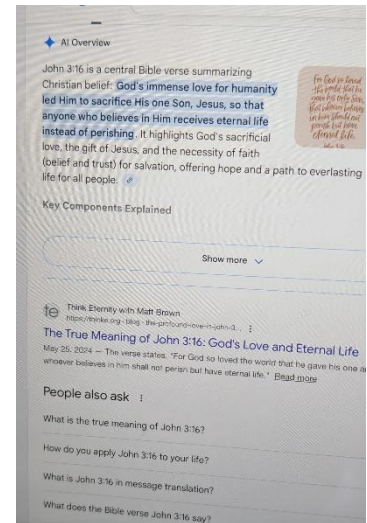


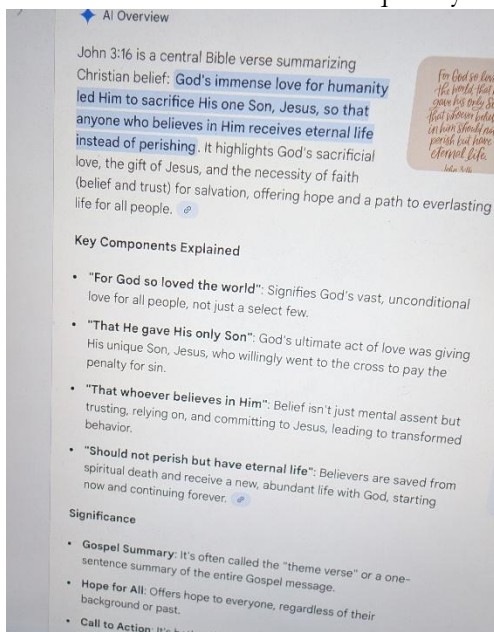
Make Spending Time in God's Word a New Year's Resolution

Do you get a little confused with what you read in the Bible? When reading parables, it is difficult to understand what Jesus was talking about with some of His stories or references. Don't get discouraged because you don't immediately understand. There is help, literally right within your reach.

Many of us spend a few minutes in the morning, coffee cup in hand, relaxing and getting ready to start the day. This is a great time to read a bible verse while sitting on the sofa or at the breakfast table. Right next to you is likely a cell phone and/or iPad. That is where you can find the information about the passage you just read. After you read a passage, open your internet browser and type the biblical reference followed by the word "meaning." Within seconds, your screen will show an explanation of the bible passage. It's just that easy, and it takes just seconds. It will explain the meaning and context of the passage you just read. The first explanation is from "AI", but other human writings also populate your screen.



Let's do a quick practice run of this concept. Read the familiar passage, John 3:16. We have heard it so many times that we can probably recite it from memory. *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* Type "John 3:16 meaning" in your browser. What instantly appears on the screen not only explains the passage, but outlines the "Key Components Explained," and the "Significance." Just click on "Show More" for this information to appear. What a gold mine! Scrolling down my browser gives even more information – it lists some frequently asked questions, "How can you apply John 3:16 to your life?"



and other related questions. It just took seconds for you to gain valuable insight into what you just read.

Why do I suggest this now? New Year's is typically when people evaluate their daily routines and consider making changes. Many resolutions are short-lived, but our chances of sustaining lifestyle changes increase if we experience immediate success, and it is easy to do. Learning some new insight into understanding bible passages might be just what you need to be energized to make a permanent change. And, it has immediate results.

How do I get started? Set aside some time each day – perhaps over morning coffee, or just before turning out the lights at night. Pick a time with minimal distractions. Set a goal to read one chapter of the Bible each day. Most

chapters will include several related stories. You are likely to skip over some of the stories but resist the urge. To see why it was essential to include in the Bible, type in the passage reference and the word “meaning” to gain a broader understanding. If you do this often, I guarantee you will gain new insight into the Bible.

Every Part of the Bible is Important: We tend to intentionally overlook some books or chapters of the Bible because we don’t understand them or because they deal with a subject we don’t want to hear. When you come to those passages, it is doubly important to seek out the meaning of the passage. It has broader implications. Jesus did tell us that, in this life, “we will have trouble” (John 16:33), but that he “came to overcome the world.” There is hope. Jesus is the foundation for our joy and hope, no matter what comes our way.”¹ Read those difficult passages, too, and know that Jesus is our Hope in good times and bad.

This process could forever change the way you read the Bible. It could change your life. That is what New Year's Resolutions are all about.

Happy New Year!

Question: Are you willing to try a resolution of being more intentional in understanding God’s Word?

Closing Prayer: Dear Lord. Your Word describes Jesus’ ministry. As we discover the meaning of Your Word, we will see how it applies to our lives. We commit ourselves to a better life in the year to come. Amen.

¹ Portals of Prayer, December 24, 2025 devotional reading.