact in my life?

You know, I've just, it seems sometimes maybe that your appetite isn't being fed as it was before, or maybe you're doing exercise.
Let's say you're lifting weights, right? And it's just making you tired, and it's taking time out of your day, and it's really having an impact. But if you're consistent at those things, you're three months later, six months later, three years later, five years later, you'll look back at where you were.
And the same thing applies to our reading the scriptures. You'll look back where you were and where you've come today. And you've matured so much in your Christian life.
And so much of that had to do because you just kind of had that built, that regular disciplined habit of opening up the scriptures and reading God's word and meditating on it, thinking about it, talking about it with other people, grasping with it, wrestling with it, trying to get the understanding of what God's trying to say to us.
[40:47] And like the scripture said, like Paul says, that's what God wants. He wants us to feed on his word, and he wants us to be transformed to be more like him.

So let's go ahead and end with a word of prayer. Father, thank you so much for the Bible. I thank you. I'm thinking about all the people who've dedicated their lives to making the Bible available to us, the scriptures available to each one of us.
Many of them even paid with their own life. I pray that you would work, continue to work in my life and in the lives of everyone hearing my voice to make this a habit in their own lives.

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That they would feed on God's word, that you would teach each one of us how to make this a habit, but also give us the understanding that we need as we wrestle with the scriptures.
Help us to understand what you want us to understand, that we might grow, that we might mature as Christians, that we ultimately might be more like our Savior. We thank you again for your word. [41:53] In Jesus' name, amen. All right, thanks everybody. Happy Mother's Day to all the moms. So grateful for each one of you.

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