

## God's Word – Requirements For Study (#5)

Text : **Luke 8: 4-15**

### **INTRODUCTION :**

#### **A. Christianity is a religion based upon knowledge.**

1. We believe that God **“is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”** **Heb. 11:6**
2. Our faith is not based upon feelings or just blind trust. It is based upon knowledge of Christ's miraculous birth, His vicarious death and His resurrection.
  - a. **Rom. 10**
  - b. **I Cor. 15** , etc.

#### **B. Jesus revealed God in His person, and the holy writings reveal Jesus.**

1. The bible ( book of holy writings ) is composed of 66 individual writings  
Which were penned by at least 40 different men over a period of 1500 yrs.
2. All of these writing are strung together like pearls by one theme .. God's unfolding plan to redeem man through the gospel of Jesus the Christ.
3. All of the sacred writings were the product of God's inspiration, not the mind of men.
  - a. **II Pet. 1:21- no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.**
  - b. Though men penned the words, the message came by inspiration from God.
4. Christians understand inspiration to mean :
  - a. God gave the actual words in the bible, not just the general thoughts. ( *Verbal* )
  - b. Each and every part of the scriptures is equally inspired of God. ( *Plenary* )
  - c. God revealed Himself through man. ( *Confluent* )
5. THEREFORE, because the holy writings we call the bible come from God :
  - a. It contains no errors. ( *Inerrant* )
  - b. It carries the authority of God. ( *authoritative* ) *Only place to find God's will.*

#### **C. Christians are called to be a nation of priests and entrusted with God's word.**

1. Priests must communicate God and His will to the world. ( **Go into all the world.** )
2. We must know His will before we can communicate it to the world. ( **are the light** )
3. The only way man gains knowledge of God's will is by studying it.

#### **D. Most Christians acknowledge that they need to study God's word, but few do so.**

1. Some brethren just don't like to study anything. ( **Why do you call me Lord, Lord ..** )
2. Others think they can't understand the bible so they don't try.
3. Regardless of the reason, the failure to seek out God's will is sin.

**Therefore, because it is a salvation issue, we will use this lesson to observe some requirements for productive bible study.**

## **I. Productive bible study requires “ears to hear” words from God.**

### **A. Most everyone has physical ears, but not everyone has a willingness to listen to God.**

1. Jesus often used the phrase, “*He who has an ear let him hear.*” e.g. **Mark 4: 9, 23**
2. In **Acts 7** the Jews covered their ears to avoid hearing Steven.
3. In **Act 28** the Apostle Paul quoted the prophet Isaiah to the Jews saying :  
**Act 28: 25-27** **And when they did not agree with one another, they began leaving after Paul had spoken one parting word, “The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers, <sup>26</sup> saying, ‘Go to this people and say, “You will keep on hearing, but will not understand; And you will keep on seeing, but will not perceive; <sup>27</sup> For the heart of this people has become dull, And with their ears they scarcely hear, And they have closed their eyes; Otherwise they might see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart and return, And I would heal them.” ’**  
*( In **Mark. 8: 18** Jesus made a similar quote from **Jer 5** and **Ezek 12.** )*

### **B. One’s worldview affects his receptiveness to the scriptures. (*friends , culture* )**

1. **Titus 1: 15-** **To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled.**
2. **I Cor. 2: 14-15** **But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. <sup>15</sup> But he who is spiritual appraises all things, yet he himself is appraised by no one.**
3. When he is born again, the Christian’s ears, i.e., his worldview changes. **II Cor. 5:17**

### **C. This is not to say that the non-Christian cannot learn how to be saved.**

1. Before one can comprehend the word of God, he must have a receptive heart.
2. The parables revealed God’s will to some and hid it from others. (*difference = heart* )

### **D. The bible CAN be understood. If one is having a problem with it, the first thing he should do is to examine his heart and pray.**

## II. Productive bible study requires a heart which desires to obey the will of God.

### A. Many study God's word academically, but never really comprehend its message.

1. Atheists study the bible to refute it.
2. Some study it as literature.
3. Some study to teach it.
4. Many Christians study the bible just because they are expected to do so. ( *duty* )

### B. Jesus instructed us that obedience to His word is required.

1. **Matt. 7: 21-** Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in Heaven will enter.
2. He taught that anyone who wants to obey God will learn the word.  
**John 7: 17-** If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself.

### C. Bible study without a willingness to change is worthless.

**James 1: 22-25** But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. <sup>23</sup> For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; <sup>24</sup> for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. <sup>25</sup> But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

### D. One who refuses to follow the roadmap is not better off than one who has none.

1. Jesus is the author of salvation only to those who obey Him.  
**Heb. 5: 9-** And having been made perfect, He ( *Jesus* ) became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation,
2. He taught that faith without obedience is futile.  
**Luke 6:46-** Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?
3. *Therefore, if one is not willing to conform his life to God's revealed standard, he is wasting his time studying the bible.*

## III. Productive bible study requires a heart that accepts only the authority of God.

### A. We live in a world which seeks to dissuade us from following God.

1. This is the information age. ( *Internet, cable TV, etc* )
2. We are bombarded by unlimited anti-God propaganda. ( *Satan works tirelessly* )
3. Faith in God is ridiculed by an increasing number of people.

**B. We live in a world that rejects the standards set by God's word. (*rebellious*)**

1. Satan's influence is dominant in American culture.
2. Moral values are diminished and perverted.
3. There is strong social pressure to conform to cultural norms.

**C. Religions pressure people to conform to their doctrines and practices.**

1. Confessions and creeds are bound as a standard.
2. Some Christians view certain commentaries as a standard.
3. Over time traditions begin to be bound as doctrine.
  - a. Every congregation develops traditions.
  - b. It is not a sin to practice a tradition, **but** it is a sin to bind one as doctrine.
  - c. Christians must be willing to change their traditions when required to do so.
4. **ALL of us have preconceived ideas which must be cast aside before studying.**

**D. God's word is the only authority in the life of a Christian.**

1. It is only the truth of God's word that can make one free.
 

**John 8:31-32** So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; <sup>32</sup> and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."
2. When Jesus referred to "*the truth*", He was referring to the word of God.
  - a. **John 17: 17-** Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.
  - b. **Psalms 119: 160-** The sum of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting. (*can't cherry-pick verses*)
3. The Apostles recognized the scriptures as binding upon Christians.
  - a. Paul commanded us to reject those who will not submit to the scriptures.
 

**II Thes. 5:14-15** If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that person and do not associate with him, so that he will be put to shame. <sup>15</sup> Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.
  - b. The scriptures are the limiting factor regarding what can be taught or practiced.
 

**I Cor. 4: 6-** Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written, so that no one of you will become arrogant in behalf of one against the other. ( cf - **I Pet. 4:11** )

**Note :** *The scriptures are the standard for the Christian's entire life, not just what he does in church or in his "religious life."*

- a. The Christian is the wholly owned property of God. **I Cor. 6: 19-20 , Gal. 2: 20**
- b. Christians are citizens of Heaven and aliens on the earth. **Phil. 3:20 , I Pet. 2:11**

#### IV. Productive bible study requires a heart that is committed for the long haul.

\* **Not on-again off-again like a New Years resolution.**

**A. In order for bible study to be productive it must be given a high priority.**

1. **Matt. 6: 33- But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.**
2. Bible study must be scheduled and done on a regular basis.
  - a. We can't just do it when we are not busy.
  - b. Most who do study fit it in their schedule instead of scheduling around it.
  - c. *The priority one places on his bible study IS the priority he places on God.*
3. How does one spend time with God ? ( **Walk in the cool of the evening with Him.** )
  - a. Reading and studying God's word.
  - b. Prayer and meditation on His word.
  - \* c. *One cannot lock God away in the church building and visit Him once a week.*

**B. Bible study is a marathon, not a sprint. ( It requires a steady effort over time. )**

1. Jesus said, **"If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;" Jn. 8:31**
2. It takes time for one's mind to be transformed. **Rom. 12:2**
3. Knowledge is like a wall .. it must be built brick upon brick, one brick at a time.

**C. Continuing bible study takes discipline and patience.**

1. Understanding grows over time and ripens with repetition.
2. There is some understanding added each time a book is studied.
  - a. Each time one learns something new it adds to his ability to understand other things.
  - b. **ILL. -** *One cannot learn to divide until he can multiply.*
  - c. The higher one's wall becomes the farther he can see from it.
3. I learned a valuable lesson from a friend and from my grandmother :
  - a. **When I stopped by to pick him up a few minutes earlier than we had scheduled, his wife would not disturb him because his study time was not yet complete. Nothing short of life and death was permitted to interrupt his study.**
  - b. **My grandmother would leave visitors set while she observed her daily worship time. She read from the bible, sang songs from her hymnal and prayed during the same hour every day regardless of who was there.**

## **CONCLUSION :**

### **A. Every Christian must have a time set aside every day to read, to study and to pray.**

1. It takes time to build and to maintain any relationship, even with God.
2. No one can be close with God while giving Him only scraps of his time.
3. Give God the best of your time, time when you are most alert, not when you are tired from having given the best to others and to self.
  - a. Other people will let you down and sometimes break your heart, but not God.
  - b. Earthly relationships are all temporary, but one's relationship with God is eternal.

### **B. In order for one's bible study time to be productive, he must :**

1. He must develop a heart which longs to hear words from God.
2. He must be willing to humble himself before God in obedience to His word.
3. He must be able to reject all other authority except the word of God.
4. Understanding is the fruit of a long-term commitment to regular study.

### **C. I appeal to each one of you to schedule a regular time for your daily walk with God.**

1. Give him your best time.
2. Don't let anyone rob God of the time you have committed to Him.
3. Do not become weary in well doing for the fruit of study is understanding.
4. Understand directs one in the paths of righteousness which lead to eternal life.

### **D. God used 40 men over a period of 1500 yrs to make the bible available to you.**

1. It reveals the greatest love story ever told.
2. It teaches you everything you need to know to please God.
3. It is the roadmap to Heaven.

**BUT ... It is only of value if you learn what is in it.**

*Our text demonstrated to us that our attitude toward the word  
IS our attitude toward God. What is your attitude toward God ?*

## **INVITATION :**

Lesson Text :

## Luke 8: 4-15

### *Parable of the Sower*

**4** When a large crowd was coming together, and those from the various cities were journeying to Him, He spoke by way of a parable: **5** The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up. **6** Other seed fell on rocky soil, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. **7** Other seed fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it and choked it out. **8** Other seed fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop a hundred times as great.” As He said these things, He would call out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

**9** His disciples *began* questioning Him as to what this parable meant. **10** And He said, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to the rest *it is* in parables, so that SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MAY NOT UNDERSTAND.

**11** Now the parable is this: the seed is the word of God. **12** Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and take away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved. **13** Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no *firm* root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away. **14** The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to maturity. **15** But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.