

Faithful in Bible Study

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Main Scripture Text: 2 Timothy 2:15

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

2 TIMOTHY 2:15

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Introduction

Take God’s Word and find 2 Timothy chapter 2 and verse 15. In a moment, we will look at it. Let me tell you what happened to me. As a teenage boy, I sat in a church and heard a man preach the gospel. I was sitting by my father. When the invitation was given, my father went forward to give his heart to Jesus Christ. Conviction of the Holy Spirit struck my heart. I went forward also to give my heart to Jesus Christ, and I was as sincere as a young man could be. And, when I went forward, they filled out a form; and they stood me up in front of the church, and they said, “Aren’t we very grateful that Adrian Rogers has come forward tonight to give his heart to Jesus Christ?” And, the people said, “Amen,” and that was about it. And, I went out and endeavored to live the Christian life. And, I want you to know, as a young man, I struggled and I failed, and I struggled and I failed. And, I rode a spiritual rollercoaster: sometimes I was up, and sometimes I was down. Sometimes I wondered if I had been saved at all. But then,

slowly, I began to get into the Word of God. I began to study the Bible. I learned some truths, and when I learned some truth, that truth became something absolutely solid that I could stand on. And, my life was transformed, not by resolution, not by emotion, not by determination, but by the truth of God's Word.

Now, we want you, as a believer in Jesus Christ, and especially if you are a new Christian, to learn some factors of faithfulness that will help you to stand strong, to be a good Christian at home, to be a good member of this church, and to be a solid citizen in this world. And, the factor of faithfulness that comes number one is Bible study. I want you to look at God's Word and see what Paul said to Timothy. Second Timothy chapter 2, verse 15: "*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*" (2 Timothy 2:15) Now, that is God's command to you and to me through Paul and Timothy—that we're to "*study to shew [ourselves] approved unto God.*" (2 Timothy 2:15)

Do you want to live a holy life? Jesus said in John chapter 17, verse 17—as He prayed for us, He prayed, "*[Lord] sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*" (John 17:17) You want to be sanctified? You want to be holy? You want to be powerful in the Lord? You want to stop riding a spiritual rollercoaster? You want to stop walking around on eggshells and JELL-O? You want some spiritual steel and concrete beneath your feet? Then learn to be faithful in Bible study.

I want to give you today four things that I pray God the Holy Spirit will write upon your consciousness indelibly—that God the Holy Spirit will cause them just to be etched upon your soul—that will help you to know, understand, live by the Word of God. Now, we're talking about faithfulness in Bible study.

I. You Must Receive the Saving Author of the Bible

Number one: If you were to understand the Bible, if you would know the Bible, if God's Word would be to you a bright, living reality, you must, number one, receive the saving author of the Bible.

A. Invite Jesus into Your Heart

Now, God is the author of the Bible. And, in order to understand the Bible, you must receive the author of the Bible into your heart. Why is this? Because without Jesus Christ you are spiritually blind. The Bible says in 1 Corinthians chapter 2 and verse 14 that "*the natural man*"—that is, a naturally born man—"*receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because [they're] spiritually discerned.*" (1 Corinthians 2:14) If you've only been born once, you are a natural man born into the natural world and blind to the spiritual world. You will never truly understand the Bible. The Bible says in 2 Corinthians chapter 4 and verse 4 that Satan is "*the god of this world [and he has] blinded the minds of them [that] believe*

not.” (2 Corinthians 4:4) And, without Jesus Christ, the author of the Bible, in your heart, you will never understand the Bible. To try to help an unsaved man to truly understand the Bible would be like trying to teach a dog to understand opera. You just can’t do it. You don’t have the facility; you don’t have the ability to understand the Word of God.

¶ There’s a classic story that I’ve shared with you before about a young man who went to a college class. And, the professor was an infidel, and he tried to mock those students who believed in the Word of God. And, he let loose a diatribe against the Word of God. And then, he asked, “Is there anybody here now who says he believes the Bible is the Word of God?” And, even those Christians who were Christians seemed to be intimidated. But, one young man stood up in the back of the room and said, “Yes, sir.” He said, “I want you to know I believe the Bible is the Word of God.” The professor said, “Does it make sense to you?” He said, “Yes, sir, it does.” Professor said, “Well, young man, I want you to know I’ve read the Bible and it doesn’t make any sense to me.” And, the student said, “Sir, I don’t mean you any disrespect, but the Bible is God’s love letter to His children. If you’ve read it and don’t understand it, it’s because you’ve been reading someone else’s mail.”¶

Isn’t that true? You see, the Bible is God’s letter to us. And, in order to understand the Bible, you must know the God of the Bible. Now, an unsaved man can read the Bible and appreciate it for beautiful literature. It is beautiful literature. He might learn the history of the Bible. He might even agree with the moral precepts of the Bible. But, he will never know the deep meaning of God’s Word until he’s born again.

Nicodemus came to Jesus by night. Nicodemus was a master in Israel; that is, he was a brilliant man. But, he couldn’t understand, and the reason he couldn’t understand is he had not been born again. Jesus said in John 3:3: “*Except a man be born again, he cannot see.*” (John 3:3) Nicodemus was a blind man. “*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*” (John 3:3) He just cannot. And so, therefore, if you were to understand the Bible, first of all, invite the Lord Jesus Christ into your heart, the saving author of the Bible. You must receive the saving author of the Bible. Have you got that?

B. Pray

Now, once Christ is in your heart, then you begin to pray. Never come to Bible study without praying. In Psalm 119, there are three prayers that you need to pray before you begin your Bible study, once you know that Jesus Christ is in your heart. Put these verses down in your margin, and I want you to turn to them later on, or tomorrow morning, when you begin to study the Bible, or this afternoon. Psalm 119 and verse 12—here’s the first prayer: “*teach me thy statutes*”—“*teach me thy statutes.*” (Psalms 119:12) And, when you pray that, God begins to teach you. He becomes the teacher in

your heart. When you pray, “Lord, teach me thy statutes,” when you lay your intellectual pride in the dust and pray over the Word of God—now, remember that Christ must be in your heart, first of all—three things will happen. Here are the three things that will happen when you pray, “Lord, teach me thy statutes.”

1. Your Eyes Will Be Opened

In Psalm 119 and verse 18: *“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”* (Psalms 119:18) That’s the first thing that will happen. Your eyes will be opened. God will help you to see things that you have never seen. I can tell when I am walking in the Spirit: when I’m reading the Word of God, there are truths that just jump up off the Bible into my heart.

2. Your Heart Will Be Stirred

Number two: Not only will your eyes be opened, but your heart will be stirred. Put this verse down—Psalm 119, verse 36: *“Incline my heart unto thy testimonies.”* (Psalms 119:36) God opens your eyes. God inclines your heart. You see, you must see, and then your heart must be moved.

3. Your Mind Will Be Enlightened

Your eyes will be opened; that’s number one. Your heart will be stirred; that’s number two. And then, your mind will be enlightened. Listen to Psalm 119, verse 73: *“give me understanding, that I may learn [your] commandments.”* (Psalms 119:73)

And so, you have the Lord Jesus Christ in your heart. You have received Him into your heart. God gives you a new heart. God gives you a new mind. Then, you come to the Word of God, and you say, “God, teach me your statutes.” And, when you do this, you pray, “Lord, open my eyes.” You pray, “Lord, stir my heart.” You pray, “Lord, quicken my mind.” Never fail to study the Bible that way. It’s unthinkable to me that I would sit down for a serious study of the Word of God without first of all asking the author of the Word of God to teach me.

¶ I read years ago about a man who had a mentor, a Bible teacher. He was a new Christian, and the mentor was teaching this younger Christian the Word of God. And, they were doing well. They would meet for Bible study, and the young neophyte Christian would have difficulty with the Word of God. And, he would come to his teacher, whose name was Harry, and he would say, “Harry, what does this mean?” or, “Harry, teach me that,” or, “Harry, what about this?” And, Harry would explain it to him because Harry had a walk with God, a real close walk with God. And, he taught the younger man. And, we need older people to teach younger people the Word of God, and that’s a very wonderful and legitimate thing. But, one time this man could not get to Harry. He had a problem in the Word of God. He couldn’t understand it. And, he labored over it, and he said to himself, “Boy, I wish Harry were here. I wish somehow Harry

were here because I need to understand this.” And, he went to God and said, “Lord, just somehow help me to get to Harry. I need to understand this.” And, the Lord said to him in his heart, “Why don’t you ask me to explain it to you? I’m the One who taught Harry.” And, you can ask God Himself to teach you the Word of God.†

II. You Must Recognize the Sovereign Authority of the Bible

So, number one, here’s the first big heading: you must receive the saving author of the Bible. You must have Jesus Christ in your heart. Number two: You must recognize the sovereign authority of the Bible. Once you know the author, you must believe the authority of the Word of God. The Bible will never be a real book to you if you do not accept it as the sovereign authority of Almighty God.

The Bible is a literary miracle. Put this verse down—2 Timothy chapter 3 and verse 16: “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God*”—“*all scripture is given by inspiration of God.*” (2 Timothy 3:16) And, the word *inspiration* that’s used here is used only one time—this one time—in the Bible. It’s *theopneustos*, and what it literally means is it is “God-breathed.” All Word is God-breathed, is given by inspiration of God. That literally means that it is God-breathed—not that God breathed into the Scriptures, but that God breathed the Scriptures themselves.

You say, “Why would you call the Scriptures ‘God-breathed’?” Well, what you’re hearing right now is my breath. There’s a diaphragm down here. There are lungs in here. My diaphragm and my ribcage are pressing against my lungs, and they’re sending air up my throat. That air is passing over my larynx and my voice box, and that air is being moved and articulated by my tongue, my teeth, and my lips. And, I’m making sounds, and what you’re really hearing right now is my breath. I am breathing out my words right now. Now, the Bible says that all scripture is the breath of God. When you read the Bible, you hear God speak. “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God.*” (2 Timothy 3:16) Now, it says, “all scripture,” not some scripture. That’s the reason we believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible. *Verbal* means “every word.” A verb is a word. *Plenary* means “full.” The Latin word *plenos* means “full.” So, theologians call it the “verbal, plenary inspiration of the Bible.” That means all of the Bible is fully inspired. There’s no part of it that is not inspired.

As you pick up the Bible, you read phrases like this: “The word of God came unto me,” or, “The Lord said,” or, “God spake,” or, “Thus saith the Lord.” You read that 3,808 times—“God said,” “God said.” Now, either the Bible is the Word of God or it is the biggest bundle of lies the world has ever known. It is the Word of God, and you need to take it that way. Jesus Christ said in Matthew chapter 4, verse 4: “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*” (Matthew 4:4) The Word proceeds out of the mouth of God. You say, “Well, didn’t human people write

the Bible?” Yes, they wrote it, but they wrote it by divine inspiration. God Himself inspired the penman. “Well,” you say, “if God wrote it, why didn’t it all sound alike? Why do parts of it sound so different?” Because God used different people—just like our orchestra here today. We have different instruments in the orchestra.

† Suppose Carter Threlkeld, who sang for us today who is the orchestra director and, by the way, can play a number of instruments—if Carter picks up one instrument and plays it, and then he picks up another one and plays it, and then picks up another one and plays it, you would be able to tell the characteristics of those different instruments. A trumpet would sound like a trumpet, and a French horn like a French horn, and a cornet like a cornet, and an oboe like an oboe, or whatever, but there’s one author who’s playing all the instruments. And, you pick up this Bible, and you can say, “Yes, that’s Paul. Yes, that’s Matthew. Yes, that’s Moses, yes.” Those are the different authors of the Bible, but really, there’s one author who’s using all of those men as instruments in His hand—not mechanical dictation. God uses the fears, the desires, the aspirations, the experiences of all of those men, but over it all and through it all is divine inspiration.†

And so, you must accept the absolute authority of the Word of God, and your view of the Scripture must be the view that Jesus had. And, Jesus said in John chapter 10, verse 35: *“the scripture cannot be broken.”* (John 10:35)

Now, if you accept the absolute authority of the Bible, some will say you’re guilty of worshipping the Bible. Some of the liberals will call you a bibliolater; that is, you’ve made an idol of the Bible. And, they call that “bibliolatry”—just worshipping the Bible. Pay no attention to them. I’m telling you, if reading the Bible brings you closer to Jesus Christ and causes you to love Jesus Christ, unless you let the Bible stand between you and Jesus Christ, just pay no attention to them. That’s their problem. Love the Word of God!

And so, the Bible, interpreted by the Holy Spirit, is the final authority—not reason, not human reason, not your conscience. Your conscience is like a sundial. It operates according to the light that’s shone on it. So, your conscience can’t be your guide unless God guides your conscience. And so, it’s not human reason, not your conscience, not tradition, not emotion, but the Word of God.

III. You Must Resolve a Serious Analysis of the Bible

Now, here’s a third thing. First of all, you must receive the saving author of the Bible. You must have the author of the Bible in your heart. Number two: You must believe the sovereign authority of the Word of God. No stutter, no stammer, no apology, the Bible is the Word of God. Number three: You must resolve a serious analysis of the Bible. The author, the authority, and the analysis of the Bible. It’s not enough to say that God is the

author of the Bible. It is not enough, therefore, to say that the Bible, therefore, is absolutely authoritative. You must learn to study and analyze the Bible. You must bring your mind to the Bible, though you lay your intellectual pride in the dust at the same time.

Put these scriptures down. First Timothy chapter 4, verse 13: Paul said, *“Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine”*—*“Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, [and] to doctrine.”* (1 Timothy 4:13) And then, again, the scripture that we began with—2 Timothy 2, verse 15: *“Study to shew [yourself] approved unto God.”* (2 Timothy 2:15) Now, what does that word *study* mean? I looked it up in a number of translations the other day. Let me tell you some of the ways that that word *study* is translated. One says, “Give diligence.” Another says, “Earnestly endeavor.” Another translation says, “Do your best.” Another says, “Try hard.” Another says, “Let it be your care.” Another says, “Aim first.” All of these are saying that you must have a burning desire for the Word of God. You must earnestly endeavor. You must *“study to shew [yourself] approved unto God.”* (2 Timothy 2:15)

Do you really want to know the Bible? Could you say with the psalmist in Psalm 119, verse 72: *“The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver”*? (Psalms 119:72) I mean, had you rather know the truth of God’s Word or be a multimillionaire? Answer that question in your heart, but don’t answer it out loud. Don’t tell me that you believe the Bible is the Word of God unless you have a desire to understand it. That’s contradictory.

I don’t want you to answer this question out loud, but I want to ask you this question: How many of you believe everything you read in the newspaper? “Well,” you say... And, if I were to ask for the hands to go up, I doubt that any would go up. But, I’d ask you a second question even more embarrassing: How many spend more time with the newspaper every day than you do with the Word of God? That’s an incriminating question. You spend more time with that which you don’t believe than that which you say you do believe. You spend more time with the bad news than you do with the good news. You say, “Yes, I know the author of the Bible. Yes, I believe the authority of the Bible, but I make no analysis of the Bible. I do not study the Bible.” You must, friend, open the Bible and do as the Apostle Paul said: *“give attendance to reading, to exhortation, [and] to doctrine.”* (1 Timothy 4:13) There’s no other way that you’re going to get it. If you’re looking for a cheap way, an easy way, a lazy way to understand the Bible, you’re not going to understand it.

Now, here at Bellevue Baptist Church, we have some ways to help you to grow in our Bible understanding—first of all, by Bible preaching and Bible teaching. When you come into this place, you go to our Fellowship Bible Classes, there’s a teacher who’s teaching the Bible. When you come into this auditorium, there is a preacher who is

preaching the Bible. And, God gives to the church pastors and teachers to help you to “grow in [the] grace, and...knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” (2 Peter 3:18) Another thing we provide for you is a bookstore and a library. Out here to my right is a wonderful—one of the finest—Christian bookstores in all of the world and one of the finest Christian libraries in all of the world. Are you familiar with our library and the bookstore? If not, then you need to learn about it. Another thing we provide for you is seminars, conferences, and training. We’re having seminars tonight, and you need to be in a seminar tonight. It is for you—a hands-on seminar beginning at 5:15 this evening to help you to learn how to be a good student of the Word of God.

Now, the Bible says here in our text that we started with that you’re to “*rightly [divide] the word of truth,*” (2 Timothy 2:15) and that word “rightly divide” literally means “to cut straight the Word of truth.” And, what it comes from is a practice in the Old Testament when an offering would be made to God, unless it was the whole burnt offering. Say it were a lamb, and it would be brought to the Lord—that lamb would be divided. The priest would take it, and he would divide it into thirds. One-third would be offered to God. One-third would be given back to the person who brought the offering, and one-third would be given to the priest. And, what he would do would be to rightly divide that lamb—cut it straight, as it was meant to be—so that everyone would get that part that belonged to him. Now, you need to do the Word of God the same way. You need to learn how to rightly divide the Word of God. Don’t bring your ignorance to the Word of God, but study the Bible.

For example, all of the Bible is for us, but not all of it is to us. Let me give you an example—1 Corinthians chapter 10 and verse 32: Paul says, “*Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God.*” (1 Corinthians 10:32) Did you know that everybody in the world is divided up into those three categories—the Jews, the Gentiles, and the Church of God? And, Paul says, “*Give none offence, neither to the Jews...the Gentiles, [or] the church of God.*” (1 Corinthians 10:32) Now, as you pick up the Bible and begin to read the Bible, you need to understand, is this written to the Jew or is it written to the Gentile or is it written to the Church? Now, if you don’t understand that, you’re going to get all confused.

For example, you can go into the Old Testament and take the promises that belong to Israel and try to apply them to the Church. For example, the Old Testament Sabbath, Saturday, was given to Israel, not to the Church. It was given to Israel. God says, “It is a covenant between me and the children of Israel forever.” (Exodus 31:16) You read that. It’s not for you. The Old Testament Sabbath is Saturday. Sunday is the Lord’s Day. Sometimes people take the Old Testament truths that were meant for Israel and they try to apply them to the Church, and they get all confused in their Bible study. It is all for us, but it is not all to us. That doesn’t mean we’re not supposed to understand that or read

that. Of course we are, because in there, there are lessons that we can learn, rightly understood, that will apply to us, but we have to understand how to “*rightly [divide] the word of truth.*” (2 Timothy 2:15) You have to understand the difference between the Church and the kingdom. You have to understand the difference between law and grace. You have to cut it straight, and there’s no easy way to do that.

When you look at the Bible to analyze it, you need scrutinize it, you need to organize it, you need to summarize it. Here’s what you need to do. Let me give you three very common things, if you’ll just take these three things to help you to analyze the Bible.

A. Read the Bible in Context

First of all, the word *context*—just read it in its context. Don’t just do a “lucky dip.” Don’t just throw it open and begin to read and say, “It doesn’t make sense to me.” Why, if you read any book that way, it wouldn’t make sense to you. It is written systematically. Read it systemically. You can make the Bible say anything. Did you know the Bible says there is no God? Did you know that? The Bible says there is no God. That’s what the Bible says, but that’s only part of a verse: “*The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.*” (Psalms 14:1; 53:1) If I just take a part of a verse, I could prove there’s no God. I could say, “Here the Bible says there is no God,” because what I’ve done is taken a part of a verse; I’ve taken a text out of its context. And, it’s a pretext if we do it that way. So, first of all is the word *context*.

B. Read the Bible with Common Sense

Secondly, common sense. When you read the Bible, don’t check your brains at the door. Read poetry as poetry. Read prose as prose, prophecy as prophecy, promise as promise, parable as parable, and precept as precept. Now, understand these things. When the Bible speaks, sometimes it uses metaphors. It uses figures of speech. It uses symbolism. Sometimes people say to me, “Adrian, do you take the Bible symbolically or literally?” The answer to that is yes: I take it literally; that doesn’t do away with symbolism. For example, in the book of the Revelation, Satan is described as a red dragon with a tail that sweeps a third of the stars from heaven. That’s obviously a symbol. I mean, that’s not literally what Satan is; that’s what Satan is like. That’s symbolism. But, since there’s symbolism, does that mean I don’t believe there’s a literal devil? Of course there’s a literal devil. And so, symbolism doesn’t do away with a literal interpretation. *All you do is find out what the symbol stands for and then you literally believe it.* But, I’m saying there must be context. There must be common sense.

C. Read the Bible with Concentration

And then, there must be concentration. When you look at a passage of Scripture, think, read it through, think it clear, write it down, pray it in, live it out, and pass it on. Did you get that? Read it through, think it clear, write it down, pray it in, live it out, pass it on, and

it'll be yours. Now, if you don't do that, how do you expect to understand the Bible? Analyze the Word of God. There must be a serious analysis of the Word of God in its context, using common sense and concentration, with the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

IV. You Must Respond with a Steadfast Application of the Bible

Now, let me just go to the last thing of these four things. First of all, you must receive the saving author of the Bible. Secondly, you must recognize the sovereign authority of the Bible. Thirdly, you must resolve a serious analysis of the Bible. And, last of all, you must respond with a steadfast application of the Bible.

If you read and study the Bible and don't apply it, it'll backfire on you. Inspiration, apart from obedience, will cause the Word of God to sour on you like food that you eat and you do not digest and don't turn it into energy. You must put these things into practice. Listen to this—John 14, verse 21: *“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me”*—Jesus said—*“and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”* (John 14:21) That's John 14, verse 21. Jesus said, “If you have my commandments and you keep them...” To have them—that means to study, to receive them. All right? And then, keep them—that means to obey them. “Then,” He says, “you love me.” Don't sing “Oh, How I Love Jesus” if you're not receiving and keeping His commandments. *“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that [loves] me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father”*—now, if you want God the Father to love you, you have to love God the Son, and to love God the Son is to hear His commandments and keep them. Now, watch it—*“he it is that loveth me: and he [will] be loved of my Father”*—now, listen to this—*“and [I] will manifest myself to him.”* (John 14:21)

Many of you are saying, “Pastor Rogers, Jesus Christ is not real to me. I wish He were real to me. Why isn't God more real to me? Why is it that some people seem to be so happy in Jesus? Why is it that some people say that God is very real and dear and precious to them? He is not to me.” Well, now, listen: *“He that hath my commandments, and [keeps] them, [he's the one] that [loves] me: and he [will] be loved of my Father, and [I] will manifest myself to him.”* (John 14:21) Truth—if you don't hear anything that I say today, listen to this: Bible study gives you knowledge about God; obedience gives you knowledge of God. You can study the Bible and learn about God or you can obey the Bible and know God—you can study the Bible and learn about God, or you can obey the Bible and know God. Bible study gives knowledge about God; obedience gives knowledge of God. Listen to this verse again—John 14, verse 21: *“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.”* (John 14:21)

Conclusion

You must receive the saving author of the Bible. You must recognize the sovereign authority of the Bible. You must resolve a serious analysis of the Bible, and you must respond with a steadfast application of the Bible. Appropriate and act on the truths of God's Word, and I promise you that this Bible will become real to you. It will become a brand-new book to you. I want to tell you again, as a new Christian, I started out with a lot of sentiment, a lot of sincerity, a lot of resolve, and I floundered and floundered and floundered until I learned spiritual, Bible truth.

Now, we're here as a church to help you. We're here to help you. We're going to give you six factors of faithfulness. This is number one. But, it's simply not enough for you to come and listen to me preach. Fruit that you pick yourself is the sweetest. The flowers that you gather for yourself you enjoy the most. And, I'm hoping that in your church life and in your private life, you'll be faithful to the Word of God.

Bow your heads in prayer. Heads are bowed; eyes are closed. Have you received the author of the Bible into your heart? Have you? If not, you may today. If you would like to be saved, let me help you to be saved. To be saved means that every sin is forgiven. To be saved means that Jesus Christ lives in your heart to give you peace and power and purpose. To be saved means that you will not face the Final Judgment and be cast into hell. To be saved means that you go to heaven when you die, and to be saved means that you have heaven in your heart before you die. To be saved means that you are right with God—you have the joy of Jesus now, right now. If you'd like to be saved—I mean, truly saved, be a child of God—let me help you to pray and get it settled right now. I invite you to pray like this: "Dear God... Dear God"—just pray that prayer in your heart—"Dear God, I know that you love me, and I know that you want to save me. Jesus, I believe you're the Son of God. I believe you paid my sin debt with your blood on the cross. I believe that God raised you from the dead. You promised to save me if I would receive you into my heart. I do receive you right now. Come into my heart. Forgive my sin. Save me, Lord Jesus. Come in right now. I don't look for a sign. I don't ask for a feeling. I just receive you by faith. Come into my heart right now and be my Lord and Savior. I'm sick of my sin. I turn from my sin. I repent of my sin. I trust you, Jesus, as my Savior. I receive you as my Lord. Come into my heart. Begin now to make me the person you want me to be. And, Lord Jesus, I will make public what I have done. I'll not be ashamed of you. In your name I pray. Amen."✠