



# How Do I READ & STUDY The Bible?

WHY SHOULD I BELIEVE IN THE BIBLE?



"The Bible has captivated and perplexed readers for centuries. Some people have a hard time reconciling the apparent discrepancies, inconsistencies, and contradictions. However, rather than dismissing these as flaws, delving into the study of the Bible is crucial, as it unlocks profound wisdom, reveals historical and cultural contexts, and encourages personal growth and spiritual development.

By wrestling with apparent discrepancies, readers develop critical thinking skills and strengthen their faith, ultimately enhancing their connection with the divine.

While discrepancies may initially challenge our understanding, they serve as invitations to explore, investigate, and learn. Engaging in the study of the Bible provides a rich and rewarding experience, allowing us to uncover deeper truths, unravel historical contexts, and embark on a transformative spiritual journey.

My hope is that this Module will help you embrace these apparent contradictions, so you can uncover the timeless wisdom contained within the pages of God's Word."

*Rick Carroll*

# Key Topics



**01**

WHY IS STUDYING THE BIBLE AN IMPORTANT PRACTICE FOR BELIEVERS?

**02**

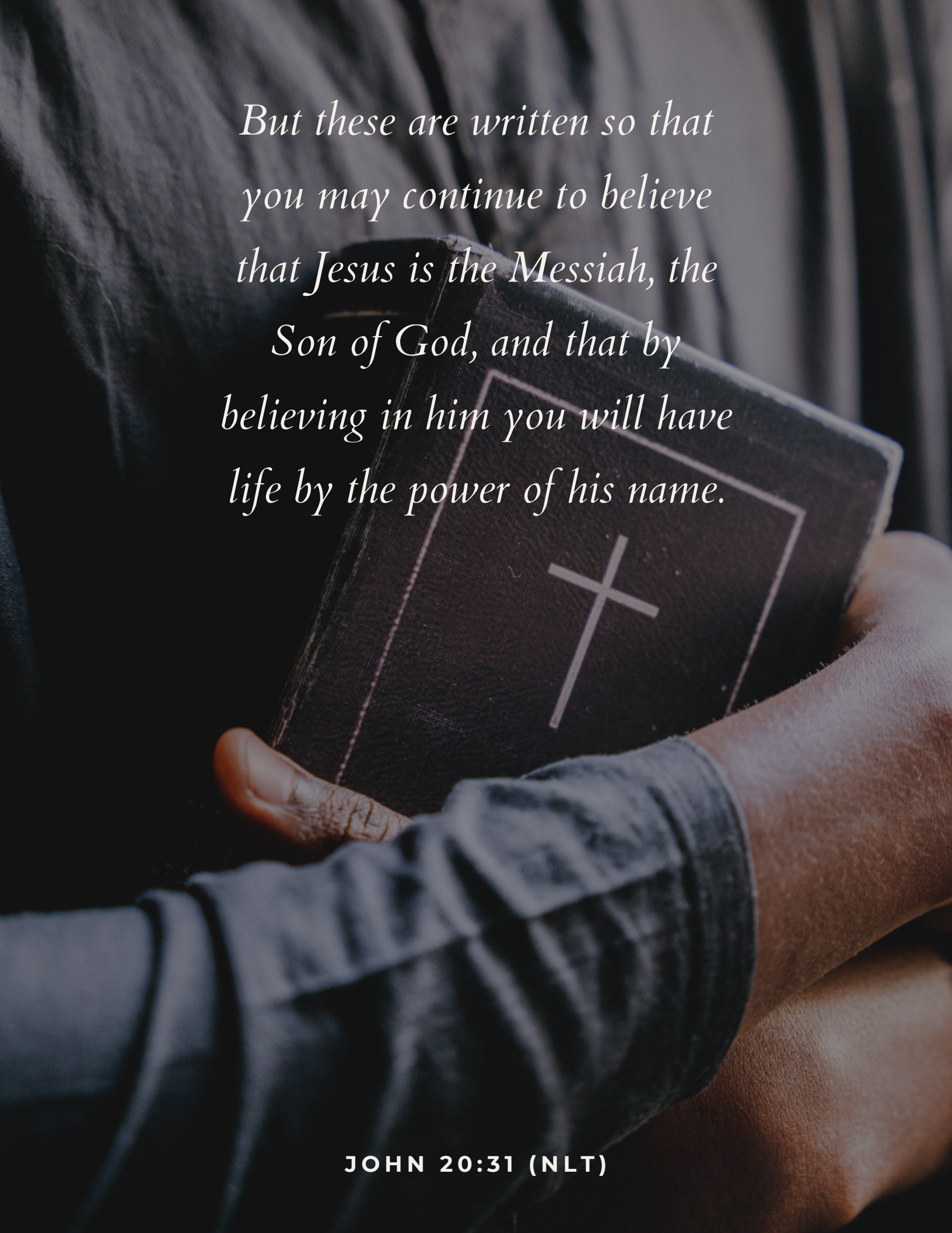
WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF BIBLE STUDY METHODS?



**03**

HOW DO WE RECONCILE PERCEIVED DISCREPANCIES WITH BIBLICAL PASSAGES?





*But these are written so that  
you may continue to believe  
that Jesus is the Messiah, the  
Son of God, and that by  
believing in him you will have  
life by the power of his name.*

**JOHN 20:31 (NLT)**

# 01

## *Why Is Studying The Bible An Important Practice For Believers?*

In our churches, we often rely on others to teach us about the Bible, instead of us reading it for ourselves. There are a few reasons why daily Bible reading makes such a difference in someone's personal faith journey:

### **God communicates with us through the Scriptures.**

*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.*

2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NLT)

### **Jesus aligned his life to the teachings of Scripture.**

*But Jesus told him, “No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” Matthew 4:4 (NLT)*

### **First Century believers studied the Scriptures**

*And the people of Berea were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica, and they listened eagerly to Paul’s message. They searched the Scriptures day after day to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth. Acts 17:11 (NLT)*

### **The scriptures reveal Jesus and salvation to us.**

*“You search the Scriptures because you think they give you eternal life. But the Scriptures point to me!” John 5:39 (NLT)*

## **The Scriptures give us encouragement and hope.**

*I have written this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know you have eternal life. 1 John 5:13 (NLT)*

## **The Scriptures provide correction and discipline.**

*For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. Hebrews 4:12 (NLT)*

## **The Scriptures provide protection, power and authority.**

*Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm...Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Ephesians 6:13,17 (NLT)*

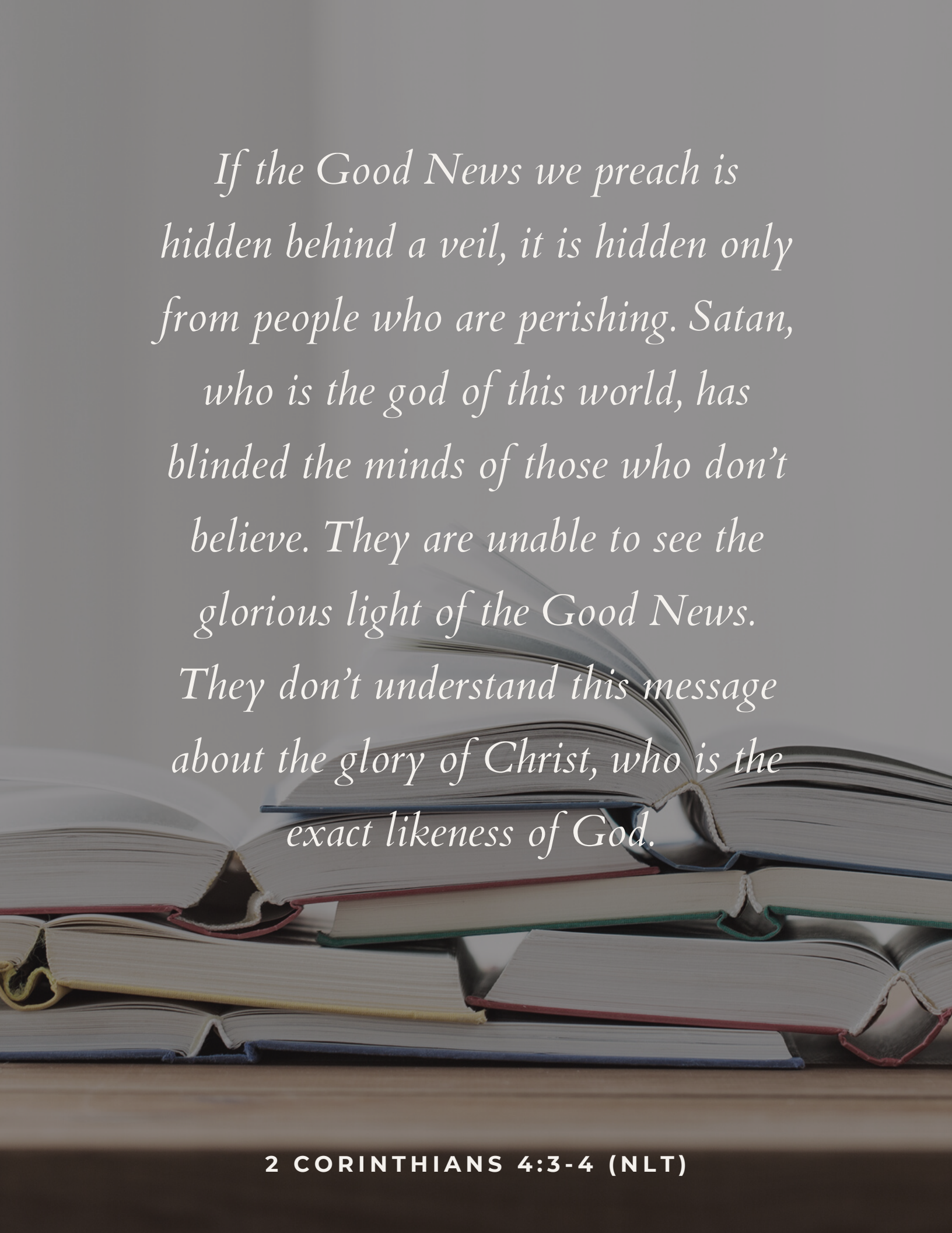
## **How can we really know Him, unless we read His Word?**

*I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God. Ephesians 3:16-19 (NLT)*



# Reflection #1

Have you made regular Bible reading part of the rhythm of your faith? If no, why not?



*If the Good News we preach is hidden behind a veil, it is hidden only from people who are perishing. Satan, who is the god of this world, has blinded the minds of those who don't believe. They are unable to see the glorious light of the Good News. They don't understand this message about the glory of Christ, who is the exact likeness of God.*



## 02

# What Are The Different Types Of Bible Study Methods?

Studying the Bible is not just informative, it's transformative!

### Two approaches to studying the Bible:

1. **Deductive** - topical studies
2. **Inductive** - passage or book studies

### Key steps to studying the Bible:

- **Observation** - what are the main things you notice while reading the passage?
- **Interpretation** - what did the passage mean to the original reader, and to you?
- **Application** - how does the passage affect your life today?
- **Correlation** - how does the passage relate to the rest of the Bible?

At PORTICO we suggest following the simple acronym S.O.A.P. for your daily devotions:

S**cripture** - what Bible verse(s) stood out to you?

O**bservation** - what did you learn when you reflected on the Bible verse(s)?

A**pplication** - how can you apply the Bible verse(s) to your life today?

P**ray**er = write down your prayer to God, asking Him to help you apply this truth.



# Reflection #2

Are there changes you could make to your Bible reading habit to make it more life giving to you?

Now we see things imperfectly, like  
puzzling reflections in a mirror,  
but then we will see everything  
with perfect clarity. All that I know  
now is partial and incomplete, but  
then I will know everything  
completely, just as God now knows  
me completely.



2 CORINTHIANS 13:12 (NLT)

# 03

## *How Do We Reconcile Perceived Discrepancies Between Biblical Passages?*

Some Biblical concepts are difficult to understand, because we do not see things the way God sees them.

Some Biblical accounts seem to contradict one another, for the following reasons:

- **Different eyewitness accounts** focus on different details.
- **Cultural differences** between the Greeks, Romans and Hebrews result in different perspectives.
- The Apostles' **different viewpoints** is reflected in their writings (e.g. Paul and James differed in their teaching on faith and works in relation to salvation).
- **Different interpretations** of the original texts resulted in different translations.
- **Different styles of translation** of the original texts (paraphrase vs literal).

### Digital Bible Study Guides

Blue Letter Bible - [www.blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org) - commentary

Bible Gateway - [biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com) - translations

Got Questions - [gotquestions.org/](http://gotquestions.org/)

The Gospel Coalition - [thegospelcoalition.org](http://thegospelcoalition.org) - articles to give insight



# Reflection #3

Are there concepts in the Bible that have confused you before, that you could go back and study again after completing this course?



# PORTICO's Bible Study Aids

[PORTICO.CC/APPDOWNLOAD](https://portico.cc/appdownload)

[PORTICO.CC/YOUTUBE](https://portico.cc/youtube)

[PORTICO.CC/GROUPS](https://portico.cc/groups)



*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.*

**2 TIMOTHY 2:15 (NIV)**

*This is what our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you with the wisdom God gave him—speaking of these things in all of his letters. Some of his comments are hard to understand, and those who are ignorant and unstable have twisted his letters to mean something quite different, just as they do with other parts of Scripture. And this will result in their destruction.*

**2 PETER 3:15B-16 (NLT)**

*Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do.*

**JOSHUA 1:8 (NLT)**

*My child, never forget the things I have taught you. Store my commands in your heart. If you do this, you will live many years, and your life will be satisfying.*

**PROVERBS 3:1-2 (NLT)**

*Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers. But they delight in the law of the LORD, meditating on it day and night. They are like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season. Their leaves never wither, and they prosper in all they do.*

**PSALMS 1:1-3 (NLT)**