

“Close the Language Gap”

The necessity of Word Studies and being DAILY in the Word!

In **1 Peter 3:15**, Peter says, in the **ESV** “**but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,**” Today’s culture has impacted God’s people by leading them astray with hard to answer questions. Some believers don’t know how to defend themselves, and as a result either leave the church or just become apathetic to it. We are commanded to have a strong defense of what we say we believe. The problem is believers just aren’t spending the time God says we should to study and know His word. In **Deuteronomy 6:6-9**, God told His people to “**And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.**” God says we are to learn His word nonstop, day and night. But in a culture so distracted by technology and entertainment we fall short horribly. In this small but helpful defense I want to address some issues that atheists have often used to discourage Christians from their beliefs.

Taxonomy—

When it comes to some hard to defend things, taxonomy plays an important role. Especially when we have a gap to close in our language, that causes us problems if not interpreted properly. Taxonomy is simply this; the classification of things, like animals. Because we have a language problem, animals in the bible seem to be like fairy tales or just wrong. Let’s go through some of these and build a defense.

Fish—

Jonah 1:17, “**Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.**”

Matthew 12:40, “**For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**”

The word for fish is often translated this way:

NASB, NRSV - **sea monster**

ESV, NLT, KJV, NKJV, TLB, NCV – **big, great huge, fish.**

So the question is, Why do people say Jonah was swallowed up by a whale?

Well if you know the definition of the word fish from the original Hebrew taxonomy of “fish” it is – any sea creature, a class of animal that lives in a body of water, not a specific size or classification, for instance an eel could be a fish, a whale could be a fish, a dolphin could be a fish. When you define the terms from the original language your result is different. A fish defined in the Hebrew as any sea creature living in a body of water is much different than our modern use of the word fish. Now, in today’s American taxonomy a fish is something in a body of water that lays eggs. A dolphin, shark, and whale are mammals because they give live birth, they do not lay eggs. So, if we took the whale, which in today’s world is the largest sea creature, it would be considered a fish in every sense of the word from the Hebrew definition. It is not a contradiction, it’s just a problem linguistically, when we don’t use the original language.

Birds—

Leviticus 11:13-20, “And these you shall regard as an abomination among the birds; they shall not be eaten, they are an abomination: the eagle, the vulture, the buzzard, the kite, and the falcon after its kind; every raven after its kind, the ostrich, the short-eared owl, the sea gull, and the hawk after its kind; the little owl, the fisher owl, and the screech owl; the white owl, the jackdaw, and the carrion vulture; the stork, the heron after its kind, the hoopoe, and the bat. ‘All flying insects that creep on all fours shall be an abomination to you.’” Wait the Bible just said, that bats and insects are birds?, that’s not right. Now, the first thing we must do is define our terms. What does a bird mean, not from our English, but we must go back to the original Hebrew. The word bird is from the Hebrew word “*op*” (OH-P) and it is defined as: any winged creature that can fly. Well if the Hebrew taxonomy says a bird is a winged creature that can fly, then yes, a bat would be a bird and so would an insect. We have to use the taxonomy and definition of the original language, not what we would classify something in today’s culture. So according to today’s culture and taxonomy NO, a bat and an insect is not a bird, but in Old Testament Hebrew yes, it is. So, question what about a penguin? In American taxonomy it is a bird yes, but in Hebrew taxonomy a penguin doesn’t fly, so no it is not a bird. It is the language you are deriving from, not the language something is interpreted into. We lose so much in translation.

Unicorns—

Numbers 23:22, “God brought them out of Egypt; he hath as it were the strength of a unicorn.”

Psalms 92:10, “But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of a unicorn: I shall be anointed with fresh oil.”

Unicorn when we say that word today, it sounds like some white horse with a single horn on its head riding on a rainbow. But in reality, the word is mistranslated, the Hebrew word is translated, wild bull, or wild ox, it refers to a large animal with a horn or horns, that is powerful. Now, from the French and late Latin, the word unicorn comes from the word, **Uni** = meaning 1, like a unicycle, unbrow. The word **Corn** = comes from the Latin, *cornus, cornu*, which comes from a root word in Latin which means head or horn. So, Unicorn would be one horned or one horn on head. The original root word is *ker*, but it is now pronounced *cer* (sir), it is where we get our words, rhinoceros—triceratops— tri means three, so biblically speaking a triceratops is a large animal with 3 horns on his head that is powerful. Very simply a unicorn is a large animal with one horn on his head that is powerful. Definition and original context is the key to understanding. This is why believers are led astray, **Hosea 4:6, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge...”**, information is there, we just need to study it out.

Wizards and warlocks and magic, necromancing, sorcery and mediums—

That sounds like medieval fantasy stuff, but wait a minute the bible talks about it so, is it true. I mean the Bible says, **Proverbs 30:5, ESV “Every Word of God is proven true...”** Well if it’s true then, there’s got to be a problem with how we are translating the original words. Listen to **Isaiah 8:19-20, “And when they say to you, “Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter,” should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living? To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”** This passage talks about 1st a **Medium** which is: Person who acts as a channel of communication between human beings and the spirit world. Secondly, a **Wizard** which also translates, conjurer, spiritist, diviner, a diviner is anyone who interprets dreams or consults spirits.

In, **Exodus 22:18, “You shall not permit a sorceress/witch to live.”** This passage talks about a **Sorceress/witch** which is: a diviner, someone who interprets dreams and or consults spirits. So, we see the terms are used synonymously for people who try to speak with the dead, for the most part. Trying to communicate with the dead is called necromancing. **Necromancing** is defined as: the conjuring of the spirits of the dead for purposes of magically revealing the future or influencing the course of events. In the Bible, necromancy is also called “divination,” “sorcery” and “spiritism” and is forbidden many times in Scripture as an abomination to God (**Leviticus 19:26; Deuteronomy 18:10; Galatians 5:19-20; Acts 19:19**). We should be seeking the Lord not the dead, dead people tell no tales. **Ecclesiastes 9:5-6, NLT “The living at least know they will die, but the dead know nothing. They have no further reward, nor are they remembered. Whatever they did in their lifetime—loving, hating, envying—is all long gone. They no longer play a part in anything here on earth.”** This is one of the worst offenses of the Catholic religion,

because they pray to Mary, which is necromancing. We are not to communicate with the dead.

You see Hollywood and all these horror films with sorcerers and wizards, and people who stop the evil wizard and they kill them, but before they die they say, I curse you and I will return and seek vengeance on you and whatever. But the Bible is crystal clear, **Psalm 146:4, NLT** “**When they breathe their last, they return to the earth, and all their plans die with them.**” They don’t come back to haunt a house or anything like that, **Psalm 146:4** says, “**when you die your plans are done.**” Listen to, **Job 7:9-10, NLT** “**Just as a cloud dissipates and vanishes, those who die will not come back. They are gone forever from their home— never to be seen again.**” They are not going to haunt houses or seek revenge or anything after they are gone. **Hebrews 9:27**, tells us, “**And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,**” once death calls upon us, we do not return.

Exorcism—

Should Christians cast out demons?/ Can a Christian be possessed by a demon?

It appears that the purpose of Jesus' disciples performing exorcisms was to show Christ's dominion/authority over the demons. **Luke 10:17, NLT** “**When the seventy-two disciples returned, they joyfully reported to him, “Lord, even the demons obey us when we use your name!”** It also revealed the disciples faith or lack thereof, **Matthew 17:17-21, NLT** “**Jesus said, “You faithless and corrupt people! How long must I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy here to me.”** Then Jesus rebuked the demon in the boy, and it left him. From that moment the boy was well. Afterward the disciples asked Jesus privately, “**Why couldn’t we cast out that demon?”** “**You don’t have enough faith,**” Jesus told them. “**I tell you the truth, if you had faith even as small as a mustard seed, you could say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it would move. Nothing would be impossible.**” Interestingly, there seems to be a shift in the latter part of the New Testament regarding demonic warfare. The teaching portions of the New Testament (**Romans through Jude**) refer to demonic activity, yet do not discuss the actions of casting them out, nor are believers told to do so. We are told to put on the armor to stand against them (**Ephesians 6:10-18**). We are told to resist the devil (**James 4:7**), be careful of him (**1 Peter 5:8**), and not give him room in our lives (**Ephesians 4:27**). However, we are not told how to cast him or his demons out of others, or that we should even consider doing so.

When you place your trust in Christ, the power of the enemy is destroyed, **Ephesians 2:2, NLT** “**You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God.**” It appears that as the Word of God was completed, the Christians had more weapons with which to battle the spirit world than the early

Christians did. The role of casting out demons was replaced, for the most part, with evangelism and discipleship through the Word of God.

So, the next question then is, Can a Christian become demon possessed?

No, a demon cannot possess a Christian, but it can oppress or influence, Christians from the outside.

Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit (**Romans 8:9-11; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19**). Surely the Holy Spirit would not allow a demon to possess the same person He is indwelling. It is unthinkable that God would allow one of His children, whom He purchased with the blood of Christ (**1 Peter 1:18-19**) and made into a new creation (**2 Corinthians 5:17**), to be possessed and controlled by a demon. John proclaims in, **1 John 4:4, NLT “But you belong to God, my dear children. You have already won a victory over those people, because the Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world.”** The believer has overcome the world of demons, and the case for demon possession of a believer cannot be made scripturally. Because we have the Holy Spirit in us, we can know which spirits are from God and which ones are not, **1 John 4:1, NLT “Dear Friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world.”** The NKJV says it this way, **1 John 4:1, NKJV “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”**

The best way to stop a demon from possessing someone is to evangelize them, once they accept Christ and possess the indwelling Holy Spirit, then greater is He that is in you than he that used to be able to be in you.

Cremation—

Cremation is a topic of much debate, but the bible does have a little insight, into this issue. Cremation is not the normal means of burial in the scriptures, but it is found there. **Amos 2:1-3, “Thus says the Lord: “For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away its punishment, Because he burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime. But I will send a fire upon Moab, And it shall devour the palaces of Kerioth; Moab shall die with tumult, With shouting and trumpet sound. And I will cut off the judge from its midst, And slay all its princes with him,” Says the Lord.”** Ok so what is burning someone’s bones called?, cremation!!! So, it angered the Lord, He got mad and killed the Moabites by burning them up or cremating them. Now some would say, “see God hates cremation, right there it is found in the Bible, but that’s not the only passage we find. In 1

Samuel 31:8-13, “So it happened the next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, that they found Saul and his three sons fallen on Mount Gilboa. And they cut off his head and stripped off his armor, and sent word throughout the land of the Philistines, to proclaim it in the temple of their idols and among the people. Then they put his armor in the temple of the Ashtoreths, and they fastened his body to the wall of Beth Shan. Now when the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, all the valiant men arose and traveled all night, and took the body of Saul and the bodies of his sons from the wall of Beth Shan; and they came to Jabesh and burned them there. Then they took their bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree at Jabesh, and fasted seven days.” Now listen to what David says about this cremation **2 Samuel 2:4-6, “Then the men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. And they told David, saying, “The men of Jabesh Gilead were the ones who buried Saul.” So David sent messengers to the men of Jabesh Gilead, and said to them, “You are blessed of the Lord, for you have shown this kindness to your lord, to Saul, and have buried him. And now may the Lord show kindness and truth to you. I also will repay you this kindness, because you have done this thing.”** Now why was God mad at Moab for cremating and not the men at Jabesh Gilead? Because it would seem that method of burial isn’t the issue, it is the proper respect for the body which was created in the image of God, would appear to be the main issue. God is more concerned with us properly burying the dead than abusing a corpse, or not properly laying to rest, that which was created in the image of God. Incidentally, that is what the king of Edom did, he did not have proper regard for the bodies of Moabites, that’s why God was mad, in **Amos 2**, but the men at Jabesh Gilead burnt the bodies of Saul so the philistines could not do any more harm to Saul and his sons’ bodies and they buried them which was well pleasing.

Another cremation is mentioned in **Joshua 7:25-26, “And Joshua said, “Why have you troubled us? The Lord will trouble you this day.” So all Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones. Then, they raised over him a great heap of stones, still there to this day. So, the Lord turned from the fierceness of His anger. Therefore, the name of that place has been called the Valley of Achor to this day.”** It’s not cremation that’s the issue, it is the proper respect of burial that God is looking at. Because God said in **Genesis 3:19, “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.”** Solomon said, **Ecclesiastes 12:7, “Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it.”**

Now just because cremation is not forbidden, it can turn into a temptation? HOW?

Necromancing, speaking to the dead!! You got to be careful!!! When you hang on to a loved one and put their ashes on the mantle, be careful you are not tempted to speak to them, that can lead to necromancing which is an abomination to the Lord.

We have to be good stewards so when it comes to funerals, we should respect the wishes of the deceased, but also, we need to remember we are still stewards of God's finances, funerals can be very expensive. In **1 Corinthians 4:2**, **“Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.”**, we should have proper respect for the dead, and use God's finances in a way that is in line with being a good steward as well as honoring the body of the one who was created in the image of God.

Is it ok to kill people?—

In **Exodus 20:13**, **“Thou shalt not kill.”** Atheists use this to point out that God is a murderer. Now we are to submit to government, Paul says in, **Romans 13:1-4, NLT** **“Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished. For the authorities do not strike fear in people who are doing right, but in those who are doing wrong. Would you like to live without fear of the authorities? Do what is right, and they will honor you. The authorities are God's servants, sent for your good. But if you are doing wrong, of course you should be afraid, for they have the power to punish you. They are God's servants, sent for the very purpose of punishing those who do what is wrong.”** Also in **Genesis 9:6, NLT** **“If anyone takes a human life, that person's life will also be taken by human hands. For God made human beings in his own image.”** We understand that God established government, and we are to submit to that established government He created.

We are not Israel in the sense of Old Testament regulations, and it is not our responsibility to take it upon ourselves to decide who lives or dies. That is why we established a government, and it is essentially from God who established it. But we shouldn't kill, unless we are defending ourselves our very lives our families, etc.

Actually, **MURDER** should be the translated word, which is the shedding of innocent blood. The word kill is not a proper translation, it should be murder, because God does not want the shedding of innocent blood. So, people who say God is a moral monster because He tells us to kill is not translating that word in its context. The proper word for the sixth commandment of God should read, **“thou shall not commit murder (or shed innocent blood)”**

Do snakes and donkeys talk?—

Now you have to listen to the question because people will deceive you with the phrase snakes or donkeys, in the plural sense. Do you believe snakes, plural talk, no I don't believe all snakes, plural, talk.

Do donkeys, plural talk? No, I don't believe all donkeys talk.

But I do however believe that one specific serpent in the Garden of Eden deceived Eve into eating of the forbidden fruit. He was allowed to speak, just one snake, not all. The same is true with donkeys I do not believe donkeys plural can talk, but I do believe that one specific donkey was supernaturally allowed to speak. Matter of fact it was God who miraculously opened the donkey's mouth so it could speak, that one specific example is found in **Numbers 22:28, NLT** **“Then the Lord gave the donkey the ability to speak...”**

Do all snakes and donkeys speak? No, but one snake spoke and one donkey spoke but it was a special circumstance and God miraculously allowed it.

Magic—

Galatians 5:20, NLT **“idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division,”**

Galatians 5:20, KJV **“witchcraft”**

The message uses **“magic”**

This word for sorcery is a little different than the Old Testament word.

Now the Greek word for sorcery or witchcraft is the word *“Pharmakeia”*, which we get our English word, Pharmacy from.

Now the Names of God Bible, NOG, says it this way,

Galatians 5:20, “idolatry, drug use, hatred, rivalry, jealousy, angry outbursts, selfish ambition, conflict, factions,”

The word **“drug”**, didn't come to be drug until the 14 century, which was defined as; any substance used in the composition or preparation of medicines, the origin of this word was unknown,

But in the 16-century drug became; to mix (a drink, etc.) with drugs, make narcotic or poisonous," some used the word potion.

Also, drug meant dose, so to give a dose to someone was to give him a drug, to take an excess with drugs or medications, obviously is called overdose.

Sorcery and witchcraft in the New Testament is nothing like sorcery and divination and witchcraft in the Old Testament.

The OT stuff dealt with talking to the dead, the New Testament stuff deals with drug use.

Listen to what the TLB the Living Bible, says,

Galatians 5:20, "idolatry, spiritism (that is, encouraging the activity of demons)..."

If we as God's children are His, then His enemies are now our enemies and the enemy now wants to corrupt us through drugs. According to the American Addiction Center in Brentwood Tennessee, they suggest, "In 2017, an estimated 20.7 million people age 12 and older had a substance abuse problem." Whether drugs or alcohol, that is a lot of people and that number increases yearly.

That is why we are told to be sober minded, its not talking specifically about alcohol but also anything that would control your mind, including drugs.

1 Thessalonians 5:4-8, "But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation."

2 Timothy 4:5, "But you be watchful in all things..."

1 Peter 1:13, "Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;"

1 Peter 5:8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."

This will continue to be a problem, even in the tribulation period men will not come to the saving knowledge of Christ because they will not leave their drugs.

Revelation 18:23, "The light of a lamp will never shine in you again. The happy voices of brides and grooms will never be heard in you again. For your merchants were the greatest in the world, and you deceived the nations with your sorceries." There we see the word

“**sorceries**”, but it is the same word as found in **Galatians 5:20**, which is interpreted pharmacy or pharmaceuticals. Which in simple terms, is drug use.

Trinity, Rapture, Bible—

The word **trinity** is not found in the bible, so why do we use it? Well even though the word is not found in the scriptures the doctrine clearly is shown. So, we use this word to describe the nature of God who is one God, yet three distinct separate persons. Though no description can explain this doctrine, I have heard one that shows something close, water. Water is one substance, yet it can be a solid, liquid, and a gas all at the same time, being three separate distinct things yet still H²O (or still water). For more on the trinity see also, Mission Point resource page, “**Is the trinity biblical or is there just one God?**”

The word **rapture** is not found in the bible either, but again, the concept is. The Word rapture is taken from the Latin word “*rapturo*” (also *raptum/rapio*) which means a “catching away” or to be “caught up”. Now the word is not found in the Greek but the concept surely is and that, just like the word trinity, is why we say rapture.

The word **Bible** is the same, except this word is found in the Greek. The word *biblios* in the Greek and the word *biblia* in the Latin both translate “books.” So when we say Holy Bible we are just saying Holy Books. That is the 66 God inspired books, that make up the completed word of God. Thus the Holy Bible.

Why know the Bible?—

Robert Velarde from “Focus on the Family”, gives some great principles on why it is so important to study and know the word of God.

1) Cultural Literacy—

One reason to study the Bible is for cultural literacy purposes. **E.D. Hirsch** writes, “**To be culturally literate is to possess the basic information needed to thrive in the modern world.**”

Simply put, the Bible contains a wealth of cultural literacy. References to the Bible are not only found in religion, but also art, music, philosophy, literature, law and more. Knowing what the Bible says is an important part of everyone's k-base.

Many popular phrases and figures of speech also find their origin in the Bible including being a Good Samaritan, the folly of letting the blind lead the blind, going the extra mile, ethical maxims such as “do unto others as you would have them do unto you,” manna from heaven, etc. Hirsch considers the Bible so important to cultural literacy that it appears first in his Dictionary of Cultural Literacy.

2) What Does It Say?—

Another reason to study the Bible is to learn what it has to say firsthand. Whether one is a supporter or critic of the Bible, or perhaps just neutral or uninterested in the topic, history has demonstrated that the Bible cannot be ignored. Considering that the Bible is important to three major world religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – it is worthy of study.

In addition, the recent rise of hostile criticism towards the Bible itself and religion in general also makes it worthy of study. Sometimes the critics do not always quote the Bible correctly or in context. Knowing what it says firsthand and having some knowledge of the context is helpful in understanding not only current events, but key ideas the Bible addresses such as the nature and existence of God, the human condition, the biblical pattern of redemption and salvation and ethics.

3) Personal Edification—

For thousands of years the Bible has been read not only as history and God's Word, but also for personal edification. This, of course, is a more meaningful reason for studying the Bible for those who believe in God, but the Bible is also surprisingly edifying for those who do not believe. It is full of individuals facing moral choices, life challenges, and, frankly, situations that are applicable to us even today. As Paul wrote, **2 Timothy 3:16-17, NLT** “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.”

The Bible is available for us to learn from not only on an intellectual level, but on a personal and emotional level.

4) To Help Others—

But the Bible is not just for us to keep to ourselves as individuals. It is also useful in helping others. We gain centuries of wisdom and are thus able to help others by studying the Bible. Proverbs, for instance, contain general principles and ideas to assist anyone in living their lives in a way that is helpful and pleasing to God.

Studying the Bible in order to help others is not just for ministers, priests or pastors, but is something everyone can do. By knowing what the Bible says on different subjects, we can help others through difficult circumstances, encourage them and so forth.

Philippians 2:4, NLT “Don’t look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.”

Proverbs 19:17, NLT “If you help the poor, you are lending to the Lord— and he will repay you!”

Proverbs 31:9, NLT “Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice.”

To name just a few.

5) Jesus—

For Christians the Bible culminates in the New Testament account of the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Some 2,000 years after the time of Christ, His life and ministry remain relevant even in our contemporary world. Regardless of how one views Christ, like the Bible, He cannot be ignored. Far from being a distant prophet or irrelevant figure in history, Jesus Christ is at the Christianity's foundation. Particularly studying the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John will help anyone gain a better understanding of Jesus and His mission.

6) God's Word to Us—

For people the world over, the Bible is God's Word to us. People inspired by God recorded the words that make up the Bible, thus communicating what theologians call special revelation. In other words, God has chosen to reveal Himself not only through creation and conscience, but also specially through Jesus and through His Word. Studying the Bible, then, is a matter of course for those who love God and desire to follow Him.

7) To Know God Better—

Since the Bible is God's Word, studying it is a way to know God better. Through His words we come to know not only the nature and attributes of God, but we also come to understand His plan for each of us. In a larger sense, we also come to know God's plan in history, His sovereignty, His providence, His love and more. There is only so much we can learn about God apart from the Bible. But with it we can know God better.

8) Avoiding Error—

Studying the Bible also helps us avoid theological error. The Bible tells us, **1 Timothy 4:16, NLT** “**Keep a close watch on how you live and on your teaching. Stay true to what is right for the sake of your own salvation and the salvation of those who hear you.**” adding that we, as **Titus 2:1 states, NLT** “**...promote the kind of living that reflects wholesome teaching.**” If the Bible is our authority for faith and life, then the inspired words it contains will help us to avoid error. In a pluralistic world with many religious and non-religious ideas competing for attention, studying the Bible provides us with a firm foundation in God's truth rather than the errors of the world. Knowing the Bible also helps us respond to error and answer questions that skeptics and others may have about it.

As Apollos was called, in **Acts 18:24**, “**Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and MIGHTY IN THE SCRIPTURES...**”

That is my prayer, that we too can be called mighty in the scriptures.