

Beneficial Bible Study

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Studying the Bible makes perfect sense. Consider the following verses:
 - 1. John 17:3 - “And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” (NKJV)
 - a. Eternal life is knowing God and Jesus.
 - b. Do you know God and Jesus?
 - 2. Matthew 7:21 - “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.” (NKJV)
 - a. In order to enter into Heaven, one must do the will of God.
 - b. Do you know the will of God?
 - 3. Ecclesiastes 12:13 - “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man’s all.” (NKJV)
 - a. The conclusion of the matter is to fear God and keep His commandments.
 - b. Do you know the commandments of God?
 - 4. It is crucial that we know God, that we know God’s will, and that we know God’s commandments.
 - 5. How do you come to know God, His will, and His commandments? By studying the Bible, which is the word of God.
- B. It is the purpose of this lesson to show three necessary elements to beneficial Bible study.
 - 1. Purpose.
 - 2. Attitudes.
 - 3. Methods.

I. PURPOSE OF BIBLE STUDY.

- A. Bible study promotes spiritual growth.
 - 1. I Peter 2:2
 - 2. Hebrews 5:12-14

- B. Bible study helps to make a Christian stable.
 - 1. Ephesians 4:11-15 - emp. 14 - “tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine”
 - 2. This person does not study for himself. He relies upon others to tell him what the Bible teaches. As a result, he will change his view for every new view he finds.
- C. Bible study helps a Christian to know the difference between Bible doctrine and the opinions of men, and the difference between Bible commands and the traditions of men.
 - 1. There were teachers who tried to bind where the word of God had not bound. (Colossians 2:16-23)
 - 2. If we teach things that are commandments of men, then we make our worship vain. (Mark 7:7)
 - 3. Bible study is not one part Bible verse and 9 parts thought. It is 9 parts Bible verse and 1 part thought.
- D. Bible study helps a Christian to know the difference between right and wrong.
 - 1. II Timothy 2:15
 - 2. “rightly divide” - “1) to cut straight, to cut straight ways 1a) to proceed on straight paths, hold a straight course, equiv. to doing right 2) to make straight and smooth, to handle aright, to teach the truth directly and correctly” (Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon)
- E. Bible study allows a Christian to give a reason for his faith and his obedience.
 - 1. I Peter 3:15
 - 2. If a person asks you why you do such and such, or why you do not do something, can you give them a Bible answer?

II. PROPER ATTITUDES TOWARD BIBLE STUDY.

- A. Accept the Bible as the word of God. (II Timothy 3:16,17)
 - 1. Without this attitude, Bible study becomes fruitless and pointless.
 - 2. You will respect what the Bible says. (I.e. Paul wrote that which came from the mind of God. Moses taught that which came from the mind of God.)
- B. Expect to understand the Bible.
 - 1. Any time God has given a command, it has been in words that man can

understand.

- a. Adam and Eve - Genesis 2:17
 - b. Noah and gopher wood - Genesis 6:22
 - c. Commands given to the children of Israel
 - d. Jesus' teachings - Mark 16:16
2. Jesus preached to the common people. (Mark 12:37 - "... And the common people heard Him gladly." (NKJV)
 3. The epistles were written with the intent to be read aloud to Christians.
 - a. The letter to the brethren in Thesslonica was to be read aloud. (I Thessalonians 5:27)
 - b. The letter to the brethren in Colosse was to be read aloud. (Colossians 4:16)
 4. While there are "meaty" parts to the Bible, if a person desires to understand what he reads, then he will understand. The more he studies, the more he grows, the more the Christian's understanding evolves and improves.
- C. Love the word of God.
1. Without the love for the Truth, a person will not obey. (II Thessalonians 2:10)
 2. Without the love for the Truth, a person will believe a lie. (II Thessalonians 2:11,12)
 3. Consider David's attitude towards the word of God. (Psalms 119:47-48, 97, 113, 119)
- D. Have an open mind (honest heart).
1. In the parable of the sower, the person of a noble and good heart received the word. (Luke 8:15)
 2. If a person's mind is opened (not closed with preconceived notions and ideas), then he will accept what the Bible teaches. Consider the example of the Jews in John 5:39-47. They should have accepted Jesus, but did not because of their closed mind.
 3. This is not to say that a person must be gullible. He must study to confirm what he has heard. (Cf. Acts 17:11)
- E. Study with the right motive.

1. When you study the Bible, why do you study? Is it to prove your belief or to improve your belief?
 2. We should not start or accept a practice and then study. We should study the Bible and then start or accept a practice.
- F. Study the Bible with diligence.
1. There are no short cuts in learning. The learning process is a life long process filled with growth.
 2. Moses told parents to diligently teach their children. (Deuteronomy 6:6,7)
 3. In Joshua 1:8, Joshua wrote about the Law of God, *“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe 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.”* (Joshua 1:8, NKJV)
 4. Paul told Timothy to give attention to reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine. (I Timothy 4:13)

III. PROPER METHODS TO USE IN BIBLE STUDY.

- A. Accept all that the Bible gives on a subject.
- B. Accept only what the Bible gives on a subject. Keep in mind that you cannot add opinions to Bible text to form a conclusion.
- C. Study your Bible methodically.
 1. For a book study or chapter study:
 - a. Establish a regular study pattern.
 - b. Pick a bible book or chapter to study.
 - c. Start from the beginning.
 - d. Establish the writer of the book, to whom the book was written, and the purpose of the book.
 - e. Keep each passage within its own context. Do not try to make a phrase, statement or verse fit a meaning to which the context does not point.
 - f. Recognize the difference between figurative language and literal language.
 - g. To help understand a particular word and how it is used in the

context, use a Bible word dictionary or different translations.

- h. Take notes to help you remember key points and passages. These key points and passages will help you to remember the purpose of the book or chapter.

2. For a topical study:

- a. Establish a regular study pattern.
- b. Pick a topic.
- c. Using either a concordance or a topical Bible, begin to research the topic.
- d. Examine each verse referred to by the concordance or the topical bible to make sure the passage fits a context that addresses the topic in question.
- e. Recognize the difference between figurative language and literal language.
- f. Make a list of each verse and its surrounding context.
- g. Study each verse and its context in detail.
- h. Put together a summary of all the verses you studied. Keep the summary and the list of verses for later study. It may be that you will find more verses or passages later that will fit the same topic.

3. Other rules important to beneficial Bible study.

- a. Determine who is speaking. Was the speaker inspired or non-inspired?
- b. Determine who is the hearer or receiver. Quite often, the meaning of a statement is directly affected by the person to whom the statement was made. (I.e. Peter's statement to Simon was made to an erring Christian, not to an alien sinner. (Acts 8:13,22))

D. What about commentaries?

- 1. Commentaries can be helpful in guiding you in a better understanding of a passage.
- 2. However, keep in mind that the commentaries will often contain speculation and opinions. If you cannot understand the connection between the thoughts of the writer and the Bible verse about which he is commenting, then stick with the meaning drawn from the context surrounding the Bible verse.

CONCLUSION.

- A. Do you want your Bible study to be beneficial? If so, then:
 - 1. Know why you are to study.
 - 2. Possess the necessary attitudes.
 - 3. Use the proper methods.

- B. When you study the Bible, you unlock a treasure chest filled with treasures, both spiritual and physical.
 - 1. Salvation
 - 2. Redemption
 - 3. Forgiveness
 - 4. Keys to successful relationships.
 - 5. Keys to successful marriages.
 - 6. Keys to providing for your family.
 - 7. Etc.

- C. Study Your Bible Today!

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