



CHRISTIAN
UNION

Seven Keys to Kingdom Advancement

KEY THREE: SEEKING GOD LIFESTYLE: MASSIVE INTAKE OF SCRIPTURE

May God's Kingdom Come



Matthew 6:9-10 - Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

Sermon on the Mount, 1877
Carl H. Bloch



3. Seeking God Lifestyle: 3. Massive Intake of Scripture

We live in the church age, and it's our role to hasten the day of Christ's return by deepening and expanding the kingdom of God.

Having the Scriptures filling our minds helps us as Christians seek God wholeheartedly because we learn what pleases Him and have strength to obey.



Seven Keys to Kingdom Advancement

1. Aspiration and Desperation
2. Theological Foundations
3. **Seeking God Wholeheartedly**
4. Spiritual Practices
5. Supernatural Aspects
6. Impacting the Three Spheres
7. Leadership



Seeking God Entails a Focus on the Scriptures

Isaiah 34:16 - “**Seek and read from the book of the LORD**: not one of these shall be missing; none shall be without her mate. For the mouth of the LORD has commanded, and his Spirit has gathered them.”



Seeking God Lifestyle

1. Humility with Help of Fasting
2. Fervent and Frequent Prayer
- 3. Massive Intake of Scripture**
4. Deep and Ongoing Repentance
5. Faithful Obedience
6. Strong Community
7. Relentless Perseverance

Learning and Not Just Valuing the Scriptures



“I would rather speak five words out of this book [the Bible] than 50,000 words of the philosophers. If we want revivals, we must revive our reverence for the Word of God.”

“I have ten men willing to die for the Bible for every one man willing to actually read it.”

Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892)
British Pastor and Author



Massive Intake of Scripture

1. Forms of God's Word
2. Qualities of Scripture
3. Usefulness of Scripture
4. Power of Scripture
5. Obeying the Scriptures
6. Examples of Massive Scripture Intake
7. Christian Leadership



Massive Intake of Scripture

1. **Forms of God's Word**
2. Qualities of Scripture
3. Usefulness of Scripture
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6. Examples of Massive Scripture Intake
7. Christian Leadership



Different Forms of God's Word

- **Scriptures are Unique** - The Scriptures are God's word to all people at all times in all cultures.
- **“Word of God”** - The Bible refers to a variety of modes of divine communication as “the Word of God.” Every form of “the Word of God” is to be obeyed, once there's confidence it's from God and always in harmony with the Scriptures.



Different Forms of God's Word

- **Jesus is referred to as the Word of God: Revelation 19:13** - He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is **The Word of God.**
- **Speech from God is referred to as the Word of God: Genesis 1:3** - And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light. **Psalm 33:6** - **By the word of the LORD** the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host.
- **Words of prophets are referred to as the Word of God: Jeremiah 1:9** - Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the LORD said to me, "Behold, I have put **my words in your mouth.**"



Different Forms of God's Word - Dreams and Visions

Job 33:14-15 - For **God speaks** in one way, and in two, though man does not perceive it. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls on men, while they slumber on their beds...

Acts 16:9-10 - And **a vision appeared to Paul in the night**: a man of Macedonia was standing there, urging him and saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, **concluding that God had called us** to preach the gospel to them.



Different Forms of God's Word - The Bible

“Thus says the LORD,” appears 417 times in the ESV text of the OT

2 Timothy 3:16-17 - **All Scripture is breathed out by God** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2 Peter 3:15-16 - just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, **as they do the other Scriptures.**



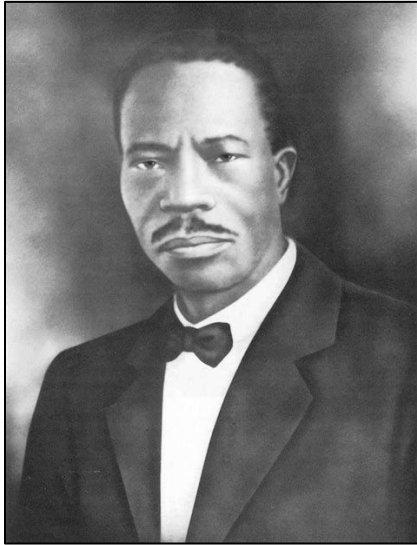
3. Seeking God Lifestyle: 3. Massive Intake of Scripture

Massive Intake of Scripture

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Lack of Biblical Knowledge Leads to Misunderstanding of God



“Get to know the God of the Bible.”

Bishop Charles H. Mason (1866-1961)
Founder of Church of God in Christ

The Bible is Worth Celebrating



The Museum of the Bible in Washington D.C. celebrates the influence of the most important document in the history of humanity.

**Museum of the Bible
Washington D.C.**



Five Qualities of Scripture

1. **Authority** - The Scriptures are the very words of God and by them God teaches, commands, and forbids.
2. **Clarity** - The Scriptures are able to be understood, although our understanding requires the help of the Holy Spirit, our own effort, and will be imperfect.
3. **Necessity** - The Scriptures are needed to understand the gospel, know God's will, and walk with God, with the help of the Holy Spirit.
4. **Sufficiency** - The Scriptures contain all the words we need to know for salvation.
5. **Utility** - The Scriptures profit those who read them and put them into practice.



A Note About Sufficiency of Scripture

- **Salvation Explained** - The Scriptures satisfy the universal human needs for salvation and pleasing God (e.g., 2 Timothy 3:14-17).
- **Additional Commands** - However, God may give specific commands to individuals that will not come through Scripture. - Examples:
 - The angel tells Joseph to proceed in wedding Mary (Matthew 1:20).
 - A dream bids Paul to Macedonia (Acts 16:9-10).
 - The Spirit tells Philip to go to the Ethiopian chariot (Acts 8:29).



A Note About Sufficiency of Scripture

- **Obeying All Commands of God** - In situations like these, disobeying would be tantamount to disobeying a clear command in Scripture.
- **Understanding Sufficiency of Scripture** - The sufficiency of Scripture does not nullify our need to hear God's voice and obey Him when He gives commands.



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First Book Printed in History - The Gutenberg Bible



Psalm 119:105 -
Your word is a lamp to
my feet and a light to
my path.



The Usefulness of the Scriptures

Manifold benefits in this life are promised those who devote themselves to the Scriptures. The benefits of the Scriptures follow in proportion to one's devotion to them. They include:

- Increased knowledge of God and God's ways
- Faithfulness to God and His ways
- Prosperity in all areas of life for the individual and his family
- Blessings to those in his community
- Personal blessings like joy and peace



The Usefulness of the Scriptures

2 Timothy 3:16-17 - All Scripture is breathed out by God and **profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.**

1 Corinthians 10:11 Now these things happened to them as an example, but **they were written down for our instruction**, on whom the end of the ages has come.



The Usefulness of the Scriptures

Deuteronomy 17:18-20 - “And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, **he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law**, approved by the Levitical priests.¹⁹ And **it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them,**²⁰ **that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment,** either to the right hand or to the left, **so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.”**

Knowing the Scriptures Changes Everything



“We deceive ourselves if we claim to want to hear His voice but neglect the primary channel through which it comes. We must read His Word. We must obey it. We must live it, which means rereading it throughout our lives.”

Elisabeth Elliot
American Missionary and Author



The Usefulness of the Scriptures

Joshua 1:7-8 - Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, **that you may have good success wherever you go.** ⁸ **This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.**



The Usefulness of the Scriptures

Psalm 1 - Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; ² **but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.** ³ **He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.** ⁴ The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. ⁵ Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; ⁶ for the LORD knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.

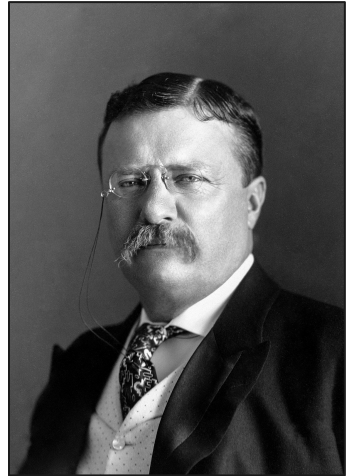


The Usefulness of the Scriptures

Psalm 19:7-11 - The law of the LORD is **perfect, reviving the soul**; the testimony of the LORD is **sure, making wise the simple**; the precepts of the LORD are **right, rejoicing the heart**; the commandment of the LORD is **pure, enlightening the eyes**; the fear of the LORD is **clean, enduring forever**; the rules of the LORD are **true**, and **righteous altogether**.¹⁰ More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.¹¹ Moreover, **by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.**



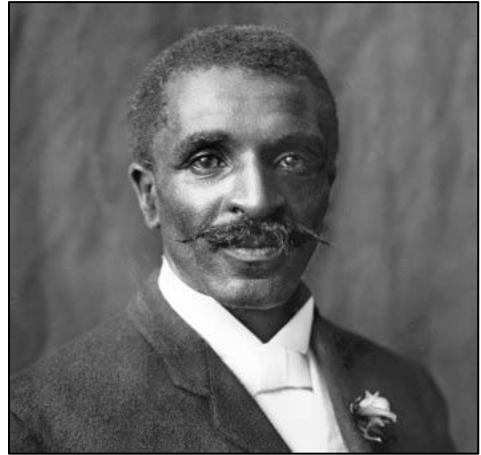
Bible Worth More than a College Education



“A thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education.”

Theodore Roosevelt (1858 - 1919)
President of the United States of America

Bible as the Secret to Success



“The secret of my success? It is simple. It is found in the Bible, ‘In all thy ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct thy paths.’”

George Washington Carver (1864-1943)
American Agricultural Scientist and Inventor



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The Power of the Scriptures

- **Scriptures Centered in Evangelism** - The Scriptures carry the power to bring spiritual change in non-believers and believers, giving regeneration and revival, since they are the very words of God.
- **Scriptures Centered in Teaching** - Preaching and teaching should concentrate on the very words of Scripture, as much as possible, while still giving the meaning of the Bible through illustration and application.
- **Scriptures over Commentary** - Christian teachers, authors, and books can be helpful, but the Scriptures should be the Christian's primary textbook.



The Power of the Scriptures

Psalm 19:7 The **law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul**

Romans 10:17 So **faith comes from hearing**, and hearing through **the word of Christ.**

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is **living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.**



The Power of the Scriptures

Acts 20:32 And now I commend you to God and to **the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.**

Ephesians 6:13, 14, 17 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, **that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.**¹⁴ Stand therefore ... and take ... **the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.**

John 15:7 If you abide in me, **and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.**



The Power of the Scriptures

Nehemiah 8:7-8, 12, 17-18 - Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law, while the people remained in their places. ⁸ **They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.**

¹² **And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them.**



The Power of the Scriptures

Nehemiah 8:7-8, 12, 17-18 (cont'd) - ¹⁷ And all the assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in the booths, for from the days of Jeshua the son of Nun to that day the people of Israel had not done so. **And there was very great rejoicing.** ¹⁸ **And day by day, from the first day to the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God.** They kept the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the rule.



The Power of the Scriptures

Deuteronomy 31:10-13 - And Moses commanded them, “At the end of every seven years, at the set time in the year of release, at the Feast of Booths, ¹¹ when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God at the place that he will choose, **you shall read this law before all Israel in their hearing.** ¹² Assemble the people, men, women, and little ones, and the sojourner within your towns, that they may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, and be careful to do all the words of this law, ¹³ and that their children, who have not known it, may hear and learn to fear the LORD your God, as long as you live in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess.”



King Josiah's Reverence for the Law

2 Chronicles 34:16-21 - Shaphan brought the book to the king, and further reported to the king, “All that was committed to your servants they are doing.”¹⁷ They have emptied out the money that was found in the house of the LORD and have given it into the hand of the overseers and the workmen.”¹⁸ Then Shaphan the secretary told the king, “Hilkiah the priest has given me a book.” And Shaphan read from it before the king.¹⁹ **And when the king heard the words of the Law, he tore his clothes.**



King Josiah's Reverence for the Law

2 Chronicles 34:16-21 (cont'd) - ²⁰ And the king commanded Hilkiah, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Abdon the son of Micah, Shaphan the secretary, and Asaiah the king's servant, saying, ²¹ “Go, inquire of the LORD for me and for those who are left in Israel and in Judah, concerning the words of the book that has been found. For great is the wrath of the LORD that is poured out on us, because our fathers **have not kept the word of the LORD, to do according to all that is written in this book.**”



King Josiah's Reverence for the Law

2 Chronicles 34:26-27 - ²⁶ But to the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall you say to him, Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: **Regarding the words that you have heard, ²⁷ because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before God when you heard his words against this place and its inhabitants, and you have humbled yourself before me and have torn your clothes and wept before me, I also have heard you, declares the LORD.**



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Obeying the Scriptures

The reason for taking in vast amounts of Scripture is so that one might walk in them and thereby experience the benefits of them all the more. Taking in the Scriptures without doing them brings little to no benefit.



Obeying the Scriptures

James 1:22-25 - But **be doers of the word, and not hearers only**, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. ²⁴ For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. ²⁵ But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, **he will be blessed in his doing.**



Obeying the Scriptures

Matthew 7:24-27 - “Everyone then who **hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock.** ²⁵ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶ And everyone who **hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.** ²⁷ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it.”

Psalms 119:100 - I understand more than the aged, **for I keep your precepts.**



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Massive Intake of Scripture

Nehemiah 8:1-8 - And all the people gathered as one man into the square before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses that the LORD had commanded Israel. ² So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could understand what they heard, on the first day of the seventh month. ³ And **he read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law.**



Massive Intake of Scripture

Nehemiah 8:1-8 (cont'd) - ⁴ And Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden platform that they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand, and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam on his left hand. ⁵ And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was above all the people, and as he opened it all the people stood. ⁶ And Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, “Amen, Amen,” lifting up their hands. And they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground.



Massive Intake of Scripture

Nehemiah 8:1-8 (cont'd) - ⁷ Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law, while the people remained in their places. ⁸ **They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.**

Chrysostom - Early Church Preacher



“It is said of Chrysostom, that he had learned his Bible by heart, so as to be able to repeat it at his pleasure: no wonder that he was called golden-mouthed.”

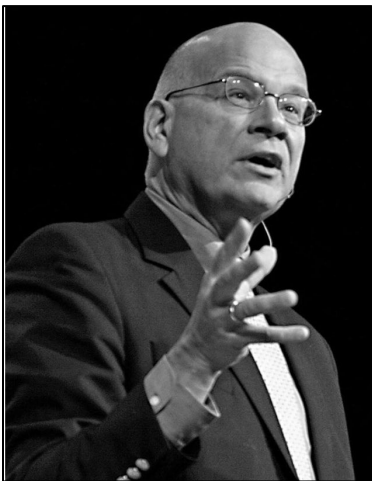
- Charles Spurgeon

St. Patrick's Value of the Scriptures



St. Patrick (385 - 461) - While a shepherd in slavery, St. Patrick recited from memory 50 Psalms every morning and 50 Psalms every night. Patrick's ministry lasted 29 years, baptizing over 120,000 Irishmen and planting 300 churches.

Scripture Immersion as Ordinary Protestant Formation



“In the 1549 *Book of Common Prayer* as well as in 1559, daily readings (public and private) covered nearly the entire Old Testament once and the New Testament thrice in a year. On top of that, the Psalms were to be read once a month. Scripture immersion was ordinary Protestant spiritual formation.”

Tim Keller
Chairman and Co-Founder Redeemer City to City



Massive Scripture Intake and Its Benefits

- **Princeton Revival of 1815** - One of the main causes to the revival was said to have been that President Ashbel Green made students memorize and be prepared to recite five chapters of the Bible each week. [*God at Work by Ken Jasko*](#)
- **Healing While Reading Ezekiel for Two Hours** - Example of woman's healing experience reading Ezekiel for two hours at a CU Fire Retreat



Massive Scripture Intake and Its Benefits

- **William Wilberforce** - The member of parliament, who labored for 40 years to outlaw the slave trade and emancipate the slaves in the British Empire, hid the Scriptures in his heart, including the entirety of Psalm 119, and would recite it at his leisure.
- **World Trumpet Mission** - During Covid, John Mulinde's World Trumpet Mission out of Uganda sponsored a program on the web to read the Bible in 30 days with many thousands participating.



Studies of Bible Engagement

American Bible Society's Bible Engagement Commission:

“Consistent with the findings from our previous studies, we also find that there are no statistically significant differences between those who read or listen to the Bible one to three times a week and those who spent zero days doing so. In other words, for adults, engaging scripture for less than four days a week does not appear to have the same protective factor as doing so for four or more days.”



3. Seeking God Lifestyle: 3. Massive Intake of Scripture

Ways to Take in the Scriptures

1. Hear (1 Timothy 4:13)
2. Read (Matthew 12:3)
3. Meditate (Psalm 1:2)
4. Memorize (Psalm 119:11)
5. Study (Ezra 7:10)
6. Recite (Matthew 4:4)
7. Copy (Deuteronomy 17:18)
8. Do (Psalm 119:100)



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Christian Leaders Set the Pace

1 Timothy 4:12-16 - Until I come, **devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.** Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. **Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress. Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.**



Christian Leaders Set the Pace

2 Timothy 3:15-4:5 - But as for you, **continue** in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how **from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.**



Christian Leaders Set the Pace

2 Timothy 3:15-4:5 (cont'd) - I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: **preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.** As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.



3. Seeking God Lifestyle: 3. Massive Intake of Scripture

Ways Christians and Leaders Can Take In Lots of Scripture

- Memorize large portions or whole books of the Bible.
- Read the entire Bible multiples times per year.
- Compile extensive Bible studies on various topics.
- Teach and preach drawing constantly on the Scriptures.
- Lead your ministry in public non-stop reading of the Bible.
- Lead your ministry to read the Bible in 90 days.
- Lead your ministry to memorize certain key Scripture passages



How Much Is Needed

- **Better Than Food** - The Scriptures are more vital than food (Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4).
- **Morning and Evening** - Scriptures were read or recited at the morning and evening hours of prayer (cf. Psalm 1:2). The Scriptures should be consumed morning and evening at devotional times and at various other times each day as desired and needed. Additional time should be taken to read, hear, study, meditate, memorize, and recite the Scriptures on a weekly, monthly, and annual basis.
- **All of It** - One should take care to incorporate all of the Bible, so that the whole counsel of God is understood and a canon within the canon is not developed.



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We live in the church age, and it's our role to hasten the day of Christ's return by deepening and expanding the kingdom of God.

As Christians seek God wholeheartedly, He gives grace, power and direction to be used as His instruments in our families, communities and nation.

**Help America Return to God by Becoming a Cornerstone Partner
with Christian Union: christianunion.org/cornerstone**

**Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord,
the people whom he has chosen as his heritage!**

Psalm 33:12



**CHRISTIAN
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