

# Reading your Bible for all it's worth

Sermon Discussion Guide for the week of January 28, 2015

**Main Point: Daily study of scripture is essential for God's blessing in our lives**

## CONNECT

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No one has ever had success in changing their daily activities without a plan. What are some plans that you stuck to that have helped you change your life? Are there plans you have made that you failed to keep?

## LEARN

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Ask a volunteer to read 2 Timothy 3: 14-17 out loud. How does Paul describe the value of scripture?

Why do you think the Bible was written?

What barriers are there to studying God's word?

In the sermon Dave highlighted five benefits from the habit of daily scripture study; 1. Wisdom, 2. Revelation, 3. Transformation (spiritual), 4. Inspiration, 5. Connection with God. Which of these do you think is the most desirable? Why?

Much like walking, study of scripture has to be learned by doing. Dave described the best way to learn how to study scripture is to begin studying scripture. Many people don't study scripture because they feel unprepared. What fears have you faced in studying scripture? How did you overcome them?

What are some of the benefits to writing down notes and thoughts in a notebook and in your Bible?

## SERVE

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As we mentioned in the beginning of the discussion, making something a daily habit that changes lives requires a plan. We are going to come up with a plan.

1. Prepare
2. Pray
3. Zoom Out
4. Make a Mess
5. Zoom In
6. Pray

Make a plan to help one another continue the daily habit of scripture reading. Find a partner within the group and give each other permission to ask if you stuck to your scripture reading plan.

## COMMENTARY

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Paul reminds Timothy of his heritage. He identifies Timothy's training in Scriptures, referring to the OT, which provides wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. V. 16 tells us why the Scriptures can do this: They are God-breathed, which supports God's direct involvement in the giving of the Scriptures but is inadequate in providing a definitive theory of inspiration by itself. This in no way affects the authority of the Scriptures as Paul quickly goes on to show their usefulness and the ultimate goal (vv. 16-17). The result of properly using the Scriptures is a person of God fully qualified and equipped (niv thoroughly equipped combines the two concepts). This result helps to explain wise for salvation (v. 15). Salvation here, as elsewhere in Paul (e.g., Php 3:12), encompasses one's total relationship with Christ.

He directs him to keep close to a good education, and particularly to what he had learned out of the Holy Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:14, 15): Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned. Note, it is not enough to learn that which is good, but we must continue in it, and persevere in it unto the end. Then are we Christ's disciples indeed, John 8:31. We should not be any more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, Eph. 4:14. Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines; for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, Heb. 13:9. And for this reason we should continue in the things we have learned from the holy scriptures; not that we ought to continue in any errors and mistakes which we may have been led into, in the time of our childhood and youth (for these, upon an impartial enquiry and full conviction, we should forsake); but this makes nothing against our continuing in those things which the holy scriptures plainly assert, and which he that runs may read. If Timothy would adhere to the truth as he had been taught it, this would arm him against the snares and insinuations of seducers. Observe, Timothy must continue in the things which he had learned and had been assured of.

1. It is a great happiness to know the certainty of the things wherein we have been instructed (Luke 1:4); not only to know what the truths are, but to know that they are of undoubted certainty. What we have learned we must labor to be more and more assured of, that, being grounded in the truth, we may be guarded against error, for certainty in religion is of great importance and advantage: Knowing, (1.) "That thou hast had good teachers. Consider of whom thou hast learned them; not of evil men and seducers, but good men, who had themselves experienced the power of the truths they taught thee, and been ready to suffer for them, and thereby would give the fullest evidence of their belief of these truths." (2.) "Knowing especially the firm foundation upon which thou hast built, namely, that of the scripture (2 Tim. 3:15): That from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures."

2. Those who would acquaint themselves with the things of God, and be assured of them, must know the Holy Scriptures, for these are the summary of divine revelation.

3. It is a great happiness to know the Holy Scriptures from our childhood; and children should be times get the knowledge of the scriptures. The age of children is the learning age; and those who would get true learning must get it out of the scriptures.

4. The scriptures we are to know are the holy scriptures; they come from the holy God, were delivered by holy men, contain holy precepts, treat of holy things, and were designed to make us holy and to lead us in the way of holiness to happiness; being called the holy scriptures, they are by this distinguished from profane writings of all sorts, and from those that only treat morality, and common justice and honesty, but do not meddle with holiness. If we would know the Holy Scriptures, we must read and search them daily, as the noble Bereans did, Acts 17:11. They must not lie by us neglected, and seldom or never looked into. Now here observe,

*(1.) What is the excellency of the scripture? It is given by inspiration of God (2 Tim. 3:16), and therefore is his word. It is a divine revelation, which we may depend upon as infallibly true. The same Spirit that breathed reason into us breathes revelation among us: For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men spoke as they were moved or carried forth by the Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. 1:21. The prophets and apostles did not speak from themselves, but what they received of the Lord that they delivered unto us. That the scripture was given by inspiration of God appears from the majesty of its style,—from the truth, purity, and sublimity, of the doctrines contained in it,—from the harmony of its several parts,—from its power and efficacy on the minds of multitudes that converse with it,—from the accomplishment of many prophecies relating to things beyond all human foresight,—and from the uncontrollable miracles that were wrought in proof of its divine original: God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will, Heb. 2:4.*

*(2.) What use it will be of to us. [1.] It is able to make us wise to salvation; that is, it is a sure guide in our way to eternal life. Note, those are wise indeed who are wise to salvation. The scriptures are able to make us truly wise, wise for our souls and another world. “To make thee wise to salvation through faith.” Observe, the scriptures will make us wise to salvation, if they be mixed with faith, and not otherwise, Heb. 4:2. For, if we do not believe their truth and goodness, they will do us no good. [2.] It is profitable to us for all the purposes of the Christian life, for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. It answers all the ends of divine revelation. It instructs us in that which is true, reproves us for that which is amiss, directs us in that which is good. It is of use to all, for we all need to be instructed, corrected, and reprov'd: it is of special use to ministers, who are to give instruction, correction, and reproof; and whence can they fetch it better than from the scripture? [3.] That the man of God may be perfect, 2 Tim. 3:17. The Christian, the minister, is the man of God. That which finishes a man of God in this world is the scripture. By it we are thoroughly furnished for every good work. There is that in the scripture which suits every case. Whatever duty we have to do, whatever service is required from us, we may find enough in the scriptures to furnish us for it.*

*(3.) On the whole we here see, [1.] That the scripture has various uses, and answers divers ends and purposes: It is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction of all errors in judgment and practice, and for instruction in righteousness. [2.] The scripture is a perfect rule of faith and practice, and was designed for the man of God, the minister as well as the Christian who is devoted to God, for it is profitable for doctrine, etc. [3.] If we consult the scripture, which was given by inspiration of God, and follow its directions, we shall be made men of God, perfect, and thoroughly furnished to every good work. [4.] There is no occasion for the writings of the philosopher, nor for rabbinical fables, nor popish legends, nor unwritten traditions, to make us perfect men of God, since the scripture answers all these ends and purposes. O that we may love our Bibles more, and keep closer to them than ever! And then shall we find the benefit and advantage designed thereby, and shall at last attain the happiness therein promised and assured to us.*