

Understanding the Deep Things of God (mandatory prerequisite, and requirements)

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. (1 Cor 2:9,10)

The first part of this scripture refers to the heart of unregenerate man. The second refers to those of us who are born again. The unregenerate man can hear and understand the basics of the gospel, but if he does not call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to receive his free gift of salvation, he cannot understand the deep things of God, for they are revealed to us by God's Holy Spirit, which the unregenerate man does not have.

The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor 2:14)

So, "how to understand the Bible" begins with a mandatory prerequisite: a "heart-set" so-to-speak (as opposed to, or not merely, a mind-set).

The problem: sin

There is none righteous, no, not one. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Rom 3:10, 23)

The penalty: death

For the wages of sin is death; (Rom 6:23)

The promise: life

But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom 3:23) God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Rom 5:8) For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16) He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (John 3:18) He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. (John 3:36)

So therefore...

If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (Rom 10:9)

Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. (John 3:5-7)

So then, the mandatory prerequisite is that ye must be born again. Only then is one even *able* to understand the deep things of God, that lie sealed within the scriptures against the *natural* man's understanding, but which are revealed to those whose *hearts* are set upon God.

Understanding the scriptures, then, requires the “heart-set” of the believer:

1. Fear God.

O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me... (Deut 5:29)
The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him. (Ps 25:14)
The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge. (Prov 1:7)
Behold, the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom. (Job 28:28)
What man is he that feareth the LORD? Him shall he teach... (Ps 25:12)
Yea, if thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; if thou
 seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou
 understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD
 giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding. (Prov 2:3-6)

2. Believe the Bible (that it is the very word of God).

Through faith we understand... (Heb 11:3)
Above all, taking the shield of faith... (Eph 6:16)
O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. (Luke 24:25)

3. Be meek.

The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way. (Ps 25:9)
The meek shall eat and be satisfied. (Ps 22:26)
The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach
 good tidings unto the meek. (Isa 61:1)
Be not wise in thine own eyes... (Prov 3:7)
I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from
 the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. (Matt 11:25)

4. Pray.

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God ... and it shall be given him. (James 1:5)
Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. (Ps 119:18)
Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.
 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.
 (Jer 29:12-13)
Ask, and it shall be given you... for every one that asketh receiveth... (Matt 7:7)
Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart... (1 Kings 3:9)
Blessed art thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes. (Ps 119:12)

5. Obey.

I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts. (Ps 119:100)
A good understanding have all they that do his commandments. (Ps 111:10)
Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. (James 1:22)

6. Meditate on memorized scripture.

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart... (Deut 6:6)
And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures... (2 Tim 3:15)
Be instant in season, out of season... (2 Tim 4:2)
Thy word have I hid in my heart... (Ps 119:11)
I will meditate in thy precepts... I will not forget thy word. (Ps 119:15-16)
I meditate on all thy works; I muse on the work of thy hands. (Ps 143:5)
I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.
(Ps 119:99)

7. Read the Bible again and again.

When ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ. (Eph 3:4)
He shall read therein all the days of his life... (Deut 17:19)
Let the word of God dwell in you richly... (Col 3:16)
Till I come, give attendance to reading... (1 Tim 4:13)
Bind [the word] continually upon thine heart. (Prov 6:21)
They... searched the scriptures daily... (Acts 17:11)
Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Tim 2:15)
Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear... (Rev 1:3)

As an encouragement, consider the following testimony of two women...

My grandmother and mother are examples that bring to mind Timothy's grandmother Lois and mother Eunice, and their influence and example whereby Paul could say to Timothy "that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures" (2 Timothy 3:15). My mother related that since she received Jesus Christ as her Saviour as young child, she read the Bible through every year of her life, until she could no longer see to read it anymore. For 60 years or more. Sixty-plus complete read-throughs! And after that, she heard the Bible as my father would read it to her, and then she listened completely through every year via her CD player after my father's passing. And I have inherited both her and her mother's Bibles, which I treasure for reminding me of their examples (as well as for being the very words of God, not merely the English translation thereof). Through my mother's diligence, I also from a child have known the holy scriptures. However, for 40 years "in the wilderness" I was not diligent in reading them over and over again (#7 above) as my mother's example should have led me to do. But regardless... "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." My mother's training of me as a child led to my obedience to the gospel - my acceptance of Jesus Christ as my Saviour - which is bearing fruit (finally) now that I am old. My mother was able to see her work bearing fruit in her last years, as I was approaching Jordan and looking to cross over it into the promised land where the true word of God is to be found - the land that floweth with milk and honey (the nourishment of God's word).

My mother's blindness made me think of another - a blind girl named Joan Waste, who was able to recite many chapters of the New Testament from memory (#6 above). She purchased a New Testament with money earned by knitting. From her meager living she "would give a penny or two" to pay people to read the Bible to her. She has been described as a burning beacon (literally as well as figuratively) at the age of twenty-two, at the stake in the town of Derby, England where she was executed for her faith under the reign of Catholic queen "Bloody" Mary.

What must I do to be saved?

In Acts 16:30, the Philippian jailor asked, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?
In Acts 16:31, the sirs answered and said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

Please note well, that they did not say, "there is nothing you must do: God will save you, or he won't: you have no say - no choice - in the matter. You cannot do anything to be saved."

Salvation comes to you as God's response to your obedience of faith in his word: it is not something that God gives without you having any choice in the matter, or without you having to do something first.

The Bible makes it clear: you must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Believing on/in/upon the Lord Jesus Christ involves a response to the gospel of salvation that is heard – what the scripture calls the obedience of faith. Jesus Christ's *call* is open to *all* who will obey it: For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Romans 10:13)

If there is any one that has not heard, let him hear and know; hearken unto the Lord: and if there is any that has not done the one (and only one) thing that the Lord requires, let him hear and do; heed the Lord's call to come unto him... [If any man thirst, let him come unto me; (John 7:37) Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28)] There is a sequence: (1) the Lord Jesus Christ calls all to come unto him voluntarily (let him come unto me); (2) a person wanting to come unto Jesus Christ and be saved then voluntarily obeys and does what the scriptures require and calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to be saved; (3) Jesus Christ then saves him from the sentence of death and hell, and gives him the free gift of eternal life and heaven.

Let us allow the Lord Jesus Christ himself to speak by his written word...

there is none that doeth good, no, not one. (Psalm 14:3)

There is none righteous, no, not one. (Romans 3:10)

we are all as an unclean *thing*, and all our righteousnesses *are* as filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6)

For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)

The wages of sin is death... (Romans 6:23)

...but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

If any man thirst, let him come unto me; (John 7:37)

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. (Matthew 11:28)

...what must I do to be saved? (Acts 16:30)

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. (Acts 16:31)

The word is nigh thee... (Romans 10:8)

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. (Romans 10:9)

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Romans 10:10)

...he that believeth not is condemned already (John 3:18)

But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of (2 Corinthians 7:10)

For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. (Romans 10:11)

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. (Romans 4:6)

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. (Romans 4:7)

There is now therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1)

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. (Romans 10:12)

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Romans 10:13)

Choose you this day whom ye will serve (Joshua 24:15)

...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation. (2 Corinthians 6:2)

Will you call upon the name of the Lord to be saved from eternal damnation and receive his free gift of everlasting life? If you do so, please consider contacting me: I would love to hear from you that I have a new brother or sister in Christ Jesus.