

VISITING PROGRAM TRAINING CLASS

Third Class

October 20, 1968

FORMAT:

1. Open with prayer.
2. World news discussion and drill (5 - 8 Minutes).
3. Difficult scripture drill (30 Minutes).
4. Sermonettes and evaluations (30 minutes).
5. Recess (10 minutes).
6. Lecture (one hour).
7. Assignments for next class.

DIFFICULT SCRIPTURES

1. We should not plan ahead or save for the future (Matt. 6:25).
 - A. This scripture does not say we should not prepare for the future.
 - B. The center reference column of the National Bible shows that "thought" could better be rendered "anxious thought" according to the Greek. Christ was telling His followers not to worry about the future. Maintaining a tranquil mind is one of the seven laws of good health.
 - C. Christ was certainly not advocating that Christians make no plans at all for the future. God knows we have need of certain physical things (Matt. 6: 31-32). He tells us to follow the example of the ant who saves and plans ahead for the future (Prov. 6:6-8) and even specifically states in I Tim. 5:8 and Prov. 13:22 that a man who does not provide for his family is derelict.
 - D. The point is we must not be presumptuous in making plans for the future. James said, "Go to now, you that say, Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas YOU KNOW NOT what shall be on the morrow.. For that you ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or do that" (Jas. 4:13-15).

Jesus is saying that you should not waste time making elaborate, intricately detailed plans that you may never use. Keep your life simple and concentrate on the basics. It's a matter of emphasis. "Seek ye first the KINGDOM OF GOD and his righteousness, and all these

things (material possessions and physical needs) shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

2. It is all right to eat any meat as long as you ask God's blessing upon it. (I Tim. 4:4)

- A. The subject in question is not clean and unclean meats but vegetarianism.
- B. Some were teaching to abstain from meats -- which Paul described as a doctrine of demons (verse 1).
- C. Paul was pointing out that meat is good -- if it be received with thanksgiving of them which know the Truth. What is Truth? John 17:17 -- Thy Word is Truth. God's Word shows which meats are to be received with thanksgiving -- in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14.
- D. Notice verse 5. Certain meats are sanctified or "set apart" by the Word of God and prayer. We could not, in faith, give God thanks and ask His blessing on meat that is not set apart for food by His Word.
- E. Verse 4 is telling us, then, that all meat is good if we who know God's Truth -- who know Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14 -- receive it with thanksgiving.

3. Is the "baptism of fire" something we should seek? (Matt. 3:11)

- A. Notice the context. John is not speaking to Christians. He is reproving the Pharisees and Sadducees for their self-righteous attitudes (verses 7-9), and he is telling them to bring forth fruits meet for repentance (verse 8).
- B. John explained that he was baptizing with water unto repentance (verse 11), but Christ would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire.
- C. Notice verse 12. This fire is described as an unquenchable fire that would burn up the chaff.
- D. Malachi 4:3 describes this also. The wicked are to be ashes -- completely burned up -- under the feet of the righteous.
- E. This is speaking of the second death, as described in Revelation 20:6, 14-15.

HOW TO STUDY AND MARK YOUR BIBLE
AND
HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF
WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY AND SABBATH SERVICES

I. INTRODUCTION -- WHY STUDY THE BIBLE?

A. God's Word is Spiritual Food

Our physical bodies are constantly running down. Minute by minute they are literally dying, but at same time, they are being revitalized and renewed by physical food which nourishes and sustains us. What would happen if we were to stop taking food into our bodies? We would begin a process which -- if not interrupted -- would result in the END of our physical life!

In the same way, our Spiritual life is sustained by Spiritual food. God describes HIS WORD as that life-giving spiritual food. It is the staff of our spiritual life! (Matthew 4:4.)

John 6:63 -- Christ's words are spirit and life. He was, in the flesh, the Word of God personified (John 1:14). He described Himself as the LIVING BREAD (John 6:51) which -- if we eat of it -- will enable us to live forever.

Romans 8:5-6 -- To be spiritually-minded is life and peace. We can be spiritually-minded only if we are regularly putting into our minds spiritual thoughts -- God's thoughts!

Romans 12:2 -- Our minds must continually be renewed. A spiritual mind is not permanent in a physical body. EVERY DAY our minds must be renewed by the study of God's Word.

God spoke personally to Adam, to Enoch and Noah, to Abraham, Moses and all His prophets in the Old Testament times, but today God speaks to His servants through His Word! If we are not letting God speak to us regularly and consistently through diligent, wholehearted and often prayerful Bible study, then we are not learning to think as God thinks, and we will STARVE TO DEATH spiritually.

B. Purposes of God's Word

II Timothy 3:16 -- All scripture is given by inspiration of God -- "God breathed" --and this verse summarizes the purpose of God's Word. It is profitable for:

1. Doctrine

A doctrine is merely a "teaching." We refer to the doctrines of God's Church as "the Truth" and these doctrines explain God's plan for mankind,

how He is working it out and our part in it. Our understanding of the Truth of God will depend directly on our personal Bible study.

2. Reproof

This word could better be translated conviction (see Strong's Concordance). God's Word convicts us.

James 1:23 -- It reveals to us our shortcomings and sins, and convicts us of them.

Romans 7:7 -- Just as Paul came to understand what "lust" is, we all learn what sin is through the Word of God.

Heb. 4:12 -- It is a two-edged sword that cuts both ways! It plainly shows us our thoughts and real intentions. God's Word convicts us and brings us to deeper and deeper repentance. Job was finally convicted of what he was by God speaking to him personally. Unless God is speaking to you through regular personal Bible study, you won't SEE yourself, and you won't qualify to be used of Him.

3. Correction

This is the only place in the New Testament that this Greek word is used. It means literally "a straightening up again" (see Strong's Concordance). God's Word "sets us straight!"

Let God's Word correct you, change you and clean you up. All of us, to one degree or another, are affected by our past sins. What we have done in the past -- Our habits and our ways of life -- and what we have thought affects our minds and our character today.

Psalms 119:9 -- Looking into and heeding God's Word will clean us up! (John 15:3 and Ephesians 5:26.) Regular, intensive Bible study washes and cleans up our minds. It FLUSHES OUT the spiritual filth that accumulated in our minds before conversion.

4. Instruction in Righteousness

Psalm 119:172 -- God's commandments are righteousness, and God's Word lists, expounds and magnifies the commandments so that we will understand how to obey them in the spirit of the law.

Just as any machine comes with an instruction book to show how it is to be operated, God has given MAN an instruction book to show us how we are to be "operated." That Instruction Book is HIS WORD! Following

those instructions will give us happiness, peace and joy in this physical life as well as insure that we will experience these things for all eternity in His Kingdom!

C. Why WE Should Study God's Word

Deuteronomy 17:15, 18-20 -- Notice that God commanded the king of Israel to write out the law and to read it every day of his life! Verse 19 -- In this way he would learn to fear God and keep His commandments and statutes. Verse 20 -- It would give him a right perspective of himself and keep him humble. It would direct him in God's way and give him a long, happy life. How much MORE should we -- who will be kings in the World Tomorrow -- study God's Word every day as a way of life.

Hebrews 5:12-13 -- But as shown by the Entrance Examinations for the Visiting Program Training Class, some of you who should now be teachers need to be taught the beginning principle of God's Word! Those of you in this class need to really DIG IN and go on a crash program to deeply study and learn God's Word.

II. HOW TO STUDY YOUR BIBLE

A. Have a Proper Attitude

1. Go to God for help for the right attitude. Pray first, asking for a right attitude.
2. Be positive toward Bible study. Don't look at it as something you must "get in." Study with zeal.
3. Have intellectual curiosity in studying.
4. Hunger and thirst after righteousness -- after a knowledge of God's Word

B. Provide a Regular Place and Proper Environment

1. Have a definite area or place to study
2. Never study in a place not conducive to a proper mental attitude
3. Select a quiet area
4. Select a time when you will have peace and quiet
5. If you think that you can study successfully and comprehend completely what you are studying with a lot of noise and outside interruption, you are kidding yourself!

C. Bible Helps

1. The best Bible help is a good Bible. Get one if you don't have one. Three basic types are recommended:

- a. Oxford Wide Margin with India Paper, No. 58-S8.
- b. National Crystal-Clear Type, No. T3.
- c. Cambridge Turquoise, 24KD4.
- d. A thumb index is all right if you want it, but robs you of vital margin space.

2. Useful helps that you need:

- a. A Cruden's Concordance.
- b. A Bible Dictionary such as one of the following:
 - 1) Peloubet's
 - 2) Hastings' (One Volume)
 - 3) Unger's

3. Useful helps if you can afford them:

- a. Strong's or Young's Concordance
- b. A Bible commentary, such as one or more of the following:
 - 1) Clarke's (for Old Testament)
 - 2) Critical and Experimental by Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown (for New Testament)
 - 3) Soncino's Books of the Bible (Jewish -- for Old Testament)

D. Study Methods

1. By subject -- faith, Sabbath, sin, etc.

- a. Use Concordance, Correspondence Course, and other helps to get information on one subject.
- b. Memorize a key scripture on a subject and write in other scriptures in the margin of that scripture, or chain reference the scriptures beginning at the key scripture.

2. By books of the Bible

- a. Use Bible helps to learn:
 - 1) Who wrote the book
 - 2) To whom it was written
 - 3) When it was written
 - 4) Circumstances under which it was written
 - 5) Geographical location of and individual or individuals to whom it was written
 - 6) Historical and geographical background of the area
 - 7) Summarize all this background at beginning of the book in your margin

- b. Read from chapter one to end of book, about three chapters at a sitting
 - c. Use Bible helps as you read
 - d. Review previous three chapters each time before beginning with next three
- 3. Reading for inspiration
 - a. Good when you have only a few minutes or at night before bed
 - b. Some examples of good chapters for this are:
 - 1) I Corinthians 13
 - 2) Hebrews 11
 - 3) I Corinthians 15
 - 4) John 13-17
 - 5) Matthew 5, 6 and 7
 - 6) Philippians 2-4
 - 7) Many others, including any of the Psalms
- 4. Frequently used scriptures -- Peruse the marked scriptures in a well-marked Bible, noting their location in the book and position on the page.
- 5. Studying difficult scriptures -- Col. 2:14; Eph. 2:15, etc.
 - a. Read articles or booklets for the information
 - b. Write basic explanation in the margin
 - c. Use a modern translation

III. HOW TO MARK YOUR BIBLE

- A. Simplest method is best
- B. Suggest red and blue pencil
- C. Write clarifying thoughts, other scriptures in margin
- D. Mr. John Portune's article in December 1965 Good News is helpful
- E. Marking is no substitute for knowing God's Word well!

IV. HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY AND SABBATH SERVICES

- A. Get plenty of sleep and rest beforehand
- B. Pray and study beforehand
- C. Have a right attitude as you listen
 - 1. God speaks through ministers
 - 2. Listen, be alert and concentrate
 - 3. Don't let your mind wander

D. Apply to self

1. Don't apply to others
2. You will learn and profit only if you apply to self

E. Take good notes

1. We forget 90% within 24 hours
2. Take good notes and review them as soon as possible and then once more later

V. CONCLUSION

Remember that your spiritual growth will depend on how much you are deeply drinking in of God's Word and making it a part of you. Only by knowing the Bible can you "let this mind" be in you Phil. 2:5 that is in Christ. Our every thought and action should be tempered by the knowledge and understanding of GOD'S WORD!

Your future in this physical life -- the extent to which God will be able to use YOU -- as well as your future for all eternity will depend a great deal on how faithful and diligent you are in your study of God's word!

ASSIGNMENTS FOR NEXT CLASS

1. The Answer to Unanswered Prayer and The Power of Prayer -- Reprint #130 (both combined), by Mr. Roderick C. Meredith.
2. Vital "Keys" to Success in Prayer -- The PLAIN TRUTH, November 7, 1964, by Mr. Roderick C. Meredith.
3. Should You Fast? -- The GOOD NEWS, November 1964, by Mr. William Dankenbring.
4. Meditation -- A Vital Key to Your Spiritual Life!-- The GOOD NEWS, February, 1968, by Mr. David L. Antion.