

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE FOR GREATEST PROFIT

by

R. A. Torrey

Author of "*How to Bring Men to CHRIST*," "*Baptism With the Holy Spirit*," etc.

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CHAPTER NINE

FINAL SUGGESTIONS

There are some suggestions that remain to be given before we close this book.

1. *Study the Bible daily.*

Regularity counts for more in Bible study than most people fancy. The spasmodic student, who at certain seasons gives a great deal of time to the study of the Word, and at other seasons quite neglects it, even for days at a time, does not achieve the results that he does who plods on regularly day by day. The Bereans were wise as well as "**noble**" in that they "**searched the scriptures daily**" (Acts, 17:11).

A man who is well known among the Christian college students of America, once remarked at a student convention, that he had been at many conventions and had received great blessings from them, but the greatest blessing he had ever received was from a convention where there were only four persons gathered together. The blessing had come to him in this way. These four had covenanted together to spend a certain portion of every day in Bible study. Since that day much of his time had been spent on the cars or in hotels and at conventions, but he had tried to keep that covenant, and the greatest blessing that had come to him in his Christian life had come through this daily study of the Word.

No one who has not tried it realizes how much can be accomplished by setting apart a fixed portion of each day, (it may not be more than fifteen or thirty minutes, but it surely should be an hour) for Bible study, and keeping it sacredly for that purpose under all circumstances. Many will say I cannot spare the time. It will be time saved.

Lord Cairnes, one of the busiest as well as most eminent men of his day, before his death testified, that the first two hours of every day were given to the study of the Bible and prayer, and he attributed the great achievements of his life to that fact. It will not do to study the Bible only when we feel like it. It will not do to study the Bible only when we have leisure. We must have fixed principles and habits in this matter, if we are to study the Bible to the greatest profit. Nothing that we do will be more important than our Bible study, and it cannot give way to other less important things. What regularity in eating is to physical life, regularity in Bible study is to spiritual life. Fix upon some time, even if it is no more than fifteen minutes to start with, and hold to it until you are ready to set a longer period.

2. Select for your Bible study the best portion of the day that you can give to it.

Do not put your Bible study off until nearly bed-time, when the mind is drowsy. It is well to take a parting verse for the day when one retires for the night, but this is not the time for study. No study demands all that there is in a man as Bible study does. Do not take the time immediately after a heavy meal. The mind is more or less torpid after a heavy meal, and it is unwise to put it on the stretch then. It is almost the unanimous opinion of those who have given this subject careful attention, that the early hours of the day are the best for Bible study, if they can be secured free from interruption. It is well, wherever possible, to lock yourself in and lock the world out, when you are about to give yourself up to the study of the Bible.

3. In all your Bible study look for CHRIST in the passage under examination.

We read of JESUS that "**beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning HIMSELF**" (Luke 24:27). JESUS CHRIST is the subject of the whole Bible and the subject pervades the book. Some of the seemingly driest portions of the Bible became instinct with a new life when we learn to see CHRIST in them. I remember in my early reading of the Bible what a stupid book Leviticus seemed, but it all became different when I learned to see JESUS in the various offerings and sacrifices, in the high-priest and his garments, in the tabernacle and its furniture, indeed everywhere. Look for CHRIST in every verse you study, and even the genealogies and catalogues of the names of towns will begin to have beauty and power.

4. Memorize Scripture.

The Psalmist said, "**Thy word have I hid [laid up] in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee**" (Psalm 119:11). There is nothing better to keep one from sinning than this. By the word of GOD laid up in His heart JESUS overcame the tempter. (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10).

But the word of GOD laid up in the heart is good for other purposes than victory over sin.

- it is good to meet and expose error;
- it is good to enable one "**to speak a word in season to him that is weary,**" (Isaiah 1:4).
- it is good for manifold uses, even "**that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works**" (II Timothy 3:17).

Memorize scripture by chapter and verse. It is quite as easy as merely memorizing the words, and it is immeasurably more useful for practical purposes. Memorize the scripture in systematic form. Do not have a chaotic heap of texts in the mind, but pigeon-hole under appropriate titles the scripture you store in memory. Then you can bring it out when you need it, without racking your brains. There are many men who can stand up without a moment's warning, and talk coherently and cogently and scripturally, on any vital theme; because they have a vast fund of wisdom in the form of scripture texts stored away in their mind in systematic form.

5. Finally, utilize spare moments in the study of the Bible.

In most men's lives there is a vast amount of wasted time. Time spent in traveling on the street cars and railroads; time spent in waiting for persons with whom they have engagements; time spent in waiting for meals, etc., etc. Most of this can be utilized in Bible study, if one carries with him a pocket Bible or pocket Testament. Or one can utilize it in meditation upon texts stored away in memory. Many of the author's sermons and addresses are worked out in that way.

It is said that Henry Ward Beecher read one of the larger histories of England through while waiting day after day for his meals to be brought on to the table. How many books of the Bible could be studied in the same time? A friend once told me that the man who had, in some respects, the most extraordinary knowledge of the Bible of any man he knew, was a junk dealer in a Canadian city. This man had a Bible open on his shelves and in intervals of business he was pondering the Book of GOD. The book became very black by handling in such surroundings, but I have little doubt his soul became correspondingly white. There is no economy that pays as does economy of time, but there is no way of economizing time so thriftily as putting the moments that are going to waste into the study of or meditation upon the word of GOD.

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