

## **The “3 Rs Concept” for Effective Christian Living**

### **Reading and Riding a Horse at the Same Time Will Be a Rough Ride for the Roughest, Toughest Rider**



Acts 8:26-32, “Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.”<sup>27</sup> So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means “queen of the Ethiopians”). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship,<sup>28</sup> and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet.<sup>29</sup> The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.”<sup>30</sup> Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked.

Proverbs 21:31, “The horse is made ready for the day of battle, but victory rests with the LORD.”

**Trivia:** There are 176 verses in the Bible that the word “horse or horses” are part of Scripture. There are 5 verses about riding horses.

### **Read to Succeed...Ride with the Right Attitude and the Lord’s Approval...and You Will Be Ready for Victory!**

**Victory comes when we are willing to fight the battle against the enemy.**

**The Christian’s enemy is Satan and his demons.**

**How can we read the Word of God and know that we understand what is said and meant?**

**Do you think our attitudes affect our understanding of God’s Word?**

**How do you think it affects our understanding?**

*Ecclesiastes 8:17, “...then I saw all that God has done. No one can **comprehend** what goes on under the sun. Despite all their efforts to search it out, no one can discover its meaning. Even if the wise claim they know, they cannot really **comprehend** it.”*

*1 John 4:6, “We are from God, **and** whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the **Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.**”*

*Colossians 1:9-10.* “For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the **knowledge** of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the **knowledge** of God,”

### **What should our attitude be about reading the Word of God?**

*2 Timothy 2:15.* “**Study** to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

*1 Corinthians 1:5.* “For in him you have been enriched in every way—with all kinds of speech and with all **knowledge**—“

*Ephesians 3:2-6.* “Surely you have heard about the administration of God’s grace that was given to me for you, <sup>3</sup> that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. <sup>4</sup> In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, <sup>5</sup> which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God’s holy apostles and prophets. <sup>6</sup> This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.”

### **The Word of God (Scripture)**

*2 Timothy 3:14-16.* “But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, <sup>15</sup> and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

**If you have chosen to be a child of God, you have access to the greatest tool and friend ever placed in man’s hands and heart!**

**(1) The Bible—The Word of God.**

**(2) The Holy Spirit providing you access to God’s nuggets of truth.**

**(3) The ability given by the Holy Spirit to understand the Holy Scriptures.**

*1 Corinthians 2:13.* “This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words.”

**It is relevant for the proper understanding of the Word of God to believe that “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God (God breathed), 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” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).**

## **The Word of God is Life-Changing!**

*Earl had far too much money. He did not need to work. He took all kinds of drugs, including heroin. At the age of thirty he ended up in the hospital.*

*Someone came to visit him in hospital and gave him a New Testament. He was thrilled. The paper was very thin and was ideal for rolling joints. He rolled his way through Matthew, Mark and Luke. When he came to John's Gospel he started reading. As a result of reading the words of John's Gospel he encountered Jesus. He was filled with joy unspeakable*

*The psychologist in charge of his case was a very beautiful young woman who had been a model. One day she said to Earl, 'Look, I have it all – success, beauty and endless qualifications – yet I am not fulfilled. Your life is a mess yet you seem to have something – a peace and a joy. What is it?'*

*Then he led her to faith in Jesus Christ. Later they were married. They both had been changed by the life-changing Word of God.*

***God's Word (the Bible) has some great truths and important messages for those who read and heed to its precepts.***

***It has profound benefits as we read and become active participants of His Word:***

### **#1 Truth: Live Under the Blessing of God's Words**

Psalm 119:1-5, "You're blessed when you stay on course, walking steadily on the road revealed by GOD. You're blessed when you follow his directions, doing your best to find him. That's right—you don't go off on your own; you walk straight along the road he set. You, GOD, prescribed the right way to live; now you expect us to live it." (Message)

***If you want a 'blessed' life – one with minimal regrets –align your conduct and conversation with God's words.***

***God loves you and wants to bless you. Through God's words in Scripture, discover the blessings of life in relationship with God.***

***To have a relationship with God, you must be open to His comments and correction. The comments and corrections from God comes by reading and meditating on His Word.***

***The Bible clearly embraces the idea and practice of meditation. Here are a few Scriptures supporting the simple pleasures of meditation.***

*Psalm 19:14, “May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”*

*Psalm 49:3, “My mouth will speak words of wisdom; the meditation of my heart will give you understanding.”*

*Psalm 104:34, “May my meditation be pleasing to him, as I rejoice in the Lord.”*

*“Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things” (Philippians 4:8).*

## **#2 Truth: Speak Out the Power of God’s Words**

- **No church is perfect.** *As has often been said, if you find the perfect church, don’t join it. The moment you or I join the church it will become imperfect!*
- **There is such a thing, however, as a model church.**
  - ✓ *A model church is one that sets a good example and an inspiration to others.*
  - ✓ *People will travel from all over the world to learn from this kind of church.*

### **The Church in Thessalonica became a model church:**

*1 Thessalonians 1:1-8, “To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you. We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. <sup>3</sup>We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>4</sup>For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you, because our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction. You know how we lived among you for your sake. You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. And so you became a model to all the believers in Macedonia and Achaia. The Lord’s message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere.”*

**This should be our aim and our prayer – to be a church worthy of imitation, where the gospel rings out not only in our own local area, but everywhere.**

*The aim is not empire building, but gospel spreading. Paul does not commend the Thessalonians for the size of their church (we do not know how big it was). Instead, he commends them that ‘you’re the message!’ (v.8)*

**We see that the message came ‘not simply with words but also in power, with the Holy Spirit and with deep conviction’ (v.5):**

- **Words**

*There is a time to speak. It is not enough simply to live out the Christian life. Tell people about Jesus and what he has done.*

- **Power**

*Words in themselves is not enough. We need power. The power of God speaks through you, the Holy Spirit bringing deep conviction to the heart of the hearer.*

- **Lives**

*Paul goes on, ‘You know how we lived among you for your sake’ (v.5). Even powerful words will not have a lasting effect unless our lives are consistent with the message. It is not life or lips, but life and lips.*

**The task of proclaiming the gospel is a great privilege as well as a great responsibility. God has entrusted the work to us. Ultimately you are accountable to Him and to Him alone. Do not be concerned primarily with whether the preaching of the gospel pleases other people – in all probability it will not – but be concerned that it pleases God.**

**For Christ’s Sake, Please God!**

**This is not a blasphemous or irreverent statement! Ask yourself the question that Paul presented to the Church in Galatia....Galatians 1:9-10: “Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or, Am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Jesus Christ.”**

**For the sake of the Son of God....Don’t try to please men, but try to please God!**

**We look at the Word of God for our strength....We look to the Word of God for our confidence....Why not look at the Word of God to find out how to please Him?**

**Pleasing God is the most profitable thing a man can do.**