

How To Study the Bible and Enjoy It

Lesson 2: The Right Approach to Bible Study

I. Introduction

1. In our last lesson, we noted that it is ESSENTIAL that we LOVE the Scriptures. Review the Scriptures that were studied.
2. How can we learn to love the Scriptures?
 - a. We must thrust ourselves in that direction. We must read and study them in order to love them!
 - b. A person LEARNS to love anything by beginning to DO the thing he wants to love. For example, a person will begin to love the game of basketball by beginning to play the game. The same is true of our love for Scripture. The more we do, the more we love it!
3. When we read and study the Bible, we will not only learn the Bible, but we will also learn to love the Bible.
4. Many times, people do not love the Bible because instead of studying the Scriptures, they study books ABOUT the Bible, not the Bible itself.
5. The Scripture divides itself into different levels of detail and difficulty (*Hebrews 5:11-6:3*):
 - a. The Hebrew Christians needed to be teachers, but still needed a teacher.
 - b. They needed another lesson on the “ABC’s” of God’s oracles.
 - c. They needed “milk” and not “solid food.” Examine also *1Corinthians 2:6; 3:2; 14:20; Ephesians 4:13, 14; 1Peter 2:1, 2* to see the need to be spiritually “mature” or “adult,” “full grown” in the Lord.
 - d. Spiritual “babies” cannot discriminate between good and bad, and will just “eat” what is set before them.
 - e. These Hebrew Christians needed to mature and learn God’s will concerning the priesthood of Jesus discussed in Hebrews 7. See also *Hebrews 5:8-11*.
 - f. They needed to progress beyond the need for “milk.”
 - 1) Teaching repentance from a sinful life and faith toward God (*Hebrews 6:1*). See also *Mark 1:14, 15*.
 - 2) Teaching on the difference between the New Testament baptism and other ceremonial washings, whether Jewish washings, the baptism of John the Baptist, etc., and also the teaching of the “laying on of hands” (*Hebrews 6:2*).

- 3) Teaching on the resurrection and judgment to come
(1Corinthians 15:12-23; John 5:28, 29)
- g. Christians MUST progress beyond the “first principles” and stop the continual practice of “laying a foundation!” Go on to maturity!

II. A Consideration of the Correct Approach to Bible Study

1. Christians must work hard in their Bible study. They must seek diligently! It takes a great amount of effort! There is no “instant” learning in Bible study.
 - a. Some necessary Scriptures:
 - 1) People are wise who “seek God” *(Psalm 14:2)*
 - 2) Cry out for wisdom, understanding, insight *(Proverbs 2:1-5)*
 - 3) Search for the Lord “with all your heart” *(Jeremiah 29:13)*
 - 4) “Seek” and you will “find!” *(Matthew 7:7)*
 - 5) Be “noble” or “fair” minded in searching the Scripture *(Acts 17:11)*
 - b. This diligence, or hard work, involves:
 - 1) Thinking! Intellectual “laziness” is the cause of much useless Bible study, and the cause of much false teaching!
 - 2) People seek new methods of Bible study, but their real desire is to learn without work!
 - 3) The study of the Scriptures is like the study of any other subject. To be a success, mental hard work is necessary. Is it necessary for us to study very hard in secular school?
2. We must have a willingness to seek humbly.
 - a. Jesus was thankful that the great things of God, which were hidden from the “wise” of this world, were revealed unto “babies” *(Matthew 11:25)*
 - 1) “Mr. Worldly Wise” considers the cross of Christ to be foolishness *(1Corinthians 1:18-25)*
 - 2) A baby is teachable. He is not proud! Be like a baby!
 - b. Sometimes, people go to the Bible, NOT to learn in a humble manner, but rather in an attempt to confirm their own opinions.
 - c. Note: The Bible closes up to the “wise fool,” but opens up to the baby.
3. We must have a willingness to seek honestly.
 - a. In the parable of the sower, there is the HARD heart, the SHALLOW heart, and the CROWDED heart, but also the GOOD and HONEST heart that the Lord desires *(Matthew 13:1-23)*

- b. Pride or prejudice concerning the holding on to past teaching makes it very difficult for a person to be honest in Bible study.
 - c. The Jews were blind to the truth. Therefore, they could not believe *(John 12:37-40)*.
 - d. "Convince a man against his will and he will be of the same opinion still" is an old, but true saying.
- 4. We must have a willingness to seek obediently.
 - a. We must be prepared to revise our beliefs and change our lives as we read, study, and understand.
 - b. Ezra had prepared his heart to "study the law of the Lord," then to "practice it," and then to "teach His [God's] statutes" to Israel *(Ezra 7:10)*.
 - c. "Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and keep it" *(Luke 11:28)*.
 - d. Think and ask yourself, "Is my will in harmony with the will of God?"
- 5. We must have a willingness to obey immediately.
 - a. "I hastened and did not delay to keep Your commandments" *(Psalm 119:60)*
 - b. Jesus said, "If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them" *(John 13:17)*.
 - c. If we use truth, we will get more. If we refuse truth, we will lose it!
 - d. Be doers of the word and not hearers only *(James 1:22-25)*.
- 6. We must have a willingness to seek meditatively.
 - a. "Meditate" comes from a Greek word meaning "to attend." It is to read carefully, pay attention to it, and think about it.
 - b. The man is blessed who meditates on the law of the Lord both day and night *(Psalm 1:1, 2)*
 - c. Notice the emphasis on meditation in *Psalm 104:34; Psalm 119:15, 23, 48, 78, 97, 99, 148*.
- 7. We must have a willingness to seek prayerfully.
 - a. He who prays well, studies well!
 - b. The Psalmist prayed, "Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your law" *(Psalm 119: 18)*