
BIBLE TALK

Welcome to “Bible Talk.” This week I would like to share with you some ideas on how to study the Bible – some suggestions that I hope will help you come to a better and deeper knowledge of the word of God.

BECOME A BIBLE READER

First, let me encourage you to become an avid Bible reader. Many of us will spend at least an hour in the evening watching television, or videos, or reading magazines and newspapers. I would suggest to you that reading the scriptures would be a more worth-while investment of your time.

- You would feel better about yourself to know you’re reading something of substance, and:
- This is actually the only real way you will ever become knowledgeable about the scriptures.

Most people who call into this program are interested in growing in their knowledge of the scriptures, but the fact of the matter is, you must put out effort to grow in your knowledge of the scriptures. It comes by hard work.

The New Testament contains approximately 250,000 words. The average reader can read approximately 250 words per minute. This means that the average person can read thru the NT in about 1000 minutes or just a little over 16 ½ hours. In other words, it is very possible to read thru the entire NT in a month by reading less than an hour per day!

So my first suggestion to you is to become a reader of the scriptures.

Jesus would often ask people if they had read the scriptures:

Matthew 12:3

3 But He said to them, "**Have you not read** what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him:

Matthew 12:5

5 "Or **have you not read** in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?"

Wouldn't it be embarrassing if Jesus were here today and asked this same question to us? Would we be able to truthfully say, "Yes, Lord, I have read that." Unfortunately, many would have to confess, "No, Lord, I have not read that."

Bible knowledge begins with Bible reading.

BIBLE STUDY RULES

I'm going to suggest to you a few rules to keep in mind while you do your reading. I'll try to illustrate these rules so you will understand why we are saying that they are in fact "rules" that every person needs to consider.

When reading a passage, ask who is doing the speaking and to who are the words being spoken to.

The reason I say this is because *first, not everyone speaking in the Bible is a good person*. Do you realize that the words of the Devil are in the Bible? We should not read the words he spoke and conclude that, because they are in the Bible, they are words to live by.

For example, the Devil said that Adam and Eve would not die if they ate the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3:4). His words are recorded in that passage. While this is an accurate record of what he spoke, these words are not words that anyone should live by.

The second reason I'm giving you this rule is because, *even when a good person is speaking, what they say does not always apply to every person in the world*. Do you realize that sometimes certain passages are directed to specific groups of people and not to everyone?

To illustrate what I'm talking about, I ask you to consider 1 John 1:8-9:

1 John 1:8-9

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

These words were written by a good man – the apostle John. They are true. They are not like the words of the Devil, or the words of a lost man. However, these words were spoken to Christians – people who had already been “born again.” These words were not written to lost sinners who needed to know how to be saved.

The scriptures teach that lost sinners are saved when they believe in Christ and are baptized for the remission of sins:

Mark 16:16

16 "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

Do you see how sinners are saved? The rule is, when you read a Bible passage, consider who is speaking and to whom are they speaking. This is important.

- Mark 16:16 is Jesus speaking about sinners who have never been born again.
- 1 John 1:8-9 is the apostle of Jesus speaking to Christians who have sinned and need forgiveness.

It would be a mistake to read Mark 16:16 and conclude that Christians need to be baptized and it would also be a mistake to read 1 John 1:8-9 and conclude that lost sinners should confess their sins and pray to God.

Now, we will consider some more rules about Bible study next time, but I see my time is up for now.

Call back next week as we continue our study of the word of God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Well ... thanks for listening to our message this week. We invite you to visit our web site www.WillOfTheLord.com. There you may download the notes and the audio file of the message you just listened to.

Call again next week when we consider a new subject on ***Bible Talk***.