

Five Questions To Ask When Reading The Bible.

How exactly does the Bible—an ancient book written thousands of years ago—reveal God’s way to people today? There are several key questions we must ask, the answers to which reveal to us the way. Here they are:

1. Is there a command to obey?

The Bible is filled with divine commands for you and me to obey. There is no question what God’s will is in these areas. Our obedience to His commandments leads us precisely into the center of His will.

For example, “Do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18). This is clear-cut. Non-negotiable. Black and white. There is no doubt what God’s will is in this matter. His track will always be found within the boundaries of obedience to His commandments.

2. Is there an example to follow?

A major portion of the Bible is written in story form—narrative and bibliographical literature. The first seventeen books of the Old Testament are narrative; the first five of the New Testament are bibliographical and narrative. These historical books contain the lives of real people who followed God. Their godly lives are recorded as an example for us to follow (Romans 15:4). As we imitate their lives, their walks of faith reveal God’s track to us.

Take Daniel, for example. As I read that this exiled prophet placed a higher allegiance on obeying God than obeying government, his life reveals God’s way to me for today. When I am confronted with a similar tension between the earthly and the heavenly, I must choose to obey God, not men. Always.

3. Is there a promise to claim?

As a father’s will governs the management of his vast estate, so too is the Bible filled with promises from God to His children—to bless, to enrich, to satisfy. God’s estate is a vast reservoir of spiritual riches able to meet all the needs of our life. Charles Spurgeon once compared these divine promises to blank checks issued by God to His children. Already signed by God, they are to be cosigned by His children, brought to heaven’s treasury, and drawn against the limitless wealth of heaven’s account.

For example, Jesus says, “Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (John 14:13). Just think about the large inheritance that Christ desires to share with us. Of course, the key is praying in Jesus’ name—praying for those things which honor and glorify His name.

4. Is there a sin to avoid?

The Bible holds up before us certain sins that must be avoided at all costs. They are clearly out of bounds. For example, “This is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality” (1 Thessalonians 4:3). God’s will is always found where sexual purity is maintained. This is a no-brainer. Any step toward immorality is definitely out of bounds and off track.

5. Is there a principle to follow?

A principle in the Bible is a timeless truth tightly stated. It is a short, pithy, practical statement of truth drawn from a passage and used to guide our lives. Principles are broad statements of truth that universally apply to every situation we face. For example, Joshua led the children of God in a march around the city of Jericho, giving a shout of victory as they trusted God to fight for them. The principle is that we should worship before we do anything else. We should praise God in the face of the impossible and watch Him act on our behalf. From Steven Lawson. Reprinted from Ligonier Ministries.