
Building Bible Literacy Part VI

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The Steps to Know His Word Better

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. Psalm 119:11

God does not need us, but He does desire to use us. We are the instruments and means He uses to make His voice heard and known. Yes, the Spirit goes before us, but we are the examples and the truth-tellers of His Word and precepts. We are to know His Word and His precepts first; they must go deep and break us free of our sin so we can bathe in His love. For us, Christian leaders and pastors, it is essential that our words match our beliefs and our behaviors match our convictions. It does no good to give a sermon or lead a church when we are not impacted by the words we say or do not walk in the direction that we ask others to take.

- **Step one: Get your materials.** You will need a good, easy-to-read translation. I recommend the *New Living Translation* (this is not for study, it is a good paraphrase for getting to know the Bible, the idea behind this curriculum) and a set of tapes or CDs too. Once you get to know the Bible and become more at ease, then switch to a better translation such as the *New King James* or *New English Standard Version*, or the *NASB*, *NIV* or *KJV*.
- **Step two: Set your time and place.** Find a quiet place so you can be clear of distracting thoughts and desires! Engaging His Word is all about the Supremacy and Centrality of Christ; He is our Lord and the center of Scripture. Thus, we must come before God with our eagerness and expectancy. This is not to be a chore; it is fellowship with the Creator of the universe, and what better time could there be!

To be consistent in reading and listening to the Bible regularly, we must make time for it and keep it up—not make excuses and keep that up.

- **Step three: Select the Book** that you wish to learn about, and then read it with a passion to want to know Him and His precepts better. It is best to start with the New Testament before you venture into the Old Testament.
- **Step four: Read it.** Start with Matthew and read it through in one sitting at least once. If this is your first time, you may want to start with John and/or just plow through the New Testament.
- **Step five: Play it and Listen.** After you read it, listen to it. It is best to listen to an entire book at one sitting. You can play your Bible Book over every day, and in a month, you will know it well. I also suggest you listen through the entire Bible one book at a time; this will take you two months (smaller books you can double or triple up on).

Imagine that you can know God's most precious Word with little effort. If you do this every day, you will have listened to His entire Word in a month or two; just let the tape play and allow his Spirit to come into you.

- **Step Five: Discover what our Lord has to say.** The easy part is to read and listen; the hard part is to apply it. It is usually not what the Bible says that troubles Christians; it is being convicted of His precepts. We must be willing to not only read, but also to obey God's decrees! It is not about you, it is about God! Make it your choice and work hard with your will surrendered to His! To start to learn more, use the Basic Inductive process by asking the text some questions! You can also use this method to memorize portions of Scripture.

Study with proper sense of our ultimate reality, giving Christ Glory!

Praise be to you, O LORD; teach me your decrees. Psalm 119:12

Thoughts to Consider

In God's eyes, it is far more important that we do something right rather than we just do something, even what is good, and even service to Him.

This is convicting and will move us beyond what we think we can do and/or where we can go; this bitterness can either be a barrier we refuse to trespass, or an obstacle we take as a challenge to go deeper and further with what Christ has for us. Look at it this way; we are called to Fruit and Love, and to operate in His call and principles with joy. When we impact others with His Gospel, it will cause some resentment in them—perhaps even persecution. When we speak out against the sins of others, they will hate us. But, we must set the example and tell His Truth in love to others even when they do not want to hear it. Our experiences and actions will give us both sweetness and bitterness from others. If we only see the bitterness, we will gain little, and the sweetness will not last. If we refuse, the journey we undertake may become bitter by our own actions, whereas we could have had the sweetness of trusting and obeying Him (Psalm 119:103; Jer. 15:16; Ezek. 3:1-11; 1 Thess. 2:13).

If you do these steps, you will find that you will not be bored at all. So, fall in love with His Word! Have the appetite, as it was better than your favorite meal! Do not let it be just a duty! The love will increase as we increase in our effort and study!

So, I challenge you to set aside time each day at the time you are most alert and able to go before your Creator and Redeemer; then, read and listen to His Word.

Questions

1. What can you do to gain a better desire to grasp God's Word?
2. What needs to happen in your life and Christian walk for God's ways to go deeper within you, changing you from the inside out? How would your learning and obedience be a prime source of joy?
3. Are you afraid to ask yourself if God's Word and precepts are a part of you? If

not, when will you ask?

4. Being faithful and obedient may have a cost that will challenge or hurt or bring about our suffering for the cause of Christ. How does this make you feel?
5. God, being God, is to be the most important Person in our lives, honored, listened to, known, and worshipped. How can you make this more so in your life?
6. God, being God, should have the primary place in our lives, as we recognize, act with faith, and serve Him with joy. How can you make this more so in your life?
7. God, being God, is to be trusted, loved, and enjoyed. How can you make this more so in your life?
8. God, being God, wants to be greater in your life. How can you make this more so in your life?
9. The greater He is in you, how will He be greater will be your life, your purpose, your opportunities, and your blessings?
10. How can your hope and diligence to Bible reading mold you life?
11. What may get in the way so you do not embark on this?
12. How is it foolishness to miss crucial opportunities because you are not in His Word?
13. What can you do to seek Him first and undertake His call and mission to know His Bible?
14. You do not have to be a pastor or a theologian to do something great, you have God's Word; if we just get to know it, we will get to know Him. How can this be so for you?
15. Why do we need His Word as the prime instrument for us to survive and thrive?
16. What happens when we seek to dilute or cheapen His Word? What impact would this have upon you and your church?
17. How can you do you Bible reading from know on? Who can help keep you accountable?