

LIVING BY THE WORD: GOD'S ROAD MAP TO SUCCESS!

God has given us an “instruction manual” to guide us and help us be successful in this life and the eternal life to come. He wants us to live a spiritually and relationally abundant life here on earth (John 10:10) and positively impact the world around us (Matthew 28:18-20)! The Bible has also been referred to as God's love letter to mankind (John 3:16), and through it we can find God and the meaning of life and history.

There are two crucial and irreplaceable keys to success when handling God's word:

1) **L**_____ it

AND

2) **A**_____ it (Just do it!)

There are two errors to avoid: Not learning God's word **OR** Learning but not applying (knowledge without application is basically worthless; “to know and not apply shows we really don't know”).

WHY SHOULD WE LEARN & APPLY GOD'S WORD (THE BIBLE)?

1) **The Bible is W**_____!

- God's Word is authoritative and eternal and abides forever (Psalms 119:89; I Peter 1:25)
- The Bible is inspired by God (II Timothy 3:16; II Peter 1:20-21; I Cor 2:13)
- God's word teaches, rebukes, corrects, trains and equips us for good works (II Timothy 3:16-17)

II Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV) “**All** Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly **equipped for every good work**”.

- God’s Word is living, active, piercing and discerning (Hebrews 4:12)
- God’s Word gets results, it does not return empty (Isiah 55:11)
- The Bible is Tried, Tested, Upright and the Truth (Psalms 18:30, 33:4; Proverbs 30:5; John 17:17)

2) **God T_____ us to!**

- We are exhorted to let the Word of God dwell richly within us (Colossians 3:16)
- God tells us to meditate on the Word and do all that it says (Joshua 1:8; Psalms 1)
- Told to be a doer, not just a hearer of the Word (James 1:22-25)

3) **We receive B_____ and B_____! The church and the people around us are also blessed as we learn and apply God’s Word.**

- a) By learning and doing His Word we can stand up to the storms of life (loss of jobs, poor health, financial worries, death of a loved one, temptations to do wrong, etc):

READ Luke 6:46-49

Examples:

Struggle with worry? *Practice Philippians 4:6-7*

Having a problem with temptation? *Claim I Corinthians 10:13*

Concerned about making ends meet? *Meditate on Matthew 6:25-33*

Sad about death of a Christian loved one? *Take comfort from 2 Cor 5:6-8*

Facing a challenge too big for you to handle? *Focus on Philippians 4:13*

- b) We are blessed by Jesus:

Luke 11:27-28 “As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, “Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you.” He

replied, “**Blessed** rather are those who **hear** the Word of God **and obey** it.”

- c) We develop a special relationship with Jesus:

Luke 8:19-21 “Now Jesus’ mothers and brothers came to see Him, but they were not able to get near Him because of the crowd. Some one told him, “Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you.” He replied, “My mother and brothers are those who **hear** God’s Word **and put it into practice.**”

- d) We give evidence that we really love Jesus:

John 14: 15-24 “**If you love me, you will obey what I command ...** Whoever has my commands **and** obeys them, he is the one who loves me ... **If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching.** My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching ...”.

- e) We will be successful in what we do:

READ Joshua 1:1-9

(note: refer also to Psalms 1)

- f) Some benefits from Psalms 119:

- Avoid being shamed (verses 6, 31, 80)
- Keep our way pure and get victory over sin (9, 11)
- Receive guidance/advice/direction (24, 105)
- Preserves our life (38, 93)

Benefits from Psalms 119 (continued):

- Strengthens us (28)

- Keeps us from being deceived and from stumbling (29, 165)
- Sets our heart free/gives us freedom (32)
- Source of delight, peace and comfort (35,52, 165)
- Source of wisdom, insight & understanding (98-100, 104)
- Sustains us (175)

CAUTIONS:

We need to handle God’s Word accurately (II Timothy 2:15) and should not ADD (i.e. Legalism) or SUBTRACT (Liberalism) from God’s Word (Duet 4:2, 12:32; Rev 22:18-19; Mat 5:18-19). Teachers of God’s Word have a special accountability before God (James 3:1; Hebrews 13:17).

We also should focus on the Major teachings and not get obsessed with Minor teachings. Lets avoid being a modern day Pharisee; the most important teachings according to Jesus are the Great Commands – “Love God and Love People (Matthew 22:34-40) ” and Great Commission – “Make Disciples” (Matthew 28:18-20).

APPLICATION TIME:

How do I start a personal Bible study habit?

- 1) Make a decision (commitment)
- 2) Make a plan
 - a) Time (start of day, noon hour, after dinner, before bedtime, etc.)
 - b) Place (favorite recliner, chair in bedroom, den, etc.)
 - c) Reading plan (One Year Bible, One year reading schedule, read through New Testament, pick a book of the Bible like John, James, Psalms or Proverbs)
- 3) Just do it! Focus on what you can learn and put into practice. Application is the key!

RESOURCE HELPS FOR SERIOUS STUDY:

Study Bible, based on a respected translation (e.g., NIV, NASB, King James, New King James, etc).

Bible Commentary

Bible Concordance (e.g. Strongs)

Bible Dictionary (e.g. Vines)

Bible Handbook (e.g. Eerdmans)

Atlas/maps

Books:

“Living by the Book” by Howard & William Hendricks

“How to Read the Bible for All It’s Worth” by Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart

PSALMS 19:7 – 11

**The law of the Lord is perfect,
reviving the soul.**

**The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy,
making wise the simple.**

**The precepts of the Lord are right,
giving joy to the heart.**

**The commandments of the Lord are radiant,
giving light to the eyes.**

The fear of the Lord is pure,

enduring forever.

**The ordinances of the Lord are sure,
and altogether righteous.**

**They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold;
they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb.**

By them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.