

Spiritual KETCHUP



My kids love candy, but they hate to eat healthy food. They actually can't swallow it. I thought they were going to shrivel up and die. Really, they didn't eat and started looking like the children people adopt from third-world countries.

I prayed, God answered, and all I can say is, "Praise God for ketchup!" It is the only power that can open the tightly clinched jaws of my kids! They love the stuff! I can get them to eat anything as long as it is covered with the awesome red sauce. Now they eat all kinds of foods and are stronger and healthier. Sometimes the Bible is hard to swallow. It has so much variety to offer, but lots of people only nibble on a couple of the sweet promises and refuse to have a balanced, healthy diet. This results in loss of strength and emotional instability, which is really spiritual malnourishment.

I have been in that pitiful, powerless position of not being able to take the meaty stuff of the Word of God. I was shriveling up spiritually and taking in an unbalanced diet until I discovered what I call "spiritual ketchup." This ketchup is really a series of questions you can use to guide your Bible reading and help you swallow and digest the Word of God. I have listed these questions here for you to use. Go ahead. Try it. I'm sure you'll like it. Bon appétit!

1. Is there an insight?

Watch for insights in the Scriptures that can help you know God better or show you something about who He is and what His character is. We know God through His Word. As you read, keep this question in mind. As you discover things about God, praise Him for who He is and live in light of it.

2. Is there a principle?

Principles are truths that provide power for living. The Bible contains a lot of them. Note them and let them rule your decisions.

3. Is there a command?

God's Word is filled with commands, things He has told us to do. As you read find out what they are and obey God. Remember that God blesses us according to our obedience, and partial obedience is not obedience.

4. Is there a prohibition?

God has also told us some things not to do. These are referred to as "prohibitions." Underline and adhere to the "do not's" in Scripture. Recall again that God's blessings are a product of our obedience.

5. Is there a promise?

Some things God has said He will do in our lives. I have found that marking these in the Word and depositing them in the bank of my heart provides me with great spiritual wealth. Claim the promises; they are ours for the taking if our motives are to live for the Lord's glory and the advancement of His kingdom.

6. Is there a special word?

At times you may be going through something in your life, and a Scripture verse or phrase will "jump out of the Bible and into your soul." I call these special words. It's almost as if you're online with heaven when you're reading, and then you hear, "You've got mail!" God e-mails your heart. Write these words down, inhale them in your spiritual lungs, and be refreshed: God has not forgotten you, and He is in control!