

Alo06 – **Rightly Reading God’s Word – Psalm 119:18**

This is **NOT a Msg** for **Bible Teaching**  
& This is **NOT a Msg** – to Train **Bible Teachers**

This is a **Practical Msg** – on how to  
**Rightly Read God’s Word** - for your **Daily Devotions**

We’ve **spent 5 WEEKS** talking about  
the **100% Guaranteed** Transformation

that can come - thru **Meaningful, Spirit-Filled**  
**Daily Devotions** with God – **In His Word**

& so – I **thought** it was **only right** that we should do **ONE Msg**  
at the **end** – On **HOW** to **RIGHTLY READ God’s Word**

**SO THAT** we can be **Rightly Transformed BY IT**

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**For the most part – God’s Word can be understood PLAINLY**  
By **Plainly** - & **Carefully** - **READING it**

**Most** of the **Letters** that make up **the N.T.**  
were **NOT Mysteries** to the **people** who received them

**Sometimes** - there **WERE parts** (or entire Ltrs)  
that **WERE Mysteries** - & Maybe still **ARE Mysteries**

**BUT** – For our **purpose today**  
We are **going** to **avoid the Mystery** texts

**NOT** because **I'm afraid**

**But because** we only have **a few mins** together  
& we have to **START** – **AT the Beginning**

So **today** – We'll start **At The Beginning**  
of how to **RIGHTLY READ God's Word**

**Let's Pray**

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**Our Key Vs today - Psalm 119:18 says (NLT)**  
**18 Open my eyes to see the wonderful truths in your instructions.**

**THAT** is our **desire** – to have **Eyes to SEE**  
**the wonderful truths that are IN God's Word**

We **don't want** to come up **with**  
**Our OWN Truths** – **While** we're reading **God's Word**

We **want** to have **eyes to See**  
**GOD'S Wonderful TRUTH** – that is **already THERE**

& **that is NOT** as **hard** as you **might think**

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**You know - MOST of the books of the N.T. are Letters**

**Written to Real people** – & **Real churches** -  
& **Dealing** with very **Real subjects**

& **if someone** writes **YOU a letter**  
**you** have a **certain way** of going **about**  
**UNDERSTANDING** what that **letter** is **about**, right?

& That WAY – that you approach your understanding  
Of what your friend's letter is about – is called CONTEXT

Now – there are numerous TYPES of Context –  
in Numerous Areas - for studying the Bible

But today we are ONLY talking about the CONTEXT we see  
while READING the Bible for our Daily Devotions

So – let me DEFINE the specific TYPE of context  
We're looking at today . . . From DICTIONARY.COM

**CONTEXT: *The parts of a written or spoken statement that precede or follow a specific word or passage, usually influencing its meaning or effect.***

CONTEXT means - that what your friend writes before & after  
any One Sentence in their letter →

is what determines what that One Sentence - MEANS  
*Does that make sense?*

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I have a Bible at home (that I love)  
that has NO Ch's & NO Vs's in it

& so the books that were written as LETTERS  
Look LIKE - & Read LIKE - Letters

& when you read it – you have a tendency  
to look at larger SECTIONS – Like PARAGRAPHS

in order to follow what the writer is saying in his LETTER

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The Ch's & Vs's in our Bibles are helpful  
for us ALL to FIND a certain PLACE to read together

But they can really HINDER  
the correct understanding of God's Word

Because we tend to Start & Stop our FOCUS  
on those silly (& meaningless) numbers

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When YOUR Friend Writes you a Letter

You don't search for a single sentence  
in the middle of the letter - & then ask yourself  
WHAT do I THINK that ONE, SINGLE Sentence means?

Hopefully - you try to determine what YOUR FRIEND Meant:

- By first getting a grasp on the letter as a whole
- & then following the FLOW of the letter up to that point
- & then looking closely on the paragraph that sentence is in
- & THEN finally looking closely at that sentence

That is called CONTEXT

**CONTEXT is the NUMBER ONE RULE  
for correct Biblical Interpretation**

*[let me repeat that]*

**CONTEXT is the NUMBER ONE RULE  
For correct Biblical Interpretation**

So WHY do we ONLY teach CONTEXT to Bible Teachers

**Don't YOU need to know – the NUMBER ONE RULE for correct Bible Interpretation – for your Daily Devotions?? (yes, you do)**

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**Let me show you what I mean**

**Turn over to Phil Ch 1**

**& Let's try to walk thru what I'm talking about**

In Phil Ch 1 there's a Famous Vs I'd like to use

But I need to start with it from the ESV (same as NKJ)

Because that's the wording for the Famous Quote of this Vs

**Philippians 1:21 (ESV)**

**21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.**

[VIDEO – Leave on the Wall until Nxt Vs – But NOT on the Switcher]

that is very poetic - & an incredible statement

But, Honestly, we Can make that Vs

mean many different things – Can't we ?

But – The ONLY meaning that MATTERS

Is the one PAUL (inspired by the Holy Spirit) MEANT

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**So – Often – (not always, but often)**

the easiest way to get headed in the right Direction

Is to use a GOOD BIBLE that has the ABILITY

to consider the CONTEXT when translating the Vs.

**These Bibles** are called **DYNAMIC TRANSLATIONS**  
& the **NLT** is my personal **favorite**

You **need** to have a **Good LITERAL Translation** around as well

But **WATCH** how the “**Dynamic Translation**” of the **NLT**  
**Gets us headed** in the **right Direction** here

The **LIT** – **ESV** said

***21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.***

**& here is Philippians 1:21 in the NLT**

***21 For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better.***

**That’s a little different** than the **Literal translation**, Right?  
***For to me, living means living for Christ***

**HOW** does the **NLT** get to that **Translation** ??

The **ANSWER** is - **CONTEXT**

So – **let’s** take **Phil 1:21** & **work backwards**  
**INTO a BIT** – of the **CONTEXT** – **OK?**

I’m **going** to **put on the screen** the **PARAGRAPH** that **Phil 1:21** is in

& I’m **going** to **TAKE OUT the Vs #'s** – so it **looks** like a **Paragraph** –  
**which** is **much closer** to how it was **written**

**Unfortunately** – **even** the **paragraphs** are **not designated** in the  
**original** text - & **so** the **paragraph breaks** can be **different** in different  
**translations** – **so be aware** of that

Ok – HERE is the paragraph - in the NLT  
that is made up of 4 Vs's – Phil 1:20-24

**For I fully expect and hope that I will never be ashamed, but that I will continue to be bold for Christ, as I have been in the past** (that's the 1<sup>st</sup> thought). **And I trust that my life will bring honor to Christ, whether I live or die** (bringing honor to Christ is now the issue, whether by living or dying). (& then our vs.21) **For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better** (the word 'For' – is a connecting word - Because this statement actually 'comes out of' the previous sentence about honoring Christ, whether by life or by death). (& then Paul cont's (or expands) that statement) **But if I live, I can do more fruitful work for Christ. So I really don't know which is better. I'm torn between two desires: I long to go and be with Christ, which would be far better for me. But for your sakes, it is better that I continue to live.** (it seems like Paul's kinda thinking out-loud) (he's kinda 'musing' over his comments about Living or Dying)

Now - I know that this can take a little time & practice

but did you get the SENSE – that this entire paragraph is about BRINGING HONOR to Christ – Whether by living or by dying?

& the famous Vs 21 – actually begins  
with that Connecting Word, "For"  
meaning it's a continuation of a previous thought

& WHAT is that Previous thought?  
I trust that my life will bring honor to Christ, whether I live or die

& then the remainder of the Paragraph is Paul  
kinda thinking out-loud about the benefits of Living or Dying

So . . . the FOCUS of the paragraph – is caught up in the line  
“I trust that my life will bring honor to Christ”

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Sooo . . . What did PAUL MEAN when He wrote  
*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

HE meant – that for him . . .

Living meant - *Living to Bring Honor to Christ,*  
*and dying is even better* – It’s the BEST

SO – the Famous Vs - *For to me to live is Christ . . .*

MEANS

*For me - living means living to Bring Honor to Jesus Christ*

THAT is what the Vs MEANS !!

*If I’m ALIVE – I’m Alive to Bring HONOR to Jesus Christ*

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& You & I - DON’T get to CHANGE that Meaning

We only get to APPLY that Meaning to OUR Personal Life

So - HOW can YOU APPLY Paul’s Commitment . . .  
*living means - bringing HONOR to Jesus Christ*

IS there an area in your life

*where you could LIVE – to Bring HONOR to Jesus Christ?*



**NAMING** that **area** is called **APPLICATION** →

**RESPONDING** to that **Application**  
is what will **TRANSFORM** your life

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**So – the next time you’re sitting in a Bible Study**  
& someone asks you what you think Phil 1:21 means

Say – **Very Politely** – *It doesn’t matter what I think it means*

*Let’s try to find out what PAUL meant  
by looking closely at the context*

*& then let’s all Honestly APPLY what PAUL Meant – to our Lives*

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**Now – You MAY – or MAY NOT**

Need a **LITTLE** more **BACKGROUND** – or **Insight**

**On** the **Book** or **Section** of the Bible you are **looking at**  
**IN** order to better grasp – the **CONTEXT**

& I’ve **been talking** about the **Very-Condensed Bible Guide**  
*“With The Word”* By Warren Wiersbe

Which **WILL do that** for **you**

But the **Next STEP UP** – is a Good **STUDY BIBLE**  
**Which I highly Recommend** that you Get

Our **“Go To” Favorite** has **always been**  
*The Life Application Study Bible”*

**But my Current Favorite is**

***The NLT Illustrated Study Bible*** – (really incredible)  
(which is the **follow-up** to the **NLT Study Bible**)

& **ANY** of the **Study Bibles** – Will give you **MORE INFO** than you **need**  
for **Rightly Reading the Word** in your Devotion time

& **For** your **Devotion Time** – You can usually **SKIP**  
**MOST** of the **Introduction material** – (or just skim it)

& **just find** the section **called**

**PURPOSE** – or **THEME** - or **MESSAGE**

Which **gives** the **REASON** (Purpose) of the book

& just **get the Background** info you need - to **grasp** the **CONTEXT**  
- of the **Book** - & of the **Section** you're **looking** at

You **don't have** to **prepare** a **College paper** on it  
Just **get** a **general idea** of the **CONTEXT**

**So you** can be "**In the Same Lane**"

**As** the **Author's** "**Originally Intended Meaning**"

& **if necessary** - get **some Discipleship** on this  
**From a Believer** who is **currently DOING IT** (or learn it together)

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**Now . . . SINCE we're in Philippians . . .**  
**Can you handle ONE MORE?**

**I'm going to put on the wall - One Paragraph**  
from **Paul's Letter** to the **Philippians** (*not telling you the Vs's*)

& I'm **going to ask you** – **WHAT PAUL** Meant,  
**when** he wrote **ONE Specific SENTENCE** in that Paragraph

**NOT** - **What do YOU think the Sentence** means  
but **what** did **Paul Actually Mean** when He **wrote** it?

**BUT** – You **really have** to **Pay Attention** to the **entire Paragraph** –  
**before** you **make a decision** on that **one Sentence**, ok?

Ok, **Here it is**

**How I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again. I know you have always been concerned for me, but you didn't have the chance to help me. Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have (that is the main point of the paragraph). (& then Paul expands that thought (that's how we know it's the main thought)) **I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. For** (connecting word – summing up his thought) **I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.** (then he finishes the thought) **Even so, you have done well to share with me in my present difficulty.****

In this Paragraph is (possibly) the Most Famously  
“Quoted Out of Context Vs” in the entire Bible

*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me*

But – now that we’ve read the entire paragraph

Can you tell me – NOT what WE WANT this Vs to mean . . .

But can you tell me what PAUL Meant when he wrote this vs?

It’s not too hard looking at the entire paragraph, right?

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The Philippians were concerned for Paul’s well being

But he told them – He never felt “in need”

*Because he had learned*

how to be content with whatever he had – (main point)

& then he expands on that main point by saying

*He had learned how to live on nothing or with everything,  
in every situation, whether with a full stomach or empty,  
whether with plenty or little*

& then the Famous Verse - PHIL 4:13

*For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength*

Paul Clearly Meant that he knew how to face ANY Circumstance  
No matter how GOOD , & No Matter how BAD

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It becomes pretty easy to see – that Paul is saying that his circumstances DON'T MATTER at all

That Thru Jesus Christ  
Paul has the strength to face ANY situation

Whether it's the Absolute WORST  
Or the Absolute BEST – & it doesn't Matter Which One

The Condition of his Circumstances  
has ZERO BEARING on His life in Christ

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Tell me – is THAT the Meaning most people Give this Vs ?

Have we not taken that Vs

& used it for the EXACT OPPOSITE  
of What PAUL MEANT - when He Wrote it??

& - IS that a PROBLEM ???  
*Well yeah, it certainly CAN be*

Because we have implied that Vs means;

We can Accomplish ANYTHING we WANT to

We can Climb any mountain

We can make any amount of Money

We can Achieve whatever we Want

& we can WIN this FOOTBALL game – thru Christ . . .

The problem is – that is the Exact Opposite  
of what the Bible actually means in this Vs

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**But – HERE is the GOOD NEWS**

**What the Bible actually MEANS**

Is **WAY, WAY better** – than our **OWN meaning** of Scripture

The **true Meaning** of **PHIL 4:13** is **100 TIMES Better**

Than our **MAN-MADE version** of its **meaning**

**Because** this **scripture** means

that **WHATEVER** you are **going through today**

Your **ABIDING RELATIONSHIP** with **Jesus Christ**

Will **BE your Strength** to get you **thru it**

**It means** that **Jesus** Christ - is **WITH you**

& **that** He is **Your STRENGTH**

**& it means** that you **can now focus**

on **HOW** you **CAN HONOR him** – **IN this situation**

**NO MATTER** - **Whether** it's the **BEST Situation** in your Life

or the **WORST Situation** in your Life

**JESUS** will **BE your strength**

& **you** can **FOCUS** – **on HONORING him**

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The **LIFE-TRANSFORMING truth** of the **Bible**  
Is the **ACTUAL Truth** of the Bible  
***NOT our OPINION of the Truth***

**So – As we Open God’s Word**

To **MEDITATE** ON IT

To **APPLY** IT

To **RESPOND** TO IT

**Let’s be AWARE** of the **CONTEXT**  
of **What** we’re **Reading**

& **How the CONTEXT**  
**Directly IMPACTS** the **Meaning** of the TEXT

& Let’s **COMMIT** Ourselves  
To **RIGHTLY READING GOD’S WORD**

**Let’s Pray**