

# WHY I LOVE GOD'S WORD

*Friday Night Introductory Talk by  
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## **Introduction**

There are a lot of things that I love: Jesus, who loves me and died for me, to whom I committed myself as a freshman in college in an evangelistic Bible study; my family— a wife and four great kids; students— that's why I joined InterVarsity staff twenty-one years ago; and baseball, ever since my dad took me to Yankee Stadium in 1958 and Mickey Mantle made a great catch and the Yanks won. But another thing I love is the Bible. I don't worship it, but I do love it. It's where God speaks to me. It's how He changes my life, challenges me, and comforts me. Studying it is intellectually challenging, emotionally satisfying, and of course spiritually necessary. It is an ancient document that we have to figure out the meaning of, but it is also God's living Word in which He speaks to us now.

Here are some of the main reasons why I love God's Word, the Bible

### **1. It is God's creative power!**

Look at the first page of the Bible, Genesis chapter one, and note the repetition of "God said... and it was so" in verses 3, 6-7, 9, 14-15, 20-21, and 24. The author is trying to show that God's spoken Word is His creative power. He spoke, and the worlds came into being! Psalm 33:6 also summarizes this. Jesus is His Word incarnate, in a person, and the Bible is His Word written. So the Bible, as the Word of God, is His creative power!

### **2. It is Alive!**

Hebrews 4:12 says that God's Word is "living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword..." Many people think that the Bible is a dead, ancient document. It IS an ancient document, and we need to apply all of the tools of scholarship and inductive study to dig into the Bible and figure out what it meant for its original hearers and what it means for us. But the Bible is more than a dead ancient document. It is alive. It is how God speaks to us today, not just how God spoke to Moses 3500 years ago. I saw this when I went to a week-long Mark manuscript study in 1981. Jesus came through the words on the page and really encountered us as we studied His Word, and called us to new commitment to Him.

### **3. The Bible is full of Surprises!**

In Isaiah 43:19, God says "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?" God is immutable, He never changes in His essence, yet He seems to always be doing new things and surpassing us with His grace and power. So many passages in the Bible that we think are just "old hat," like the first chapter of the Gospel of Mark, are actually filled with deep and exciting meaning that we don't see when we read them in a shallow way. Most people think that the God of the Old Testament is a mean old judge, and the God of the New Testament is a nice fellow who is full of love. Reading the Bible with an open heart will show that God is the same in both Testaments, and actually the main image of God in the Old Testament is that of a wounded, seeking, loving, faithful spouse seeking to bring back his lost love— see the book of Hosea!

**4. The Bible is powerful in practical ways!**

II Timothy 3:16-17 says that the Scripture is what God uses to teach us, challenge us, set us on the right path, and equip us for God's service .

**5. The Bible centers on Jesus!**

In John 5:39 Jesus is arguing with the Pharisees, the teachers of the Law, who spent a lot of time studying the Bible of their day (the Old Testament) and thought they knew it pretty well. He says "You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. *These are the Scriptures that testify about me*" (Italics mine). Jesus is saying here that He is the center of the Scriptures. The Bible is all about Him. I love Jesus and want to get to know Him and follow Him. Since the Bible is all about Him, I love it because that is where I meet Him, and get to know Him.

**6. The Bible brings people to Jesus!**

I Peter 1:23 says that "you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, *through the living and abiding Word of God*" (italics mine).. When people, even non-Christian seekers, get into the Bible, Jesus works through His Word to bring them to Himself. That is why I am so excited about evangelistic Bible studies (now called "GIG's"- "Groups Investigating God"). I came to Christ in an evangelistic study led by a friend on campus. Then I led evangelistic studies in each of my next three years in college, and each year students in my studies came to Christ, even though I am not much of an evangelist. When I as a field staff worker I encouraged students to start evangelistic studies in the dorms, and every year students came to know Him. He works through His Word!

So, the Bible is God's awesome curative power; it is alive, it is full of surprises, it challenges us and trains us; it centers on Jesus; and He speaks through it to seekers to bring them to Himself. It satisfies my intellect, my emotions, and my soul. It is real stories about real people. It is fun to study. I just love it!