

THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF REVELATION

APPLYING LITERAL-NORMAL INTERPRETATION TO REVELATION 2 & 3

Theme: The seven churches of Revelation 2-3 are churches in the first half of the Tribulation period.

“...the consistency of one's hermeneutical principle is far more important than the defense of one's theological system.”

~Charles Ryrie, *Dispensationalism* (p. 115) ~

We have a “system of theology” (we has individuals and we as a church).

- “Theology” simply refers to the study of God and His ways. Theology is important (essential).
And this is life eternal, that they might **know** thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. [John 17.3]
- A “system” is just an organized, ordered collection of things.
- Our “system of theology” is our organized, ordered collection of knowledge of God and about God.

What Ryrie says is probably more important than we realize when first reading or hearing the quote.

- *Consistency* in applying our hermeneutical principle is *far more important* that defending our theological system. Why?

Every system is based on at least one essential principal that does not form part of the system itself.

- Think about books on a shelf in a library or a bookstore. They are a “systematized” (ordered) collection of things (books).
 - ✓ What's the system by which they are ordered? The alphabet (alphabetized by author, etc.).
 - ✓ The English alphabet is the one essential principal that does not form part of the system (it is independent of the books themselves) but which is used as the entire basis for the system itself.
- In theology (the study of God; the study of His revelation) *hermeneutics* provides the essential principals by which we order our knowledge of God.
 - ✓ Hermeneutics: Principles of how to interpret (study and understand) the Bible. You've probably taken a course on “How to study the Bible.” That's a course on hermeneutics.
 - ✓ Hermeneutics do not form part of our theological system. But they form the basis by which we develop our theology (and systematize it, order it, etc.).

Out of all the principles of hermeneutics (“rules of Bible study”), there is *one essential principle* that we apply (or at least we think we apply) to all our Bible study and reading.

- The Normal-Literal (Plain) Interpretation of Scripture (i.e., “What does the Bible *say*?”).
 - ✓ The literal meaning of words is the *normal* approach to *understanding* in *all* languages. It's how we talk and expect to be understood (or write and expect to be understood).
 - ✓ If I say, “*Run! Run! The building is on fire!*” You have a pretty clear, normal, literal, plain understanding of what I'm trying to communicate. Correct?
- Example: When you read Genesis 1-2 and the Bible says God made the earth and all that is therein during seven “days,” what do you understand?
 - ✓ A normal-literal hermeneutic says: They're days (seven periods of 24 hours). Just normal days.
 - ✓ An allegorical hermeneutic says: They're long periods of time during which evolution took place.

Here's the important part of the introduction: *Consistency* in the application of this normal-literal hermeneutic is essential to develop a sound, biblical theology!

- We do *not* change our *means* of understanding something so that we can arrive at the *end* we *want*.
 - ✓ We do *not* change our hermeneutics to support our system of theology.
 - ✓ We consistently apply our hermeneutics and allow that to develop our system of theology.
- Why is that important?
 - ✓ Because if someone teaches us something that *contradicts our system of theology* (our understanding and knowledge of God from Scripture), how do we respond?
 - ✓ Most people say, “*Well we've never believed that! That has to be wrong!*” It's like the death knell of a local church: “*We've always done it that way and we'll continue to do it that way because we've always done it that way!*”
 - ✓ We should say, “*Hm. I've never seen that before. What does the Bible say?*”

Our challenge with Revelation 2-3: We should make every effort possible to consistently apply the key hermeneutical principal of the normal-literal interpretation of Scripture.

- If we do that, we will see and understand that the seven churches are *not* churches in the current dispensation of grace (the Church Age).
- A normal-literal (plain) understanding of Revelation 2-3 leads us to the conclusion that the seven churches are, doctrinally, seven churches (or types of churches) during the Tribulation period.

I. The Historical Application of the Seven Churches of Revelation

(Handout #1)

- A. When the Apostle John wrote Revelation (probably around AD 90), there were seven literal and historical churches to which he wrote.
- B. Each church had its specific exhortation and each was a little different than the others. (All the “Fs” are not my fault. I stole them from John Phillips' commentary *Exploring Revelation*. Blame him.)
1. (Rev 2.1-7) Ephesus: The Formal Church
 2. (Rev 2.8-11) Smyrna: The Fearful Church
 3. (Rev 2.12-17) Pergamos: The Faltering Church
 4. (Rev 2.18-29) Thyatira: The False Church
 5. (Rev 3.1-6) Sardis: The Fruitless Church
 6. (Rev 3.7-13) Philadelphia: The Feeble Church
 7. (Rev 3.14-22) Laodicea: The Fashionable Church

II. The Personal Application of the Seven Churches of Revelation

- A. Regardless of anything else we might say about any passage in the Bible, we can rest assured that there is something there for us (some eternal principle, some lesson, some example to apply, etc.).

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and **is profitable** for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.[2Tim 3.16-17]

- B. The seven churches of Revelation show us seven different types of Christians or Churches that exist today. The same principles we see in the seven churches are alive and well today in churches.
1. (Rev 2.1-7) Ephesus: Fundamentalism
 2. (Rev 2.8-11) Smyrna: Ritualism
 3. (Rev 2.12-17) Pergamos: Clericalism
 4. (Rev 2.18-29) Thyatira: Ecumenism
 5. (Rev 3.1-6) Sardis: Liberalism
 6. (Rev 3.7-13) Philadelphia: Fanaticism
 7. (Rev 3.14-22) Laodicea: Materialism

C. The seven churches of Revelation can also show us an “outline” of Church History. Each church and what is said of that church in Revelation shows us the general characteristics of a different age (or stage) in the development of the Church during our dispensation.

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|------------------|---------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. (Rev 2.1-7) | Ephesus: | The Fully-Purposed Church | AD 90-200 |
| 2. (Rev 2.8-11) | Smyrna: | The Persecuted Church | AD 200-325 |
| 3. (Rev 2.12-17) | Pergamos: | The Church of “Much Marriage” | AD 325-500 |
| 4. (Rev 2.18-29) | Thyatira: | The “Odor of Affliction” | AD 500-1000 |
| 5. (Rev 3.1-6) | Sardis: | The Church of the “Red Ones” | AD 1000-1500 |
| 6. (Rev 3.7-13) | Philadelphia: | The Church with the Open Door | AD 1500-1900 |
| 7. (Rev 3.14-22) | Laodicea: | The Apathetic Church in Apostasy | AD 1900-Rapture |

8. So, before you run out of here screaming, “*Heresy! Heresy!*”, I want you know I believe these seven churches are such a picture of Church History that I begin teaching each stage of Church History with an exposition of the passage that pertains to the particular period.

9. I've taught this for over 20 years and my Church History material is available on my web site.

D. All of these personal applications of the seven churches of Revelation are, however, *allegorical*. These are *not* applications that come from a normal-literal understanding of the text of Revelation 2-3.

1. What is your first reaction when you hear me say this:

- a) The seven churches of Revelation have nothing to do with Church Age churches. They are, rather, churches in the Tribulation period.
- b) What is your reaction? “*Heresy! Hyper-Dispensationalist! Gregorian Doctrine!*”

2. Remember:

- a) The consistency of one's hermeneutical principle is far more important than the defense of one's theological system.
- b) The literal meaning of words is the normal approach to understanding in all languages.
- c) Consistency in the application of the normal-literal hermeneutic is essential to develop a sound, biblical theology!

III. The Doctrinal Application of the Seven Churches of Revelation

A. The Context: What is the context of John's seven letters to the seven churches?

1. John's Perspective

- a) (Rev 1.10) John wrote the Book of Revelation from the perspective of “the Lord's day.”
 - (1) This is the Day of the Lord that is mentioned in Scripture: the second coming of Christ.
 - (2) We're not talking about Sunday.
- b) (Rev 1.19) From his perspective on the Lord's Day, he writes about things in three periods:
 - (1) The Past: “...the things which thou hast seen...”
 - From the perspective of the Day of the Lord (second coming), this includes the Tribulation (all of it: the first half and the second half).
 - (2) The Present: “...and the things which are...”
 - This would be the second coming of Christ to earth.
 - (3) The Future: “...and the things which shall be hereafter...”
 - This would be the Millennium and Eternity future.
 - (4) And there is your outline of the Book of Revelation.

2. Daniel's Prophecy

- a) (Dan 9.27) Daniel's 70th Week divides itself in two equal halves.
 - (1) There will be 3.5 years of peace and 3.5 years of destruction.
 - (2) Paul calls the first half “peace and safety” and the second half “sudden destruction.”

For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, **Peace and safety**; then **sudden destruction** cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. [1Thes 5.2-3]
 - b) Revelation 5-19 records the “sudden destruction” of the second half, the Great Tribulation.
 - c) If John wrote about “the things which thou hast seen” (things in the past relative to the second coming), where did he write about the first half of the Tribulation, the half of peace and safety?
 - d) The Tribulation is one complete whole; it's Daniel's 70th Week. If John wrote about one half of the Tribulation, he wrote about all of it. Where is that which he wrote about the first half?
3. It is my contention that he did write about it: Revelation 1-3, especially the seven churches.

B. The Churches: How can there be “churches” in the Tribulation period?

1. The Reality of the Church Age

- a) There was apostasy during the first century (the beginning of the Church Age) and there will be and even greater (and growing) apostasy at the end.

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils. [1Tim 4.1]

This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. [2Tim 3.1]

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. [2Tim 4.3-4]
- b) Because of the persistent preaching of a false gospel today (an “easy-believism” gospel of “accept Jesus” without repentance), our churches are full of “believers” who have never been born again (false converts).

2. The Rapture of the Church

- a) When the Lord returns to remove the Church (all born again believers) in our Rapture, we will leave churches (churches of all flavors and types) full of people.
 - (1) These are the church-goers who were never saved.
 - (2) Haven't you ever wondered by “Christians” don't act like Christians?
- b) These churches are the churches we see in Revelation 2-3.
 - (1) There will be seven different types of churches in the first half of the Tribulation, and we see them in Revelation 2-3.
 - (2) How do we know these are churches of the Tribulation and not of the Church Age?
 - (3) Because there is something said in each of the letters to the seven churches that cannot be applied to Church-Age believers (us; born again Christians) literally, normally, plainly.

C. The Content: What do each of these letters say that cannot be applied to the Church today?

1. The Church of Ephesus: Revelation 2.1-7

- a) (Rev 2.7) Only he who overcomes will be able to eat of the tree of life.
- b) (Rev 22.2) The tree of life will be in the New Jerusalem in eternity.
- c) (Rev 22.14) Those who will have right to the tree of life will be those who have kept the Lord's commandments (works form part of the conditions set upon them for salvation).

- d) (Gen 3.22) What does the tree of life give the person who eats of it? Answer: eternal life.
- e) What does the tree of life have to do with any born-again Christian during the Church Age?
 - (1) How do we receive eternal life? Do we have to eat of the tree of life? No.
 - (2) We receive eternal life the moment we repent of our sin and place our faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (3) Revelation 2.7 cannot be applied to us today (during the dispensation of grace) as it is written normally, literally, and plainly.
- f) Revelation 2.7 applies to those who will have to “overcome” during the Tribulation period in order to have right to the tree of life (and thus receive eternal life).

2. The Church in Smyrna: Revelation 2.8-11

- a) (Rev 2.10-11) Those who overcome during a time of tribulation will never have to fear the second death.
- b) (Rev 20.11-15) The second death is the lake of fire.
 - (1) The first death is the physical death that separates one from this life.
 - (2) The second death is after that person has been resurrected and judged at the Great White Throne. He will be separated eternally from the source of life, God. He will be thrown into the lake of fire forever.
- c) Does a Christian today have to fear the lake of fire, the second death?
 - (1) What if we don't “overcome”? What if we are defeated time and again by sin and selfishness? Does it matter?
 - (2) Who overcame for us? Christ is our righteousness and in Him we are more than conquerors. We never have to fear the second death, whether we “overcome” or not.
- d) (Rev 20.4-6) The martyrs of the Tribulation are those who do not have to fear the second death.
- e) This passage has nothing to do with a Church-Age, born-again believer. It cannot be applied to us doctrinally (normally, literally, plainly as it is written).

3. The Church in Pergamos: Revelation 2.12-17

- a) (Rev 2.17) The hidden manna.
 - (1) Who ate manna before in the Bible and where did they eat it?
 - (2) The nation of Israel ate manna after the exodus from Egypt when they were in the desert.
- b) (Rev 12.14) Where will the faithful Israelites flee during the Great Tribulation? To the desert. And there God will sustain them miraculously with manna.
- c) (John 6.49-50) Our manna (our bread from heaven) today is the Word of God (John 6.63) and it is *not* “hidden manna.” It is manna available for everyone in just about every language on earth.
- d) The hidden manna for Pergamos believers is not for Church-Age Christians. This passage deals with something that will be going on during the Tribulation period.

4. The Church in Thyatira: Revelation 2.18-29

- a) (Rev 2.26-27) Those who overcome by enduring unto the end will be saved (cf. Mat 24.13-15).
- b) This speaks of the faithful believers during the Tribulation period who will be required to endure in their faithful obedience to God's Word unto the end of the Tribulation.

- c) Their reward is to rule with the Lord “with a rod of iron.”
 - (1) (Rev 19.15) This rod of iron speaks of the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (2) (Rev 20.4) These faithful believers will rule and reign with Christ in the Millennium.
- d) Again we see that what is written to this “church” cannot be applied directly to us today. No Christian during our dispensation has to “endure unto the end” to be saved.

5. The Church in Sardis: Revelation 3.1-6

- a) (Rev 3.3 cf. 2Pet 3.10) The coming of the Lord that is likened unto the coming of a thief is the second coming. This is another exhortation for those who will be living during the Tribulation and waiting for the second coming.
- b) (Rev 3.5) If people in the Tribulation do not overcome, their names could be blotted out of the book of life. Do you have to worry about God blotting your name out of the book of life? No!
- c) These are exhortations for believers who will be living during the Tribulation Period.

6. The Church in Philadelphia: Revelation 3.7-13

- a) And now we come to a rabbit trail because what is said here cannot be applied to the Church (the Body of Christ) but it speaks of a rapture of faithful believers.
- b) Four Important Observations
 - (1) The phrase “the hour.”
 - (a) This refers to a period of time that will be a time of temptation (trial).
 - (b) The definite article (“the”) means it refers to a very *specific* period of time, a very specific time of temptation (trial).
 - (2) The Scope of the Temptation (Trial)
 - (a) The “temptation” will com upon *all the world*.
 - (b) This is a time of trial and temptation that will be *global* in scope.
 - (3) The Purpose of the Temptation (Trial)
 - (a) The time of trial and temptation that will come upon the entire globe is to *try them that dwell upon the earth*.
 - (b) NOTE: It is to try “them” not “you.”
 - i) The Philadelphian believers are exempt from this trial and temptation that will be global in scope and that will affect *everyone* on the earth.
 - ii) The trial and temptation is to come upon everyone else except these faithful saints.
 - (4) Those Who Will Be “Kept” from This Trial and Temptation
 - (a) If there is a time of trial and temptation to come upon the *entire earth*, a trial and temptation that will affect *everyone on earth*, how are these believers “kept” from it?
 - i) First, they will not be *among* the people on earth. Why...? Because...
 - ii) Second, they will not be on earth.
 - iii) That's the only way to keep them from a trial that will be global in scope and that will affect everyone on earth at the time. These believers will not be on earth!
 - (b) Note also: Only the Philadelphian believers received this promise. It is not for anyone else, whether they “overcome” and “endure unto the end” or not.

- (c) During the Tribulation there will be faithful believers who are *raptured off the earth* (raptured out from among the inhabitants of the earth) *before* the time of trial and temptation that will come upon all people around the globe.
- (d) This speaks of a mid-Tribulation rapture (before the “sudden destruction” of the Great Tribulation).
- c) (Mat 24.37-41) It will be like it was in the days of Noah.
- (1) (v37) Context: The second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (2) (v37) Example: The days of Noah provide an illustration of the time before Christ returns.
 - (a) (Gen 5.24) There is a rapture of someone before Genesis 6 and the pronouncement of judgment (a picture of the rapture of the Church).
 - (b) (Gen 6.1-7) Before the Flood (before the “sudden destruction” of God's judgment upon the whole earth and upon all the inhabitants of the earth), there is a time of “peace and safety” (during which Noah builds an ark and preaches the righteousness of God).
 - (c) (Gen 7-8) The Flood was “sudden destruction” upon the *whole earth*, a picture of the last half of the Tribulation—the Great Tribulation.
 - (d) (Gen 9) The clean earth after the Flood is a picture of the Millennium.
 - (3) (v38) Before the Flood there was a time of normality. It was a time of relative “peace and safety” compared to what came after. This is like the first half of the Tribulation.
 - (4) (v39a) Everyone lived “normal” lives until the sudden destruction of the Flood came upon them in judgment.
 - (5) (v40-41) Again we see that there will be people living “normal” lives (*not* like we read about in Revelation 5-19, the Great Tribulation with its plagues and destruction).
 - (a) And *while* they are living these normal lives, there will be a rapture.
 - (b) The rapture does *not* occur during the time of “sudden destruction” (pictured in the Flood of Noah). It comes while people are living in “peace and safety.”
 - (6) After the first 3.5 years of the Tribulation (a time of relative peace and safety on earth), there will be a rapture. This rapture comes right before “the time of temptation” that will come upon the entire earth and affect each and every inhabitant of the globe.
 - (7) This is the mid-Tribulation rapture of faithful (“Philadelphian”) believers.
- d) (Mat 25.1-13) The Five Virgins are Raptured at Mid-Tribulation
- (1) (v1-5) We first are presented with a time of “peace and safety” during which everyone “slumbered and slept.” This cannot speak of the time of vast destruction in the Great Tribulation. This speaks of the first half of the Tribulation, the time of peace and safety.
 - (2) (v6) The bridegroom comes at “midnight” (at the mid-point of the period of darkness).
 - (3) (v7-10) The wise virgins *went in with the bridegroom to the marriage*.
 - (a) Note: The bridegroom comes, picks up the wise virgins, and leaves with them to go into the marriage.
 - i) This is *not* the second coming. The bridegroom did *not* stay. He came and left.
 - ii) (Luke 12.36) This rapture of the five virgins *cannot* be the second coming because the second coming is the return of the Lord *from* the wedding.
 - He comes, raptures the virgins, and takes them with him to the marriage.
 - The marriage is celebrated.
 - The Lord returns from the marriage for his “1000-year honeymoon.”

- (b) Also note: these virgins are not the wife, the bride. They are invited to the marriage; they are not the bride.
 - (c) (v7-9) The foolish virgins still have an opportunity to be with the bridegroom, but it will be later and it will depend on them obtaining oil (a picture of works for salvation during the Great Tribulation; i.e., enduring unto the end, keeping the commandments).
- e) (Rev 4.1-2) John the Apostle is a picture and type of this mid-Tribulation rapture of faithful believers.
- (1) (Rev 1.4, 9) Writing to the seven churches, John said he was their “companion in tribulation.”
 - (2) (Rev 3.8) John was someone who kept God's Word and never denied His name.
 - (3) (Rev 4.1-2) John's “rapture” in the Book of Revelation happens after a time of “peace and safety” (pictured in the seven churches of Revelation 2-3) and before the time of “sudden destruction” described in Revelation 5-19 (the Great Tribulation and second coming).
 - (4) Notice:
 - (a) John was a Jew (he was a Jew and he was one of the 12 Jewish Apostles).
 - (b) John, as a born again believer, however, was sealed by God.
 - (c) John is raptured from the earth to heaven before all the sudden destruction starts in Revelation 5.
 - (d) John appears to be a picture and type of the “virgins” who will be raptured out at the middle of the Tribulation period.
- f) The faithful (Philadelphian) believers who are raptured out at Mid-Tribulation appear to be the 144,000 sealed, faithful Jewish believers.
- (1) (Rev 7.1-4) The 144,000 are sealed before the sudden destruction of the Great Tribulation.
 - (a) (v3) Instructions are given to hurt not the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees until these 144,000 are sealed. So, they are sealed before the earth, sea, and trees are destroyed.
 - (b) (Rev 8.2, 7) The first trumpet of the Great Tribulation results in a third part of the trees being destroyed.
 - (c) (Rev 8.8-9) The second trumpet of the Great Tribulation results in damage to the sea.
 - (d) Therefore we know that the 144,000 are sealed by God before the first and second trumpets sound (before the beginning of the sudden destruction of the Great Tribulation).
 - (e) This means the 144,000 are on earth during the first half of the Tribulation, the time of peace and safety (just like the Philadelphian church believers).
 - (2) (Rev 14.1-5) The next time we see the 144,000, they are in heaven (the third heaven, the presence of God).
 - (a) (v1-3) The 144,000 of verse 1 are seen in verse 3 to be “before the throne” of God (the same place John was raptured to in Revelation 4: the place of the four beasts and the 24 elders). They are in the third heaven, the presence of God.
 - (b) (v4a) They are specifically called “virgins” (plural, like in Matthew 25).
 - (c) (v3b, 4b) Notice that they were redeemed “from the earth” and redeemed “from among men.”
 - i) The promise to the faithful Philadelphian church was that God would keep them from a time of trial and temptation that would be global and that would affect everyone on the earth.

- ii) They are redeemed “from the earth”: they will not be on the earth with the time of temptation comes.
- iii) They are redeemed “from among men”: they will not be present when God brings this time of trial and temptation on all those who dwell on the earth.
- (d) (v5) The 144,000 are “without fault”: (Rev 3.7-13) The Philadelphian church is the only church of the seven that does not receive correction from the Lord. They are “without fault” in the letter He writes them.
- (e) (v5) The 144,000 are raptured from off the earth (from among men) and taken to the third heaven, before the throne of God.
- (f) (v4b) These 144,000 raptured and faithful saints are a kind of “firstfruits.”
 - i) Remember that raptures in the Bible are compared to harvests with three stages.
 - ii) There is usually firstfruits, the main harvest, and the gleanings.
 - iii) Here, the 144,000 are called firstfruits. If it is as we have seen and the 144,000 are raptured at mid-Tribulation, they are the firstfruits of the post-Tribulation rapture referred to in Revelation 14.15-20.
- g) (Rev 3.10) The partial rapture of only faithful believers (only Philadelphia received this promise of a rapture) cannot be doctrinally applied to the Church (us today).
 - (1) The rapture of the Church includes all the members of the Body of Christ.
 - (2) Ours is not a partial rapture. Ours is a full and complete rapture of everybody who is born again (every saved believer).

7. The Church of the Laodiceans: Revelation 3.14-22

- a) (Rev 3.16) Christ cannot vomit us out of His mouth because we “are” His mouth. We are His body—members of His body. We are not foreign to His body (like food you can put in your mouth).
- b) Although there is much here to apply to us today in principle, it cannot be applied to us directly because we are members of the Body of Christ and therefore cannot be spewed out of His mouth.

Conclusion:

(Handout #2 & #3)

A normal-literal (plain) understanding of Revelation leads us to more clear understanding of the book.

- See the “book chart” handout for two outlines: personal (allegorical) and doctrinal (normal-literal).

We have but barely scratched the surface of our “system of theology.”

- We saw one simple, small principle of hermeneutics and how it bears on our understanding of God's revelation in Scripture (specifically, the Book of Revelation).

God is infinite and eternal, yet He is “simple” (is one God).

- The Bible is His specific revelation to us and it is as infinite and eternal in what it teaches us about God as is the Author.
- And yet the Bible is also really very simple (one book written in a normal, plain sense through history).

You can read and study the Bible as an inspired work of non-fiction: just read it normally, literally.

- If you do that, you will find more treasure just on the surface of Scripture than you can exhaust in a lifetime.

And, if you want to delve deeper into the Bible, all you have to do is apply that same principle to individual books, passages, verses, phrases, and words in Scripture.

- You will never hit bottom.
- You will never plumb the depths of the riches of the knowledge of God in Scripture. Never.

However, one warning: If you do that, *it will ruin your life*.

- *Your* life. It will totally ruin the life *you* want for *yourself*.
- Scripture will wash you and scrub you clean of your selfish, temporal desires for this world and its temporal, carnal pleasures.
- It will give you new desires: for holiness, to please God, to know God, to walk with God, to serve God.
- And, I'd venture to say that if you truly give yourself to know God through knowing the Bible, you won't be able to shut up and that will definitely have an impact on your life and those around you.
 - ✓ (Jer 20.7-8) The Word of God, internalized, will “ruin” your life.
 - ✓ (Jer 20.9) And you still won't be able to shut up about it.
- You'll be ruined for this world... but you'll be preparing for the next (the eternal one).

May God use His Word to perfect us and make us like Christ so we can say with Him:

- (John 8.29) “I do *always* those things that please the Father.”
- We're not there yet, but the Word of God, in the capable hands of the Spirit of God, will get us there.