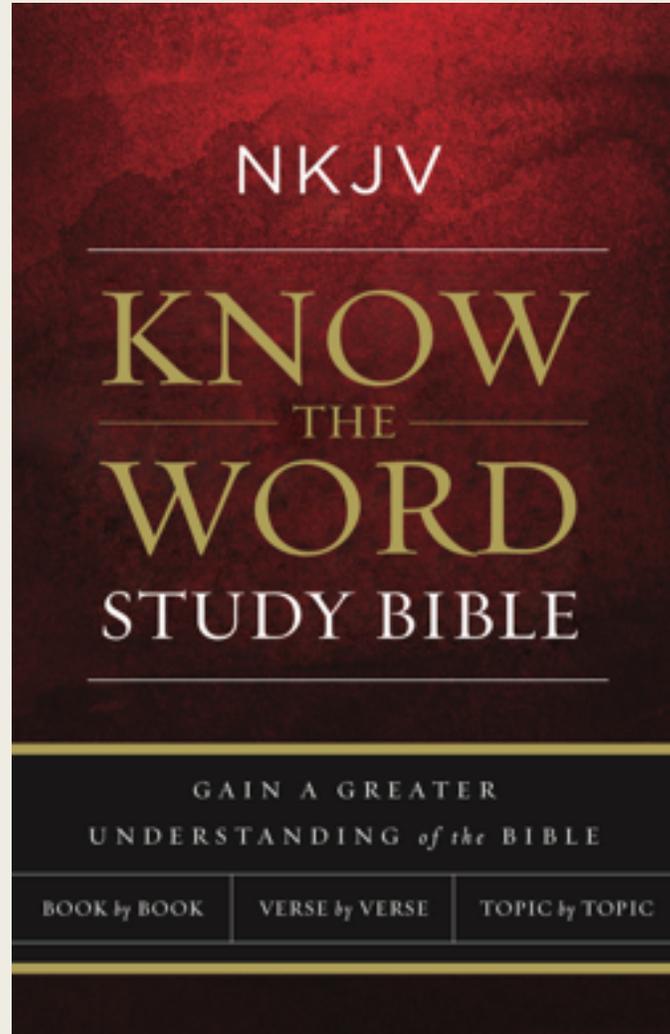


God's Purpose for You

A 5-Day Reading Plan



NKJV, Know The Word Study Bible



Studying the Bible does not have to be an intimidating or overwhelming experience. The study of God's Word can be easy and rewarding if you break down the Bible into easy-to-understand segments. The *NKJV Know The Word Study Bible* offers three easy ways to begin studying Scripture and helps individuals transition from being a casual reader of the Bible to becoming a regular student of the Word. Whether you prefer to study the Bible book by book, verse by verse, or topic by topic, each starting point offers powerful insights that will help you develop a daily routine of Bible study. The **Book by Book** series of notes leads you through the main points of each book of the Bible. The **Verse by Verse** studies help you to dig deeper into God's Word at a verse level. The **Topic by Topic** articles, which cover 21 key theological topics, give you a bird's-eye view of Scripture and guide you through the main themes that run throughout the Bible.

Features Include:

- New King James Version Bible text
- Three easy approaches to study the Bible: Book by Book, Verse by Verse, Topic by Topic
- Book introductions
- Words of Jesus in red
- Two-color interior page design
- Comprehensive list of theological notes
- Concordance

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Day 1: God Has an Eternal Purpose for Everything



Isaiah 46:8-11

“Remember this, and show yourselves men; Recall to mind, O you transgressors. Remember the former things of old,
For I am God,
and there is no other;
I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying,
‘My counsel shall stand,
And I will do all My pleasure,’
Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man who executes My counsel, from a far country.
Indeed I have spoken it;
I will also bring it to pass.
I have purposed it;
I will also do it.”

God is eternal. He always was and always will be. Anything that is eternal is also ultimately powerful, because nothing created Him and nothing can destroy Him. God alone has all power. (See the concept notes on God at Isaiah 40:28, Genesis 1:1, Psalm 147:5, and Psalm 18:30.)

On top of that, God has a purpose for everything (Eccl. 3:1). Because of God’s eternal nature, He can see what will happen. He can see the best paths toward a particular end.

Does that mean we’re like robots, following a plan over which we have no choice? No. Scripture reveals repeatedly that we have free will (Josh. 24:15; Rev. 3:20), and we are also responsible for our choices (Matt. 25:26–30, 33–36).

So in a delightfully mysterious way our choices blend with God’s purposes. We don’t have to figure out how. We simply have to choose to make good, wise, and timely choices.

That’s where God comes in. He will show us His pleasure and goals, and we get the delight of working along with Him. “Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure’” (Is. 46:10).

All of time is continually laid out before Him; because He is outside of time as we know it and because He has power over all of it, He can prepare things for a particular purpose and guarantee its success.

Day 2: God's Purposes Are Pure



God isn't selfish. He isn't vain or conceited.

But He is God: Creator and sustainer of all, all-powerful, all-knowing, and ultimately holy. And He does know what He's doing.

Revelation 4:11

"You are worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory and
honor and power;
For You created all things,
And by Your will they
exist and were created."

God works for what is good. No ulterior motives, no selfish ends, no cruelties couched behind fake smiles. God truly works for the good of all. His purposes are totally pure.

He's the only one we can trust that way.

Every now and then God gives a visible representation of His glory, this absolutely pure goodness. Whenever we look at something that makes us think of God or give Him credit or thank Him or praise Him, that thing has given Him glory. Whenever we treat a person with the pure good that God expresses, that action has given God glory. You've seen God's glory in a sunset, in a mountain range, in the ocean, in a baby's laugh, in words from a friend, in a photograph, and more.

"All things were created through Him and for Him" (Col. 1:16). Revelation 4:11 puts it this way: "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and by Your will they exist and were created."

Since we people were created in His image (Gen. 1:26, 27), we are especially purposed to glorify Him, to bring positive attention to Him. Peter said, "You are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Pet. 2:9).

Day 3: God's Purpose for You Is Active



Micah 6:6-8

With what shall I come
before the Lord,
and bow myself before the High
God? Shall I come before Him
with burnt offerings, with calves
a year old? Will the Lord be
pleased with thousands of rams,
ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I
give my firstborn for my
transgression, the fruit of my
body for the sin of my soul? He
has shown you, O man, what is
good;
And what does the Lord require
of you but to do justly,
to love mercy, and to
walk humbly with your God?

To honor the purposeful and pure God:

Do justly.
Love mercy.
Walk humbly with your God.

Those three commands are a tall order. But in one sense they are clear and can be completed by any believer. A child can cut the last brownie and let the sibling choose. That's a way to share the last brownie justly. A parent can mercifully give those two children towels to clean up the milk they spilled while eating the half brownies. And that same parent can humbly-as-one-teachable-by-God suggest that in the future the children keep their cups away from the edge of the table. Yes there is milk all over the floor and the walls because the cups bounced. But we've all created even bigger messes for the God who loves us.

These Micah 6:6–8 commands are clear in some ways, but in other ways they are incredibly complex. What is the balance of justice and mercy for the offender who killed seventeen people? How do we walk humbly when a severe injustice at work calls for us to step in and correct it?

The answers lie in our created purpose, and how God wants us to express our purpose during each particular occurrence. God's purpose affects both the kitchen table spills and the nuclear spills that create cancer for generations.

Day 4: Yield to God's Purposes



James 3:17

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

Consider this: God is perfect. Eternal. Almighty. He knows everything about everyone (Ps. 139:1–4). On the other hand, we are imperfect. Sinful. Our lives are but a vapor (James 4:14). The more we learn, the more we realize we don't know.

So why in the world wouldn't we align our plans with God's purpose?

We tend to think we know enough to make our own way in life.

But because God actually cares, get over that tendency. He is God. You are His. He provides the resources you need to accomplish His purpose.

Isaiah 41:10 records God's assurance to His people:

“Fear not, for I am with you;
Be not dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you,
Yes, I will help you,
I will uphold you with My righteous
right hand.”

God's purpose for you is not mysterious. He will show you the specifics to build upon these foundational purposes.

So make every one of your actions purposeful. And know that obedience is tightly tied to how your purpose is lived out.

Day 5: God's Purpose Requires Response



Matthew 21:28-32

So Jesus answered and said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ it will be done. And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.” Jesus’ Authority Questioned. Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, “By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?” But Jesus answered and said to them, “I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: The baptism of John—where was it from? From heaven or from men?” And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ But if we say, ‘From men,’ we fear the multitude, for all count John as a prophet.” So they answered Jesus and said, “We do not know.” And He said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things. “But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go, work today in my vineyard.’ He answered and said, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he regretted it and went. Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father?”

We cannot go through life passively if we want to live in accord with God’s purposes. If we are passive, opportunities to join in the work of God will pass us by.

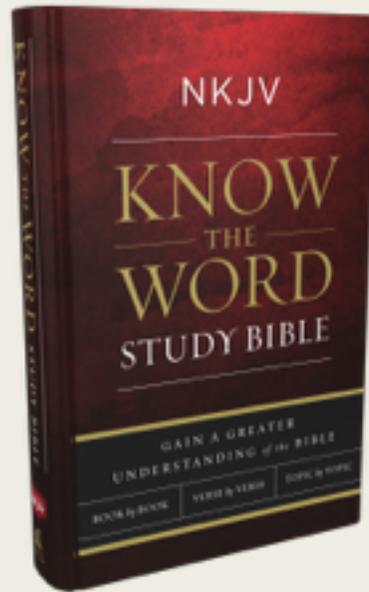
Now that you know your purpose is designed and given by God, it’s time you become active by living according to it. Quite simply, His purpose is that you obey Him. If it’s in the Bible, it’s part of God’s purpose. Acknowledging God’s purpose and yielding to it is not simply mental. It requires your mouth, your heart, and your feet.

In Matthew 21:28–32 Jesus explained the requirement for active responses. The point of His story is clear: while it’s great to say the right thing, in the end it’s more important that you actually follow through. Doing the will of God means just that—going beyond words and actually doing what He says.

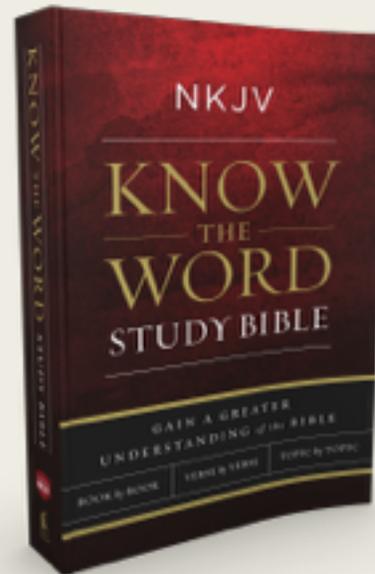
The Bible’s emphasis on words and actions, belief and works, points to the fact that our relationship with God involves our entire being. He doesn’t just want us to think true thoughts about Him. And He doesn’t just want people mindlessly or soullessly going through the motions of good works. No, we were created by God as complex creatures, with bodies and minds and the spiritual capacity for a relationship with God Himself. And in that relationship, God calls forth active responses.

Paul explained this powerful life principle by saying we are “created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10). He also said we are to “glorify God in . . . body and in . . . spirit” (1 Cor. 6:20).

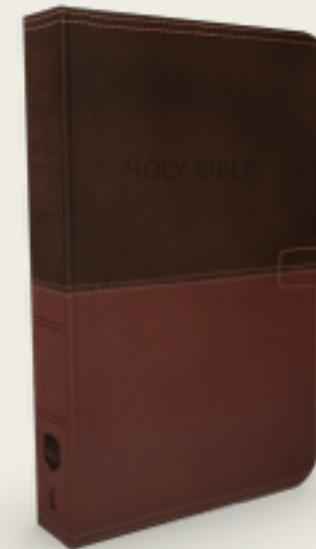
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