

Nature and Description of the Scriptures: The Purity of Scripture

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[0 : 0 0] All right, we're good to go. All right, let me go ahead and... All right, so everyone has a sheet and their Bible and we're ready to go. Well, it's definitely great to be here tonight. It's installment six of the Nature, Purpose, and Power of Scripture. You know, we started off part one was the origin of scriptures, learning about divine inspiration of the Word of God and how the Holy Spirit carried along the authors to write or to dictate to their scribes the word that was to be written. Then we went over the author of scriptures, learning about Moses. We went over the prophets, the apostles, and Christ being the author as well. Then we went over the names and titles of scriptures. So we just finished that portion where we learned about the implanted Word, the spiritual milk of the Word, the Word of God, and the Word of Christ which dwells in us. We learned about the Word of Truth which is the gospel message. And this last week we finished off the holy scriptures and the oracles of God. And this makes mention to the Old Testament, but it can also make mention to the entirety of scripture. And so tonight we're going to talk about the nature and the description of the scriptures. So you find that in your note just right at the top or Roman numeral three characteristics and we're going over that first one which is pure, the purity of scripture. The main verses we'll be going over is Psalms chapter 12 verse 6, Psalm 19, chapter 19 verse 9, and then

Psalm 51, chapter 51 verse 10. So we're gonna learn about that. We're learning about the purity of scripture. We'll go on next week about how God's Word is true, how it's perfect and sure, living and active, or some translations say quick and powerful. But for tonight we're just going to go over the purity of scripture and just how it's all connected together. But before we go any further, what I want us to do I'd like for us to open in prayer and we'll go ahead and get started. So we pray, Father we come before you tonight. We're ready to open our Bibles to learn more about who you are and what you have done.

We ask that you help us to understand the depths of your Word and to challenge us to know you and to grow in faith in you. As we have learned the titles and the names of your holy Word, may we learn more about the purity of your Word, the truth that is found in the Word of God, in your Word, and how they are perfect, how your Word is sure, how it is living and active. And as we learn we ask that our hearts will be open to live and to love like you. We wish to be more like your Son Jesus the Christ and not to have hardened hearts or bitterness. We ask that you're with us tonight as we learn more from your Word. It is in Jesus' name that we pray and we all say together amen. Amen. So we're first going to start off, it's going to be Psalms chapter 12 verse 6. It's going to be found in page 534 of the ESV Pew Bible.

Let's read Psalm chapter 12 verse 6. So let's read this together. The words of the Lord are pure words like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times. And that leads us to our first question for reflection. Have you ever paused to consider what pure means when we're talking about the Word of God? Why do you think? Why might God emphasize the purity of His Word to us?

So feel free to take a moment to write down your thoughts or you can interact and whatever comes to mind, however, whatever works for you the best. So let's take a moment and reflect on that. Sometimes the heat gets turned on in our lives if it will, but sometimes we go through things because it's supposed to kind of mold us and I know that's very heavy language, but it is true. And in the same way we're seeing here that the purity of God's Word is something that it's not tarnished, it's not dirty if you will. And when we are becoming more like the Lord, we are going to have those little imperfections if you will taken out and where we become more holy, where we become more Christ-like. And so that's... these are very good answers. These are definitely good answers. So to start off with, this is one of the Psalms of David and this verse is saying that the words, right, the speech, the commands of the Word, these words are of God and they are pure. There are some translations that will say clean or will say flawless. Do any of your translations say in Psalms chapter 12 verse 6 anything different? Does it say pure, clean, flawless? Does it say anything different? So depending upon the translation, I think the main idea is certainly the same that it has like this verse is saying, silver that is refined in a furnace. So without error, right, without flaw, when you're thinking of, again, precious metal,

[6 : 28] I think that's a very good example that the Lord is presenting to us. If you're buying fine silver or fine gold, you don't want it to have any imperfection. That's what would make a piece of... any piece of jewelry valuable is how perfect it is or how pure it is or how flawless it is. So that's something to keep in mind. So there's other translations that say other maybe not as common translations that would say God's Word is trusted or sure and those are... I would say those are good ways of looking at it as well. To have a better understanding of the meaning of purity in the Hebrew word, it's defined as pure. It is defined as clean or without... without blemish, right, without any sort of error, so to speak. It's the kind of purity that's also defined, I'll get this, as the kind moral or chemically pure also used in a ceremonial sense. So when we see this word, it's very often used in the Old Testament Levitical Law or the Law in

Deuteronomy, which is about being ritually pure. So you find that specific word used in the Old Testament Law. But here we're finding that purity is used in the purity, the cleanliness, the perfection, if you will, the trust of God's Word. Now I'd like for us to turn to 1st John chapter 1 verse 5 here because what's very interesting is when we're talking about how God's Word is pure, well it's part... we know that the Word of God comes from the Lord and certainly there's a great reminder for us when we... I absolutely love this verse because it helps... 1210, not 1220... it helps in our faith to understand this. So 1st John chapter 1 verse 5, it says, this is the message we have heard from Him and proclaim to you that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. Now what's very interesting about this is it's similar to being pure, right? When we're talking about the holiness of God and how God's way is perfect, it's another word to describe the attribute or the characteristic of God. So if you're looking at a light, well it has to be pure. Have you ever seen if you're using a flashlight and there's a speck of... maybe there's dirt or mud on it, right?

It doesn't do what it's supposed to do. So God being light without having any darkness of Him is kind of connected to the idea of God being pure and God's word being pure. And so that helps us in our faith journey. And that leads us to the next question that comes up here. If God is pure and light with no darkness, how does this challenge us? Or how does this comfort you? Or how does this comfort us in your walk with Him or in your walk with the Lord? So feel free to take a moment and write that down or express your thoughts on this because it can be a challenge for some but it can also be a comfort for others. It definitely helps us. It helps us speak to other people about who God is. You'll have some people every so often who'll say, well isn't God evil? Well no, God's not evil. Or does

God sin? Or does God do... it's just simple questions that we hear it and we're like, well no. Well here's a verse that's like absolutely not. God will not tempt you, for example. God will test you but He will not tempt you to sin. That would be clearly against not only this verse but other verses in Scripture. And so when we're thinking about the goodness of God, the truth of God, we know that God is not a liar and we know from this verse that there's no darkness in Him. So to the ones that are... they have in their mind thinking, oh well God must have some evil qualities or God must be like me who's imperfect. Well no, it's really simple, you know. So if you ever speak to someone who is saying, well you know, God must have sinned or God must have made a mistake. Well I don't know what God you believe in but that's not the God that I believe in. Because the God that I believe in is good, the God that I believe in is holy, and He is pure, He is clean. And this is one of those many verses that would show the holiness of God. And so that's...

it is comforting, isn't it? You know, knowing about that. I'll also add this, which I think will help. When you look at other... the Pantheon, right? The many gods, right? Think of Roman gods and goddesses, the Greek gods and goddesses.

[12 : 11] They were very much like humans with superpowers, if you will, right? They had the ability very strong or they could control the sea, but they weren't perfect.

And I think that's so interesting when you're looking at even the antiquity, right? Those old gods and goddesses that they were not perfect in any sense of the word and yet they still worship them. But we worship God who is perfect, right?

And so I just find that to be very interesting just how... I would say that it's very common for humans understanding, for man's understanding, to think of God like that. Well, how could God be different than me? You know, aren't we all the same?

Well, no, we're not. And you know, that the Greek mythology or the Roman mythology is a great example of kind of making gods, if you will, that are very human-like.

But with our God being three in one, right? Just like the Trinity or being the creator of the universe or is giving the way for forgiveness of sins is very different than what you learn about in those kind of mythologies of old. So, right, they fought with each other. They got angry like people did.

[13 : 36] So those gods were no different, right? With how we understand other humans. So you almost have to look at it like people who are in positions of power.

Like, oh, they're elevated, if you will, in society, but they're still imperfect. You still hear about, oh, you know, this politician embezzled money or, you know, this CEO committed adultery, right? Or whatever it is. It's no different than how the Greek and Roman mythologies, right, how they elevated their gods, but they were still imperfect, right? And so there is darkness in them, if you will.

And so that's really good. So although the first John passage does not specifically use the word pure or clean, it still helps us with our understanding of who God is and to understand that his word. Because God is good, therefore his word is good. God is pure, God is light, God is love, he is holy, and he is sovereign.

And since God is pure, the words that God speaks are pure. And there are two verses I want to share with you that will help us with our understanding of the purity of God's word. We're gonna go ahead and turn to Psalm 19. So Psalm chapter 19 verse 9. And that's gonna be in page 538 in the ESV Pew Bible. And I'll put that up on the screen right now. Psalm 19.9. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever. The rules of the Lord are true and righteous all together. Now if you look previously, you'll see verse 7, the law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul, the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple, the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing in the heart, enlightening of the eyes.

So a lot of this is talking about the law of the Lord, so also the the laws that were found in the Old Testament. But the fear of the Lord being clean, this second verse is it's pure and it says it endures forever. I'm curious what your other translations say, what it says. The fear of the Lord is what? Is it say clean? Does it say pure, flawless? The idea of this is just so interesting, right? The fear of the Lord being pure, being clean, and it enduring forever, right? It might say your translation might say it endures forever or enduring forever, but the same idea is still there. And the rules of the Lord are true and righteous all together. So okay, we're learning about the word of God being pure, but to have the fear of the Lord is also pure. So having the fear of the Lord it's clean, it's pure, and it endures forever. So that leads us to our next question. Well then wait just a minute, how do you fear the Lord in your life?

[16 : 44] In what ways does God's splendor and majesty influence you? So I want you to take a moment, reflect on that, write down or speak to it. God will be with you in every season of your life, and that I didn't write this, I didn't make this up, but someone once said that when you're being Christ-like, you're a believer in Christ, you're on a path to sin less, but never to be sinless. And I thought that was such a nice little play on words there, because we will continue to sin, you know, but it should be less than it was before, you know, especially before you knew the Lord. But certainly there are situations where people struggle with sin, and that is a reality. But knowing that God is there for us and is there to guide us through His Word and through prayer, and even with the church being the community of believers helping each other out is also something that's very beautiful. This language of the fear of the Lord unfortunately has been taken in a very negative light, right, to be a frayed of

God. And I'll make it very clear, the only time you should fear God as in being a frayed of Him is if you don't know Him. Okay, now that's different than the fear of the Lord, which you find scattered throughout the wisdom literature.

The fear of the Lord is, it's a different kind of fear, and I'll read what I wrote on here to kind of help out. When we read verses that speak of the fear of the Lord, we're talking about a reverence that is defined as the awe and the wonder of the Father, right, of the Lord. So think of it like this, the fear of the Lord is not the kind of fear that pushes us away or draws us away from God, rather it's the kind of awe, wonder, it is astonishment of who God is and what He has done for us, and it draws us closer and it draws us near to Him. It's very different than, like I said, it's different than being afraid of God by not knowing Him. When we're talking about specifically that phrasing the fear of the Lord, we have to look at it as reverence, respect, I use awe and wonder a lot or astonishment of the splendor and the majesty. Now there have been

Christians that I have met who when they read the fear of the Lord, they automatically think I must be afraid of the Lord even if I am a Christian, and that would be that would be inaccurate, that would be incorrect. It would be at that point what the fear of the Lord is to the Christian would be different than being afraid of hell or afraid of what life is after death by not knowing God.

So I hope that makes sense because I know that's a very, that can be a very touchy topic, especially for those who were taught that if you need to be afraid of God even as a Christian, and unfortunately that can happen, I can't think of an instance where that's happened specifically to me, but I do know people who have felt that way before. There's one, if she watches this online, she'll know exactly who I'm talking about. There's a there's a Christian that I knew who she read verses that talked about the fear of the Lord, and she was, she's like, well I'm a Christian. I don't, why do I need to be afraid of him if I'm on his side? And we had a lovely talk about that, about what that meant. As we go further in this, you'll see there's a nice connection about knowing the Lord, and that I almost want to say that the fear of the Lord is not an accurate way of describing it, but I don't want to change what scripture's saying. That's why, that's why I have to be very careful with certain words like that. They have certain meanings. When we read them, they mean a certain thing. But with this woman that I knew, she's a young lady. She went to youth group, and she had to kind of, she was, she knew other people who were taught the fire and brimstone. And if I sin, I'm going to hell. If I, if I do wrong, God's gonna throw me out of, you know, into the pit, if you will. And unfortunately, that's more extreme. I think, I think that'd be an accurate way of saying it. I don't want to say a specific denomination, but there are, there are ones out there that talk about that if you, if you sin, you're separate from

[22:11] God, therefore you're probably not going to go to heaven. Well, scripture actually talks about how no one can, no one can pluck you out of God's hand. I'm trying to remember, it's in John. I think it's John six. But the idea is when you make a decision for Christ, when you believe in him, you are secure in the arms of the Father, and God will protect you. He will, he will shield you even. And I think that's, we don't want to look at, we don't want to look at those kind of verses and being afraid when we don't need to be afraid. There's really, there's no need to be afraid of the Lord if you know him. It's no different than how some people, when they come to faith, they don't like calling God Father because they might have had an abusive Father, right? Or they would say, oh, I can call him, or maybe I don't want to call him Lord, can't I just call him God, or can't

I just call him something else other than that? Well, I mean, I would say that's one reason why God has many different names, you know, that would be one great thing. But one thing I want you all to know is that there is a connection with the fear of the Lord that's found in the Old Testament with having saving knowledge of the Lord. For when we know who God is, we come to believe him through faith. And here's where I'll show you. Let's turn to this next verse. In creating this, I was going to go over the purity of the word, the truth of the word, the living and active. I was going to go through all of them, but once again, when I go through it, it comes out longer. But this will, I hope this helps in understanding the tie-in with the purity of scripture and the fear of the Lord and the knowledge of God. So Proverbs chapter 2 is, so it's Proverbs chapter 2 verses 4 through 6, but you know what, let's just go, um, yeah, I guess we can go to verse 8 because there's a period there.

All right, so what's happening here? Solomon is writing to his son, right? My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom, right? And inclining your heart to understanding, right? Just like how we need to hear the word of God and we need to have our heart open to understand him. Verse 3, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, verse 4, critical, if you seek it like silver and search for it as hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find knowledge of God.

For the Lord gives wisdom, from his mouth comes, come knowledge and understanding. He stores up sound wisdom for the upright and he is what?

He is a shield to those who walk in integrity, guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of the saints.

[25 : 48] So that's powerful. Having the fear of the Lord and finding the knowledge of God, right? There's a connection there. So let's bring it all together. God's word is pure, it is clean, it is perfect, right? Just as God is light and God is pure. God is sovereign, God is holy. And for us to have the fear of the Lord, to seek God or to seek Christ who is, as we've studied before, the wisdom of God, it is much like how we are to seek first the kingdom of God, then we will have knowledge of him and then we will come to faith in him. And I know that's a lot when I'm saying that, but it's a connection bringing what we would find in the Old Testament for having the fear of the Lord and having the saving knowledge of God, right? Because having that saving knowledge, that's where we come to believe in the Lord and we receive that gift of salvation.

So what this is all saying is, okay, wait just a minute. To have the fear of the Lord is to, it's almost like you're seeking God at that point, right? To have that awe and wonder for who God is. When we're considering the stars in the sky, the mountains or the sunrises in the sunset, and you're looking at how the heavens declare the glory of God, right?

Or how we are without excuse to see through observation that which is created, it helps lead us to the Lord. And so by being in awe and in reverence of creation, that leads us to the Creator.

That is actually a way that you would find the Lord before opening the word of God, right? You find sometimes people who they don't know the Lord yet, but they're on their way to know the Lord.

And when you're looking at the animals, the plants, and they're taking it all in and they're coming to realize, man, there's no way. I'm not being distracted by my phone. I'm seeing all that there is this splendor in the majesty as we've talked about.

[28 : 04] And so it's kind of, it's all connected there, right? Having that knowledge, well there must be something more to this, right? There must be something more to this life and it's just all kind of the little seeds, if you will, that leads you to come to know who the Lord is. It is through belief in Christ that we have the fear of the Lord, having that awe and that reverence in God.

It is through having that saving knowledge that we endure forever. And so that brings us right back to this first this first verse that is talking about God's words being pure. The words of the Lord are pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times. Do you see how all of this is connected? It's really remarkable. The word of God being clean and pure, it helps us to come to know Him. It helps us to grow in faith in Him. This allows for us to gain knowledge of the Lord through His word, much like the implanted word.

So this leads us to another verse I want to share with you. It's going to be Psalm 51-10, page 560. Some of you know this one.

Create in me a clean heart. Right now we'll read verse 10, but we'll expand in a moment. Create in me a clean heart, oh God, and renew a right spirit within me. And that comes with the question of can you recall a time when you felt the need for a clean heart, or you felt the need for a right spirit? What happened? What led you to this time?

Feel free to take a moment and reflect on this. Write this down in your notes, and if you feel led, go ahead and speak to it. I'll give you a moment.

[30 : 15] Right. When someone does wrong to you, or when someone hurts you, it's very easy to have that sense of bitterness, sense of anger towards someone, and it just rubs you the wrong way. Right.

Sometimes people lose sleep. They can't sleep at night. They can't think straight, and it's just like it's a good opportunity. It's a good time to pray to the Lord and ask for that clean heart, right, and renew that spirit in you. It's like what a wonderful prayer to pray. And so that's, I appreciate you sharing that.

It's a harder one to answer, right, because we can think of many times, right, where we are asking God to, you know, help us get right with him, for God to, for that clean heart, right, to ask God for that right spirit.

And so when we think about the context of this verse, it has to do with the sin that David committed, right, with Bathsheba. And how you know this is if you go, if you go back to your Bible and right at the beginning of Psalm 51, it says, to the choir master, a Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet went to him after he had gone into Bathsheba.

So it's pretty, pretty forward with that. And you're saying, okay, so here is where David feels that sense of remorse. He's praying to God, right, or he's singing to God, right, because it is a Psalm, to be restored. So this verse is tying into the purity of God, the purity of Scripture, where David is praying to God and asking for God to give him that clean heart. David is asking for a fresh start.

[32 : 18] And how often we need a fresh start, right, to have that pure heart. But it's not just a prayer that we read about David confessing his sins. It's a prayer that we ourselves, we can also ask the Lord whether we feel conviction for wrong that we have done or sin that we have committed against God.

David goes on and saying that he is asking for his spirit to be renewed. It's not just a prayer of forgiveness, it's a prayer for restoration.

It is to be repaired or to be rebuilt when we're talking about this idea of a renewed spirit. God, help restore me, right. I've done wrong, help fix me here, help rebuild me.

And in the same manner, isn't that a prayer that we should have when we're coming to know the Lord? Isn't that a prayer we should have when we sin or when we feel disconnected?

The more I was reading this, the more I was studying this, I came to realize and I want us to read this. And we're still on Psalm 51. Let's read from verse 1 to 12.

[33 : 28] You could say the entire thing is... We can read the whole thing, but I want us to focus on these 12 verses because you'll see why here. Have mercy on me, oh God, according to your steadfast love. According to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, you delight in truth, the inward being, in the inward being, and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart. Purge me with hisso, and I shall be clean.

Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness. Let the bones that you have broken rejoice. Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, oh God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence and take not your holy spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me with a willing spirit. Now, I don't know about you, but this Psalm sounds an awfully lot like a sinner's prayer.

I want you to really think about that. So, in your notes here, I've titled this a Davidic sinner's prayer, right?

It is an Old Testament sinner's prayer, but it's the one that David had prayed. And you'll see in here the connections with the themes that's found in a sinner's prayer.

[35 : 48] So, I find this very interesting for those of us who are familiar with saying a sinner's prayer. Well, where is that in Scripture? Well, here you can find very similar language here, right?

The acknowledgement of sin. In verse 3, I know my transgressions and my sin is ever before me. That's pretty clear right there.

Asking for forgiveness. Have mercy on me, oh God, according to your steadfast love, according to your abundant mercy, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. That's asking for forgiveness right there.

The recognition of God's righteousness against you. You only have I sin and done what is evil in your sight that you might be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. The desire for purification, right? The desire for a fresh start. Purge me with hissoab and I shall be clean.

Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow. Then asking for God's transformation. Create in me a clean heart, oh God, and renew a right spirit within me.

[37 : 10] And then he goes on the fear of separation from God. Is that the fear of the Lord? No, it's the fear of not knowing the Lord. Right? Cast me not away from your presence and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

He's saying I wish to be restored, right? I'm afraid of being cast out so to speak. And then finally the desire for joy and a renewed relationship restore to me the joy of your salvation and uphold me with a willing spirit. And I'm like if that's not abundantly clear in scripture, I don't know what is because that is a sinner's prayer. I mean sure there's some words that are added and some words that are a little bit different but certainly it's the same idea here. And man, I want to put this question up here. Do you see similarities between David's prayer and your own journey to Christ? Do you remember the words or the feelings you had when you first turned to God? Because we're talking about coming to the Lord through this, through the purity of the word.

It's just all interesting how that's connected. So yeah, do you see a similarity between this Davidic prayer, this Davidic sinner's prayer and your own journey to Christ?

It's good having that sense of discernment when you're hearing something. Christians need to be fed and sometimes what happens is either sometimes they're not fed enough or they're ready to go deeper. And when that doesn't happen that creates a very big problem.

I know for a lot of younger people being as educated as they are, that's a very big struggle. A lot of the younger ones I know where they have a master's or a doctorate's or they have all these degrees and they're so used to formal education that they're like, okay well yes I know Jesus loves me but can we go a little further than that? And what happens is sometimes those churches say, well no, this is what we're all about. We're just focusing on bringing as many people as possible. And I know quite a few people who have walked away from stopped going to church period or maybe they've gone to other churches and that. And so depth is very important when it comes to, you know, like I was beginning to mention it's a pastor's job to preach the word and to teach the word. And what happens very often is you might have one or the other one who's preaching the word of

[40 : 09] God and rightfully so and some that only focus on teaching and you got to have a nice blend of the two. Preaching in the sense that you're always calling people to make a decision for Christ to believe in the Lord, to get right with God, to confess their sins, to repent, right? All that there. Teaching of the word is for depth, you know, to when the congregation's hungry and they want to know they want to be fed. The, there are different approaches to this. Some would say, well you need to have something elementary on Sunday and you need to have something deep on Wednesday. That's a very common theme. There are others that argue, well, what if you make it easy on both ends? Or what if you make it deep on both ends?

It depends because for Bible study, for example, some would argue do a book on Wednesday. So let's say we're going over revelation on Wednesday, right? But on Sunday we're doing the fruits of the Spirit or we're going over, you know, five ways to come to know the Lord or just things like that where it's more topically based as opposed to book based.

That's fine. I mean, if that's what the Lord wants to have done through a pastor or what the pastor decides, that's fine.

But I would say personally, this is just my own opinion, is you need to have depth and present it simplistically as best as possible, whether that is a Bible study or a sermon. The only difference I would say between here and a Sunday is on a Sunday I would say make a decision for Christ here. I mean, we could do that. I was like, yeah, do you know the Lord? Let's make a decision for Christ. Let's pray Psalm 51 as a sinner's prayer. Let's get going. But I do try to have sermons and Bible studies to be in depth. I try to have it where it's the same, how would you say that? The same type of depth you'll find on both Wednesday and Sunday. It's just maybe what we're going over is different. I like having these themes for this. This would be, I call them Bible studies, but some people would argue, oh, this is this doctrine, is this theology, is this a Bible study? Well, at the end of the day, your theology and your doctrine should be formed by the Bible. Thank you very much.

But all that to say, it should be deep regardless. And I, some people disagree with what I'm saying and that's fine. I've, yeah, for this one it's more of, these are more themes.

[43 : 04] I mentioned that book that I got from the 20s. It has like a Bible study on demons, a Bible study on angels, a Bible study on the, on Christology and the fulfillment of prophecy and all these different things. And it's definitely hard to pick from all of them because there's so many of them. But even with those, it's like, as you're going through the Word, sometimes God's going to change your little outline. I can't tell you how many times the little outline you have on the top is not, it's not what I was provided.

It's changed so many times. The outline from the book from the 20s only had Psalms 12-6. But the wording for pure shows up, it shows up in the Levitical and Deuteronomy law.

But that same word showed up in Psalm 19-9 and Psalm 51-10. So it was very important to have that show up in such a study.

But yeah, it's, I try. Everybody has different difference of opinions. I know some, one church that I know that I can think of right off the top of my head, they do an actual like DVD series on their Wednesdays and then they'll do something specifically on Sundays. Others do doctrine versus a book of the Bible. Some do it where it's motivation. I've seen that approach in Seeker-friendly churches, motivational versus biblical. So motivational on Sunday and biblical on Wednesday. It's just different approaches to those kind of things. But anyways, to bring all of this together, God is holy and God is pure. His Word is pure.

To know the Lord is, He wants us to know Him and to be in awe and wonder, to have that fear of the Lord. It is pure. It is clean to have that saving knowledge, to have that fear of the Lord, to be in awe and wonder of who He is. And because of this, we receive salvation.

[45 : 26] We will endure forever. We will live forever, forever, as the word says. For us to know the Lord, we need to believe in the Lord. And what better way for us to know the Lord than to pray such a prayer like we read in Psalm 51?

A prayer of transformation, to create a clean heart within us. A prayer for a renewal of our spirit. Why not pray the prayer for us to be forgiven of our sins and to be restored with Him?

No longer being separated. No longer feeling that there's that distance between you and God, but to be born again, to be saved by grace, no longer a slave or a servant to sin, but rather to be free from sin. And that's where the final question comes in for tonight is, what does believing in the Lord look like?

Is it an intellectual agreement or is it something deeper than that? Jesus answers this question very well in Mark chapter 12 verse 30, that you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all of your soul. And what's the third part?

With all of your mind. So it's more than just head a head decision, right? A mind, a mental decision. It is to love with all your mind and with all your strength.

[47 : 00] I always love how that one's in there, right? For those who love going to the gym, you work out for Jesus, right? But all joking aside, it's with the essence of who you are, right? With all of your being, so to speak.

And that would be a biblical way to respond. But keep in mind, there are some people that think that it is a mental decision.

It has to be more than that. It has to be more than... You can even go as far as to say it has to be more than an emotional decision, right? If you think, well, that's crazy for someone to make it just a mental decision, well think, is it possible for someone to make just an emotional decision or just a strength decision, right? It has to be all of you to make that decision, right? To love your Lord, right?

To believe in Him. It's something beyond just the mental. That's a powerful feeling having that, you know, when we talked about the overwhelming feeling, right? How the Holy Spirit carries along the writers of the Word of God. It's no different than feeling the overwhelming feeling. And I love how that's the word to describe the Spirit, right? We talked about how as water is carrying along the boat on the sea, that's the overwhelming feeling that you feel from the Spirit. Where it's like, oh my goodness, you know, I'm feeling this sense of love or this sense of warmth or this sense of comfort.

And it's undeniable that it is, you know? I think I would say that's a very good way of looking at it, because when we're talking about the saving knowledge of the Lord, right? It's starting with the mental. And what I'm trying to say on here is it's not the only thing, right? It certainly starts from there and it will go from just like how in the Romans passage to be transformed by the renewal of your mind, right? So there is a very important sense of the mind, the mental state, and it grows from that. But it shouldn't only be that. It should grow into all of your being loving the Lord, right? So when we're talking about belief in the Lord, yes, it would be the mind, right? It would be making that decision on there.

[49 : 19] And I put on here, whether you say a sinner's prayer, or you just say, Jesus, remember me as the thief did, or you make that internal decision, just you're just praying and you believe right then and there. You don't utter any words. I know that's a difficult one. Some people would say, well, you need to say the words. Well, could you not be there praying to the Lord and just offering, you're saying, you know what, I believe in the Lord and you're just praying without speaking?

Well, certainly that is possible. And all that matters is that whatever it is, whatever way it is, coming to believe in the Lord.

For some people, it is a sinner's prayer. And I'm not saying that is, I'm not invalidating that. It is a great way to come to believe in the Lord. Jesus, remember me is another great way, right?

Just praying and being and just believing sometimes if it's you alone and at a church one day and something happened and you just started there praying and you're believing in Jesus, that could be it.

It could be one of those, I think of the what is it, the harvest crusades. It could be coming to faith in those. There's many different ways, but it should all come back to belief, right? Because it is in believing that we then receive salvation.

[50 : 38] So whosoever believes shall not perish but have eternal life. And this reminds me so much of the Luke 23 verses 42 through 43. He said, Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. And he said to them, truly I say to you today, you will be with me in paradise. And you see, this is the encouragement though.

The encouragement is that we come to see that God is holy and that his way is perfect and that his word is pure. It is clean. And I pray that God will work in and through us.

He'll continue to work on us. I pray that God will work through everyone who comes through these doors, that they'll have that saving knowledge of him and they'll make that decision and they'll be able to love the Lord with everything that they are.

And I pray that they also will, that the word will refine us and work in us because we're always learning, we're always growing in the word. At least we should be. If you're stagnant, I guess that's a different proposition there. But the encouragement is that you grow in the Lord. Much like the implanted word, let the word of Christ dwell in us. And may we become that beacon of hope for others sharing in our faith with our testimony, sharing with scripture. You know, I'm waiting for the day where someone says, hey, go to Psalm 51. There's your sinner's prayer right there.

You just open a Bible and say, hey, look, let's go over this. I mean, that's a great way to do it. It's just many different ways, but still leads to belief. I'm not saying there's many ways to salvation.

[52 : 28] I'm saying there's many ways to come to believe in the Lord. It could be through the observation of nature, as we were talking about earlier. It could be through simply just reading the word of God.

But as long as you come to having that saving knowledge of who Jesus Christ is, that he lived, he died, he rose again, of who he is.

When we talk about the thief on the cross, I'm pretty sure he recognized who Jesus was at that moment, at those last moments. And so may we share in our faith, in sharing the word, sharing our testimony, how God has worked in us, through us, around us, people we know. I mean, it's just wonderful to have that opportunity with people. Well, I want us to go ahead and let's just close in prayer. And it's been really good.

Let's pray together. Father, we thank you for this time, for us coming together and going through your word. May we come to realize that there is life, there is truth, there is purity that exists in scripture.

Your word is life, and you call us to believe in you and to, through belief, we receive salvation in you. And upon salvation you work in and through us, refining us and making us more like you.

[53 : 54] I pray that it is our desire for not just us here tonight, but for this church to be more like you, to read scripture, to study scripture, to hear the word of God preached and to just go deeper in the word that we can become mature in our faith, that we can defend the faith, and that we can discern what is good and what is bad, what is right and what is wrong.

You show us the truth that is found in your word. You are our shepherd, and you keep us protected by your love and by your grace. May we boldly go from this place to know you, to grow in you, and to go in your holy name. It is in Jesus' name that we pray.

Amen. Amen.