

# Mark It Up!

*How to Get More from Your Bible Reading*

## **Come Desperate And Needy**

*Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / March 2, 2025*

### **I. Come Desperate And Needy**

So much of the Bible only makes sense after you come to the end of yourself and realize how hopeless and helpless you are!

A sense of duty or “Just Do It!” will never keep you reading God’s Word. But desperation can get you there and keep you there in a way that leads to delight.

It’s worth noting that the longest chapter in the Bible is all about God’s Word. **Psalms 119** has **176 verses** that go on and on about God’s Word.

Read **Psalms 119:18-20, 25, 28, 40, 50, 67, 71, 81-82, 107, 131, 145, 147-148**.

The Psalmist didn’t just fall in love with God’s Word because he read it. He fell in love with it because he longed for it and ran to it in the midst of suffering and intense adversity.

If you cling to it, long for it, and pant after it in the midst of suffering, you will start delighting in it!

### **II. Look For Contradictions To Human Thinking**

They shouldn’t be hard to find, because God’s ways are not our ways, so it’s sprinkled all throughout the Bible!

#### **A. Do Not Follow Your Heart**

**Proverbs 28:26** (p. 1217) “He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered.”

**Proverbs 23:19** (p. 875) “Hear, my son, and be wise; and guide your heart in the way.”

**Psalms 119:112** (p. 1140) “I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes...”

**Jeremiah 7:24** (p. 1068) “Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but followed the counsels and the dictates of their evil hearts, and went backward and not forward.”

*ESV* “... walked in their own counsels and the stubbornness of their evil hearts...”

*NIV* “... they followed the stubborn inclinations of their evil hearts...”

When it comes to our heart, the Bible says guide it, guard it, and tell it where to go! But do not follow it or you'll end up going backwards instead of forward.

## B. Following God Does Not Lead To An Easy Life

**1 Corinthians 16:9** (p. 938) "For a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries."

## C. God Uses Ordinary People More Than Anyone Else

**Romans 16** (pp. 864-865)

After digging into the glorious riches of our salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, Paul sticks the landing with **34 people** he felt compelled to call by name, even though they are not famous!

Even though you don't know them, Paul loved them and God knows them because these were ordinary people plugged into some of the first local churches all over Asia, living for the glory of God.

In a world filled with celebrity worship and promoting your own name, God still uses ordinary men and women to turn this world upside down, for His glory.

You don't have to be famous to make a difference with your life. You just need to be faithful.

Think about this: **Hebrews 11** gives us a list of **16** men and women you've heard of like Noah, Abraham, Moses, Sarah, and Rahab. But **Romans 16** gives us **34** unknown, ordinary men and women who got listed in the Bible.

When the Bible does a roll call on who makes a difference in this world, it gives us ordinary men and women two to one: **34 to 16**. Because God's not like us. He loves to do extraordinary things through ordinary, unknown people.

## III. Look For Conjunctions That Change Your Conclusion

Our God is a big God, but He uses little words in the Bible to signal to us that there's something big coming!

Look for conjunctions like in, but, and therefore. Because usually whatever follows is something we should stop and chew on to make sure we get all the good out of it.

### A. "But God" When You Think That Evil Rules

**Genesis 50:20** (p. 84) “But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good...”

**B. “But God” When You Start To Doubt His Love**

**Romans 5:8** (p. 817) “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

**C. “But God” When You Think There’s No Way Out**

**1 Corinthians 10:13** (p. 902) “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

**D. “But God” When You Think You Can’t Go On**

**Psalms 73:26** (p. 621) “My flesh and my heart fail; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.”

**IV. Look For Examples To Follow**

A. **Mark 5:18** (p. 194) “And when He got into the boat, he who had been demon-possessed begged Him that he might be with Him.”

B. **Luke 10:38-42** (p. 364) **v. 42** “But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”

*NIV* “... Mary has chosen what is better...”

*NLT* “There is only one thing worth being concerned about...”