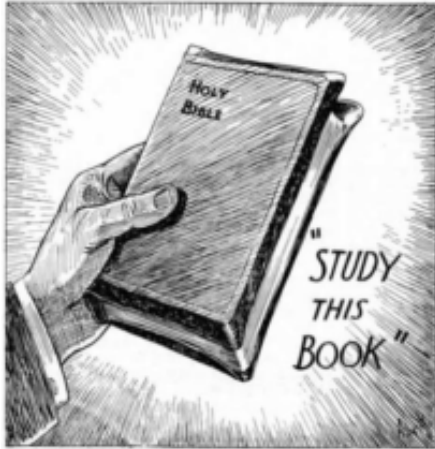


LESSON 4



DAILY BIBLE READING

Scripture Texts: 1 Peter 2:2-3; Deuteronomy 6:6-7; James 1:21-25; Matthew 13:23; Luke 11:28

Bible reading and study is one activity of the Christian life which is greatly neglected. Bible reading is the result of a desire to know more of the will of God. His Word is food, not only milk but meat also for the soul. The Word points the way to Christ. We are told to desire the Bible—read it, take it into our minds and hearts. Understand it, obey it, and teach it. To accomplish this, we must be saved. The Bible is from God and is true and living. Many Scriptures in the Bible speak of it as the living Word.

MEMORY VERSE: *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.* — John 12:48

A Normal Desire to Feed

First Peter 2:2-3. **As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word.** Newborn babies naturally desire to eat. Newborn souls (the newly saved) desire to feed on God's Word. This is natural. If the newborn baby is not fed the milk that nature provides, it will soon die. The new Christian must also be fed **the sincere milk of the word** to satisfy the new hunger which naturally comes with being born again. If a baby is born into the world with no natural desire for milk, it is because of some abnormal condition, and family and friends become greatly concerned that it will die. The same is true spiritually. Peter specifies **the sincere milk of the word**. The meaning of the word *sincere* is "true." Spiritual babes should be fed on the true Word of God that they may **grow thereby**.

When first saved, one should form a habit of daily Bible reading and study. Have a definite time for it, and do not let it be crowded out. Take time to be holy. The purpose of this is that you may grow spiritually, in grace, in knowledge of God, in His ways, and in your ability to help others. There is a condition to the promise of growth. **If so be ye have tasted . . .** If you have experienced the Lord's salvation, then you will grow from Bible study. Dead bodies do not grow and neither do dead souls. Before one is saved, the Bible means little to him. Salvation gives life, thus desire. Read with desire, and you will grow.

An Old Testament Command

Deuteronomy 6:6-7. **And these words . . . shall be in thine heart.** First, let the words of God **be in thine heart**, then **teach them . . . unto thy children . . . talk of them . . . in thine house, and when thou walkest . . . liest down, and when thou risest up.** This is God's standard of ideal Christian training. It is the answer to family strife, juvenile delinquency, and countless other evils. An Old Testament command! Yes, but God gives the same principle in the New Testament. Read Ephesians 6:4.

Moses set before parents the importance of knowing the Law of God and teaching it to their children. It was to be talked of constantly.

The Spirit Brings Understanding

James 1:21-25. **Receive with meekness.** With a teachable, submissive, willing spirit—the Word grafted or bonded in your heart, written in your heart and mind. Read Hebrews 10:16. We will not receive it by reading and hearing it only, but

we must have an understanding of it and do it. It must be more than just a book to us. **A hearer . . . and not a doer** looks and forgets. This is what we are if we read but do not apply the Word to our lives. Doing so, we deceive ourselves. Read Hebrews 2:1-3. The right way is (1) to look **into the perfect law of liberty** (what a beautiful description of the Bible—the more we understand it, the more liberty we have), and (2) to continue therein as **a doer of the work**. We do the reading, studying, and hearing, but the Holy Spirit gives the understanding. **This man shall be blessed in his deed**—blessed by God's approval, by a godly life, by growth in grace, joy, and in influence for good in all his relationships.

Bearing Fruit

Matthew 13:23. **But he that received seed into the good ground is he that [1] heareth the word . . . [2] understandeth it . . . [3] beareth fruit.** Jesus told the parable of the sower sowing seed. "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). It fell on four kinds of ground, into four kinds of hearts. Three kinds did not receive it, or left it, and bore no fruit. Only those who go on and do what the Bible says, who bear the fruit of the Spirit in a clean heart, are pleasing God. Only these are in the church and will enter Heaven.

As we obey the Word and grow on the milk, the Lord will send understanding of the Word that we call meat. We are no longer babes, and we need "strong meat" to bring us to "full age"—to full-grown men and women in Christ (Hebrews 5:13-14). God knows when we are old enough and strong enough to stand on our own spiritual feet and walk with Him.

A Great Blessing

Luke 11:28. **Yea rather . . .** Rather than what? Rather than Mary, the mother of Jesus, spoken of in verse 27. Jesus meant that to **hear the word of God, and keep it** is a greater blessing than to be chosen as the human mother of Jesus, as was Mary who had this great privilege. If Jesus places the hearing and obeying of God's Word as high as this, how careful we should be to do it!

It is very important to hold the Word of God in high esteem. It is our responsibility to know the Bible's teaching, to love its teaching, and to obey its teaching, because we will be judged by it. God is faithful to guide us with His Word and His Holy Spirit. See Memory Verse again.

JUST A THOUGHT

**The family Bible can be passed from generation
to generation, because it gets so little wear.**