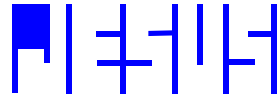


## 1813 BIBLE FOREWORD\*

AUTHOR UNKNOWN - ORIGINAL WORDS & SPELLING  
"YOU ARE LOVED!" - DR. MYRON J. PETERSEN, TH.D

WHAT DO YOU SEE?



That great numbers neglect the reading of the holy Scriptures is as evident as it is deplorable. Christians there are innumerable who are almost entirely ignorant of the Bible; because those that have the rule over them suffer it to be read only by particular persons, and with the greatest precaution as if it were a dangerous thing to put the Word of God indifferently into the hands of all men. But not to concern ourselves at present with these considerations, we shall only observe, that the greatest part even of those who have the reading of the sacred Writings recommended to them neglect to do it. Many, it is true, for want of learning, may not be in a capacity to read the Scriptures; which is a great misfortune, and a shame to Christians, that the number of those who cannot read should still be so great among them. It may be said too, that a great many do not read the Word of God, because they are unable through their poverty to purchase that divine Book. Those to whom God has given riches should supply this defect, by dedicating some portion to the pious use of providing Bibles for the poor. To this may be added, that a great number of domestick and other servants have not leisure to discharge this necessary duty, because their masters allow them not time for it. But however this be, those Christians are utterly inexcusable who have it in their power to read the Word of God, and will not do it.

God, in his infinite wisdom, and unbounded goodness, hath supplied men, by the revelation of his will, with the most perfect means of instruction. He inspired the prophets and apostles, and was pleased their writing should be preserved, that in them truth might always remain pure, without being corrupted by the forgetfulness and inconstancy, the carelessness or malice of men. The Scriptures, therefore, are the most valuable blessing God ever bestowed upon us, except the sending his Son into the world; they are a treasure containing every thing that can make us truly rich and truly happy. We must, therefore, have very little regard for God and his gifts if we neglect to make a right use of this; and it would argue the greatest degree of presumption to imagine we can do without that assistance, which God himself has judged so needful and expedient for us.

The use of the holy Scriptures was very common among the primitive Christians; and as they were regularly read in their religious assemblies, so did they read them with great diligence in their families, But the Scriptures were afterwards neglected, in proportion as ignorance and superstition gained ground. The people were no longer instructed in them; and though the custom was retained of reading some portion of them in the church, they were rendered entirely useless by being read in a language the people were unacquainted with. At length the private use of God's Word was wholly laid aside, and this divine light in a manner

extinguished for several ages. About two hundred years ago, it was as it were taken from under the bushel, where it had lain so long concealed; and the people in several parts of Christendom recovered their right of reading the Scriptures; but most of those who enjoy this privilege do not improve it as they ought.

The indifference and neglect in reading the sacred Writings is the true cause of that ignorance which prevails among the generality of Christians. This is the reason they have but a slight and superficial knowledge of the doctrines and duties of Christianity and too many entertain notions that are entirely false and groundless: this is the source of that are entirely false and groundless: this is the source of the many errors which are in vogue among us, and of the many impious and libertine notions which prevail more and more; for as soon as we forsake the Scriptures, which are our only rule of faith, to follow our own reasonings, we must of necessity go astray. It is forsaking this divine light which has occasioned many persons, who have thought themselves inspired, and imagined they had attained to the extravagant notions, and sometimes into the greatest impurities. In short, to the same cause may be ascribed all that remissness, that carnal and worldly mindedness, which ceeds from not reading the holy Scriptures, and not making that use of them for which they were given.

It is true that this neglect in Christians may be in some measure supplied by reading the Word of God in our religious assemblies. And indeed if it is surprising the people should neglect to read it, there is still more reason to be astonished that, for so many years, men should have forgot to give the reading of the sacred Writings that honourable place in the publick worship which it always enjoyed among the Jews, and among the first Christians. But even supposing the Scriptures were regularly read in the church this alone would not be sufficient, unless Christians read them likewise in their own houses. The express declarations of God's Word, the practice of the church both under the Old and New Testament, and many other reasons which it is not expedient to mention at present, prove the necessity of doing this. Besides, private reading is attended with some advantages which publick reading is not. In private, one may read, with more leisure, consider things more closely, repeat the thing more than once, and make a more nice application. Private reading is likewise the best way to improve by what we hear in publick, it being impossible rightly to comprehend what is said in publick discourses and sermons without being well versed in the Scriptures. Add to this, that private reading keeps up a spirit of piety and devotion; whereas those who neglect this inevitably fall into an indifference and disrelish for divine things; which must be attended with remissness in the duties of religion, and a slavish subjection to the passions.

*\* The Holy Bible foreword of 1813 Published by EVERT DUYCKINK, JOHN TIEBOUT, G. & R. WAITE, AND WEBSTERS, NEW YORK - ( Foreword author & copyright unknown )*

**"With your heart,  
receive Jesus Christ  
as your personal  
Savior, Lord & Friend."**

*For local help and information:*