

HOW TO MAKE BIBLE STUDY PAY (1)

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: ?? From Roy H. Enoch (01/15/1995).
- B. This title is not used in the sense of religious hucksters who claim that God will increase our material blessings if we give to Him.
 - 1. We are not talking about monetary gain.
 - 2. We are referring to spiritual dividends from the study of the Bible.
 - 3. We want to get the greatest spiritual benefit from our Bible reading and study.
- C. It is obvious that some persons do not benefit very much from their church attendance and their reading and study of the Bible.
 - 1. A young man was motivated to memorize 500 passages of the Bible so that he could attend a Bible camp free. He did it. He was able to spit out the words faster than one could comfortably hear them. He got his reward. Yet within a few weeks after returning from camp, he was arrested for stealing a car and using drugs. He obviously missed something from his memorizing and associations.
 - 2. Another young man was arrested for a theft and brought before a judge. The judge said, "Young man, I notice on the report that you attend church. Don't they teach you not to steal where you go to church?" The boy replied, "No sir. They just teach the Bible."
 - 3. This is not to say that there is no value in memorizing scripture.
 - a. When I started preaching 43 years ago, I would memorize 40-50 v., for each sermon.
 - b. The longer I preached, there were fewer scriptures that I used that I did not know.
 - c. Then I started comparing other translations to the KJV that I had been memorizing, and studying the Greek and Hebrew words in various contexts.
 - d. I no longer memorize a certain version, but try to understand the meaning of the v.
 - e. But, I still think that memorizing is the place to start, but go beyond reciting the words--learn what it means and live it.
- D. In this lesson we want to look at ways to increase the value of our Bible study.

I. PROPER ATTITUDES AND METHODS WILL PAY BIG DIVIDENDS.

- A. We must approach the Bible with proper attitudes.
 - 1. We must have the sincere desire to learn what it teaches (Phil. 1:9-11).
 - 2. We must want to have God's approval (2Tim. 2:15).
 - 3. We must have a prayerful desire to understand God's will (1Pet. 2:1-2).
 - 4. We must have a sincere love for truth (2Th. 2:10-12).
 - 5. We must have confidence that the Bible is God's word for us today (1Th. 2:13).
 - 6. Our attitude must be reverent (Heb. 12:28-29).
 - 7. We need to show more reverence during our worship. Some have enough respect to not come in during prayer (when we speak to God), but will walk in and be a distraction when God's word is being read (God speaking to us), or when we are singing a prayer. The worship is sometimes disrupted by people coming in and out. We realize that sometimes a health problem makes it necessary, but it is often just irreverence.
Illustration: Old preacher at a meeting when grown boys got up to go out: "Little jugs are soon full, and so are small minds."
- B. We must bring valid systematic methods of study to the Bible.
 - 1. Sometimes our study of the Bible is haphazard.
 - a. Some go to the Bible only in an emergency or boredom.
 - b. Some only when hospitalized, bereaved or challenged.
 - c. Some start with a new year, but soon neglect it.
 - 2. We all need Bible study more at some times more than at others.

- a. At times of sickness, sorrow or bereavement we need it more.
 - b. We should desire to study in gratitude and w/joy when things are going well for us.
 - c. The most profitable Bible study is on a regular day-to-day basis.
 - d. Illustration: Many years ago, a traveling man stopped at an old primitive 2-story hotel. The boy showed him his second-story room, and showed him the rope by the window in case of fire. The man asked why there was a Bible on the table. The boy said that that was in case the fire was too far advanced for the rope. For many, the Bible is only the last resort.
- C. We should bring concentration and meditation with us to Bible study.
- 1. One of the delights of God's word is meditating on it (Psa. 1:2).
 - 2. Educators are concerned about students being less and less able to concentrate on a subject unless it is entertaining. (They list TV and movies as a major cause.)
 - 3. We must learn to look for the lessons that are in the Bible and not try to read into it things that we WANT TO TEACH (2Tim. 3:5).

II. SOME DIVIDENDS WE CAN RECEIVE FROM PROPER STUDY.

- A. We can enjoy the dividend of knowledge of the truth.
- 1. See John 8:31-32.
 - 2. Illustration: A wayward son heard of his father's death and showed up for his funeral. Through the years, he had brought much shame and heartache to his parents but he was received with kindness. The day came for the father's will to be read. As the will began to tell of the wayward son's behavior, the boy stomped out in anger was not heard from again for several years. When he was found years later, he was told that the will continued to tell of the father's love for him and the bequest of \$15,000. He did not hear the reading all the way through to get the full truth it contained. Many people get angry when they hear, "the wages of sin is death. They never hear the last part, that "the gift of God is eternal life. Others only listen to the blessings and not the conditions.
 - 3. Only all of the truth can make us free. It does not change, it can be depended on. God keeps all of His promises.
- B. We can enjoy a dividend of assurance of salvation.
- 1. See 1Jn. 2:3.
 - 2. The word of God is essential to salvation (Jas. 1:21; 1Pet. 1:22-23). We cannot know it without study.
- C. We can enjoy the dividend of hope and comfort.
- 1. See Rom. 15:4.
We need to be familiar with the OT examples of how God blesses those who obey Him and punishes those who disobey. We are assured that God does not change.
 - 2. The Scriptures give us comfort (1Th. 4:18).
 - 3. Bible study gives us hope in eternity as well as this life (1Cor. 15:19).

CONCLUSION.

- A. Some of History's greatest achievers have credited the Bible with the inspiration that moved them to be successful.
- B. The greatest dividends that it gives are spiritual.
- C. Won't you study deeply and regularly its eternal truths and obey its commandments that you may enjoy its blessings (Rev. 22:14)?