

Inspirational Nuggets

(Archived posts from www.discipleshipcenter.org)

READING THE BIBLE:

As a teen, I remember attending a one-hour workshop on how to understand the Bible. It was led by my pastor at the time, David Denson. I am sorry to say that I don't recall most of what Rev. Denson said that day, but there was one thing I still remember: *Before you read your Bible, take time to ask God to help you with what you are about to read.* It makes sense! If I were reading a book that I didn't totally understand, who better to help my thinking than the author of the book?

Here is a quote from Mary Fairchild, in her article entitled "How To Study the Bible":

*"Probably one of the most common reasons why Christians don't study the Bible is based on this complaint, 'I just don't understand it!' Before you start each study session, begin by praying and asking God to open your spiritual understanding. The Bible says in **2 Timothy 3:16**, 'All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.' So, as you pray, realize that the words you are studying are inspired by God. **Psalm 119:130** tells us, 'The unfolding of your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple.'"*

Have you asked God to help you as you read from the Bible today?

BIBLE STUDY TOOLS:

A lot of pleasant memories come to mind as I think about my stepfather. For example, he was always very good about bicycle repair. Whenever I had a flat tire, all I had to do was tell my stepfather about it, and within a day or two he had that tire repaired, and I was on the road again (or sidewalk, as was the case with bike riders when I was a kid). In repairing a bike, Dad knew that having the right tools on hand would be a big help - and the screwdriver and pliers were always present, leading to a successful repair.

When it comes to reading and understanding your Bible, it is equally true that the right tools can assist you greatly. We are not talking about a hammer or wrench here, but we are referring to certain Bible study books that would really be a benefit to you.

Here are a few "tools" I would like to suggest:

- **Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary** (\$28.99) -- gives more interesting and greater information on Bible persons, places, things, and key words.
- **A Dictionary of the Bible and Christian Doctrine in Everyday English** (\$23.99) -- defines Bible terms and doctrine in simplified form.
- **Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old Testament and New Testament Words** (\$12.99) -- *What does that Bible word mean, and how might it affect my life? You'll find answers in this word study book.*
- **Hard Sayings of the Bible** (Walter Kaiser, et. al.) (\$23.49) -- *Helps you understand "hard to understand," or seemingly contradictory, verses in the Bible.*

You can find these books at Christianbook.com or order them through your local Christian book store.

Using Bible study tools will help you construct a greater understanding of God's word!

The BIBLE:

When you find yourself in crisis, there is nothing like a word from the Lord to bring you peace, assurance, and direction. When my wife first found out she had breast cancer in 2004, one of the first things I did was to ask God for a word from Him that would give me some indication of what He wanted to do to help her. The verse that came to mind arose out of Matthew 8:2-3. A leper said to Jesus, "If you are willing, you can make me clean." I knew, in Sharon's case, that God had the power to heal her and help her, but the question that came to my mind was, "Is He willing?" The Lord's response to the leper was "I am willing," and as I recalled His willingness to help the leper, it seemed that He brought an assurance to me that He was also willing to heal my wife. "Yes, I am willing" was the Lord's promise to me at that moment. There was nothing more valuable in those days of cancer crisis than a word from the Lord. (And, yes, God did heal her, and she is enjoying her 10th year without cancer!)

When you, or someone you know, encounters a crisis of some kind, I believe God has something helpful to say during that crisis. God does not send telegrams or e-mails, much to the chagrin of some, but He will have a word or two available from the pages of the BIBLE. Perhaps the next question is: *What verse(s) in the Bible might God use to speak to me during this crisis?*

One of the "[links](#)" listed on our Resource page is entitled "[Where to Look in the Bible.](#)" By clicking this link you will end up at a storehouse of Bible verses that are appropriate for particular crisis-like situations. May the Lord use these verses to bring you His word of peace, assurance and direction in the days to come!

"What does God have to say about your crisis situation today?"

THE BIBLE:

Here are two thoughts on the Bible:

John DeVries, who has served as director of international ministries for the *World Home Bible League*, devised a multi-point plan for getting meaning out of almost any passage of Scripture. It can make your Bible reading time an opportunity to enjoy God and His message, and help you not feel overwhelmed with too many principles of Bible interpretation. Read a passage from the Bible and then ask yourself these questions:

- What did you like?
- What did you learn about God?
- What should you do?
- What phrase can you take with you today?

How about some challenging thoughts on reading and studying the Bible?:

- There are only two ways to study the Bible: studying it with your mind made up, or studying it to let it make up your mind.
- **Read** the Bible completely like a love letter, **Consult** it constantly like a road map, **Study** it carefully like a lesson book, **Obey** it conscientiously like an army order.
- The Bible should be bread for daily use, not cake for special occasions.

Have you read your BIBLE yet today?

THE BIBLE:

Get a grip! That's the challenge for disciples like you and me as we focus on the place of the BIBLE in our lives:

Take a large book from your bookshelf, and lay it on an available space in front of you. (Did you get a book yet? Go ahead, I'll wait . . .)

Now, pick up that book with just your thumb and your pointer finger. How good a grip do you have with just that thumb and pointer? Not bad, perhaps, but if someone came along and swatted that book just now, you might have a hard time holding on to that book.

What if you grasped that same book now with your thumb, pointer, *and* middle finger? You would have a better grip still, wouldn't you? It would be more difficult for someone to knock the book out of your hand.

Okay, take up that same book, and hold it with your thumb, pointer, middle *and* ring fingers. A stronger grip than before is what you would have. And the best grip yet would be yours if you used *all five fingers* to hold that heavy book.

You know, when it comes to getting a hold on the truths that God brings to us through His Word (the Bible), there are five basic ways to grasp those truths:

- **HEARING** God's Word
- **READING** God's Word
- **STUDYING** God's Word
- **MEMORIZING** God's Word
- **MEDITATING ON** God's Word (thinking about particular verses over and over)

When do you think you would have the best grasp on the truths of the Bible? As a person has their best grip on a book when they use all five fingers, so *a disciple has their best grasp on the Bible when they hear, read, study, memorize, and meditate on the Bible*. That's good to know, too, because we have an enemy of our souls that is constantly trying to knock the Word of God out of our lives.

What steps are you taking to employ all five ways to grasp the truths of the Bible?