

# Unraveling the Mysteries



David C. McCasland

*I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path.*  
**Psalm 119:104**

Read: **Psalm 119:97–104**

Bible in a Year: **Jeremiah 20–21; 2 Timothy 4**

I have always enjoyed the wit and insight of *Peanuts* creator, Charles Schulz. One of my favorite cartoons drawn by him appeared in a book about young people in the church. It shows a young man holding a Bible as he tells a friend on the phone, “I think I’ve made one of the first steps toward unraveling the mysteries of the Old Testament . . . I’m starting to read it!” (*Teen-Ager Is Not a Disease*).

Psalm 119 overflows with the writer’s hunger to understand and experience the power of God’s Word each day. “Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long” (v. 97). This eager pursuit leads to growing wisdom, understanding, and obedience to the Lord (vv. 98–100).

The Bible doesn’t contain a magic formula for “unraveling the mysteries” in its pages. The process is more than mental and requires a response to what we read. While some passages may remain puzzling to us, we can embrace those truths we clearly understand, and say to the Lord, “How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth! I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path” (vv. 103–104).

A wonderful journey of discovery awaits us in God’s Word.

*Lord, thank You for the Bible, which gives us wisdom and understanding to follow Your pathway of life today.*

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**A commitment to read and follow God’s Word begins a daily journey of discovering His love and power.**

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# Ruth's Story

Dave Branon



*Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. [Romans 10:13](#)*

**Read:** [Romans 10:1–13](#)

**Bible in a Year:** [Jeremiah 22–23](#); [Titus 1](#)

Ruth cannot tell her story without tears. In her mid-eighties and unable to get around much anymore, Ruth may not appear to be a central figure in our church's life. She depends on others for rides, and because she lives alone she doesn't have a huge circle of influence.

But when she tells us her story of salvation—as she does often—Ruth stands out as a remarkable example of God's grace. Back when she was in her thirties, a friend invited her to go to a meeting one night. Ruth didn't know she was going to hear a preacher. “I wouldn't have gone if I knew,” she says. She already had “religion,” and it wasn't doing her any good. But go she did. And she heard the good news about Jesus that night.

Now, more than fifty years later, she cries tears of joy when she talks of how Jesus transformed her life. That evening, she became a child of God. Her story never grows old.

It doesn't matter if our story is similar to Ruth's or not. What does matter is that we take the simple step of putting our faith in Jesus and His death and resurrection. The apostle Paul said, “If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Rom. 10:9).

That's what Ruth did. You can do that too. Jesus redeems, transforms, and gives us new life.

*To learn about having a relationship with Jesus, read [Following Jesus](#).*

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**Belonging to Christ is not rehabilitation; it's re-creation.**

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# Who Is This?

Arthur Jackson



*They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”* **Mark 4:41**

Read: **Mark 4:35–41**

Bible in a Year: **Jeremiah 24–26; Titus 2**

“Remove everything from your desks, take out a piece of paper and pencil.” When I was a student these dreaded words announced that “test time” had come.

In Mark 4, we read that Jesus’s day, which started with teaching by the seaside (v. 1), ended with a time of testing on the sea (v. 35). The boat that had been used as a teaching platform was used to transport Jesus and a handful of His followers to the other side of the sea. During the journey (while an exhausted Jesus slept in the back of the boat), they encountered a swirling storm (v. 37). Drenched disciples woke Jesus with the words, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?” (v. 38). Then it happened. The One who had exhorted the crowds to “Listen!” earlier in the day (v. 3), uttered a simple, powerful command to the winds of nature—“Quiet! Be still!” (v. 39).

The wind obeyed and the wonder of fear-filled disciples was displayed with the words, “Who is this?” (v. 41). The question was a good one but it would take them a while to honestly and correctly conclude that Jesus was God’s Son. Sincere, honest, open-hearted questions and experience lead people to the same conclusion today. He is more than a teacher to listen to; He is the God to be worshiped.

*Father, thank You for Your Word that helps us to see Jesus as Your Son. Please help me to listen to You and to trust that You are in control.*

Our Daily Bread welcomes writer **Arthur Jackson**! Meet Arthur and all our authors at [odb.org/all-authors](http://odb.org/all-authors).

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**“Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go.” Matthew 8:19**

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# Living Anonymously

David C. McCasland



*Let us have real warm affection for one another as between [family].* **Romans 12:10 Phillips**

**Read: Romans 12:1–13**

**Bible in a Year: Jeremiah 27–29; Titus 3**

My well-worn and often-read copy of Jane Yolen's essay "Working Up to Anon" (Anonymous) was clipped from *The Writer* magazine many years ago. "The best writers," she says, "are the ones who really, in their heart of hearts, aspire to the byline Anon. The story told is important, not the storyteller."

The story we tell is about Jesus, the Savior, who gave His life for us. Together with other believers we live for Him and share His love with others.

Romans 12:3–21 describes the attitude of humility and love that should permeate our relationships with each other as followers of Jesus. "Don't cherish exaggerated ideas of yourself or your importance, but try to have a sane estimate of your capabilities by the light of the faith that God has given to you all. . . . Let us have real warm affection for one another as between [family], and a willingness to let the other [person] have the credit" (vv. 3, 10 J.B. Phillips New Testament).

Pride in our past accomplishments can blind us to the gifts of others. Arrogance can poison the future.

John the Baptist, whose mission was to pave the way for Jesus, said, "He must become greater; I must become less" (John 3:30).

That's a good motto for us all.

*I admit, Lord, that I have a lot to learn about humility. Help me to see You for who You are so You and others have their rightful place in my life.*

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**Always be humble before God and allow Him to be your all in all.**  
**Oswald Chambers**

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# Powerful Baby

Tim Gustafson



*How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? . . . But I trust in your unfailing love.*

**Psalm 13:1, 5**

Read: **Psalm 13**

Bible in a Year: **Jeremiah 30–31; Philemon**

The first time I saw him, I cried. He looked like a perfect newborn asleep in his crib. But we knew he would never wake up. Not until he was in the arms of Jesus.

He clung to life for several months. Then his mother told us of his death in a heart-wrenching email. She wrote of “that deep, deep pain that groans inside you.” Then she said, “How deeply God carved His work of love into our hearts through that little life! What a powerful life it was!”

Powerful? How could she say that?

This family’s precious little boy showed them—and us—that we must depend on God for everything. Especially when things go horribly wrong! The hard yet comforting truth is that God meets us in our pain. He knows the grief of losing a Son.

In our deepest pain, we turn to the songs of David because he writes out of his own grief. “How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and day after day have sorrow in my heart?” he asked (Ps. 13:2). “Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death” (v. 3). Yet David could give his biggest questions to God. “But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation” (v. 5).

Only God can bring ultimate significance to our most tragic events.

*Where do I turn when a crisis hits me? Do I ever get angry with God when facing grief and loss? Am I afraid to share my true emotions with Him? Have I ever asked God for His peace?*

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**God can do the most with what we think is least.**

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