

# YOUR BIBLE AND YOU

A **MANNAHOUSE** RESOURCE



## INTRODUCTION

Contemporary Christians live in a unique period of spiritual blessing. We can draw upon the sacrifices of many saints who have gone before us. Because of the labors of millions who have laid down their lives, we have at our disposal access to one of the most precious gifts given to mankind - the Bible.

However, the pathetic fact is that many Christians almost totally neglect this precious resource. Widespread indifference and apathy toward the Word of God exists even in the most biblically-based fellowships. Sadly enough, some Christians are more interested in magazines, newspapers, romantic novels, watching T. V., or listening to the radio than in reading their Bible. This booklet endeavors to correct this tragic tendency, and establish one of the most valuable spiritual disciplines that a Christian can develop. This booklet is designed to transform your Bible reading from a dull, drab, and boring experience into a discipline which is exciting, satisfying, and rewarding. It does so by offering the constructive, common sense steps and practical insights for establishing a successful pattern of daily devotions in the Word of God.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| <b>Title</b>  | <b>Pages</b> |
|---|--------------|
| What Is The Problem? . . . . .  | 3            |
| What Do The Scriptures Say About Our Need<br>For Developing Godly Disciplines In The World? . . . . . | 4            |
| What Have Others Said? . . . . .  | 5-6          |
| Why Should We Study The Bible? . . . . .  | 7-11         |
| Practical Guidelines For Successful Study . . . . .   | 12-16        |
| Additional Tips And Suggestions . . . . .   | 17-19        |
| The Results Of Neglecting God's Word. . . . .   | 20           |
| The Need For Application . . . . .  | 21           |
| Conclusion . . . . .  | 22           |

## WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?

In spite of the fact that all fundamental Christians embrace the reality that the Bible is the infallible Word of God, many are unconsciously guilty of neglecting this precious book. Though genuine Christians defend the Bible, praise the Bible, and revere the Bible as God's supreme revelation to mankind, many are demonstrating a disinterest in its "contents through a habitual pattern of disuse, simply because they have never established an intimate relationship with the Bible on a consistent, ongoing basis.

The reasons for this widespread neglect boils down to either slothfulness, spiritual lukewarmness, or lack of sufficient instruction. Many have slipped into a quiet pattern of neglect, disillusionment, and frustration because they lack the constructive guidelines for developing a healthy habit of personal devotion in the Word of God. Others have never established a pleasurable and rewarding relationship with the Bible because they have failed to challenge a spirit of slothfulness and indifference.

## WHAT DO THE SCRIPTURES SAY ABOUT OUR NEED FOR DEVELOPING GODLY DISCIPLINES IN THE WORD?

The scriptures repeatedly reinforce the importance of establishing consistent daily disciplines in the Word of God. Jesus specifically challenged us to “search the Scriptures” (Jn. 5:39), and Isaiah the prophet exhorted us to “Search the book of the Lord, and read” (Isa. 34: 16).

The Apostle Paul commended the Christians in Berea because they “were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, **and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.**” (Acts 17:11, K.J.V.) He underscored the significance of our personal need to study the Word of God when he exhorted us to “**Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**” (II Tim. 2:15, K.J.V.). He also instructed Timothy to “**give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.**” (I Tim. 4:13).

## WHAT HAVE OTHERS SAID?

Many powerful testimonies could be given concerning the importance of establishing a consistent, intimate relationship with our Bible. The following statements represent the convictions echoed by thousands:

**D.L. MOODY, one of the great evangelists of the 19th century, provided this revealing testimony:**

“I prayed for faith, and thought that some day faith would come down and strike me like lightning. But faith did not seem to come. One day I read in the tenth chapter of Romans *‘now faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.’* **I had closed my Bible, and prayed for faith. I now opened my Bible, and began to study, and faith has been growing ever since.”**

**GEORGE MULLER, the noted prayer warrior, provided these challenging insights: “The vision of our spiritual life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our life and thoughts. I solemnly state this from the experience of fifty-four years.”**

“The first three years after conversion I neglected the word of God. Since I began to search diligently the blessing has been wonderful. I have read the Bible through one hundred times, and always with increasing delight. Each time it seems like a new book to me.”

“I believe that the one chief reason that I have been kept in happy useful service is that I have been a lover of Holy Scripture. It has been my habit to read the Bible through four times a year, in a prayerful spirit to apply it to my heart, and practice what I find there. I have been for sixty-nine years a happy man; happy, happy, happy . . . Great has been the blessing from consecutive, diligent, daily study. I look upon it as a lost day when I have not had a good time over the word of God.”

## WHY SHOULD WE STUDY THE BIBLE?

*“ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable”*  
(2 Tim. 3:16).

The primary reason why we should regularly study the Bible is because of its immeasurable profit to our lives.

The Bible is an inexhaustible goldmine of spiritual blessing. It contains a vast deposit of truth which can potentially enrich every area of our life. The scriptures repeatedly emphasize the reality that the Bible provides countless benefits for us. When we invest ourselves in a consistent, common sense pattern of Bible reading and study, we are guaranteed to reap a lifetime of dividends.

Many reasons can be presented in order to demonstrate the profit in developing daily disciplines in the Word of God. On the following pages we will briefly examine some of the most beneficial by-products of studying God’s Word.



**1. It Gives Divine Direction and Guidance** — *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path . . . direct my steps by Your word”* (Ps. 119:105, 133). **The scriptures provide illumination to light our path and give us clarity and direction in life.**

**2. It Provides Spiritual Cleansing** — In Ephesians, Paul speaks about being sanctified and cleansed by *“the washing of water by the word”* (Eph. 5:26). Jesus also stated, *“You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you”* (Jn. 15:3). The scriptures provide a source of cleansing. They represent a cleansing agent which washes and refreshes our minds and our hearts. **The Word of God has a laundering effect which purifies our thought life, emotions, attitudes, motives, and intents of the heart.** (see also Heb. 4:12).

**3. It Imparts Spiritual Freedom and Liberty** — *“If you abide in My word, you are my disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”* (Jn. 8:31, 32) **The Word emancipates us from spiritual, mental, and emotional bondage and oppression.**

**4. It establishes a Protective Safeguard Against Sin** — “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.” (Ps. 119:9-11) **The Bible establishes the godly cautions and restraints required to insure the fear of the Lord, and protect our life from erring into sin.** It erects a spiritual hedge against the influence of temptation and solicitation to sinful compromise.

**5. It Equips Us** — “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17) **The Word of God is a sufficient source of caution, counsel, correction, insight, and instruction to comprehensively equip and prepare us for every realm of ministry and spiritual service.**

**6. It Imparts the Peace of God** — “Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble.” (Ps. 119:165) **The Bible ministers peace, confidence, security, and assurance.**

**7. It Builds Our Faith** — “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Rom. 10:17) **The Word of God stimulates, promotes, and strengthens our faith.**

**8. It Imparts Wisdom, Insights, and Understanding** — “The entrance of Your words gives light; it gives understanding to the simple,” (Ps. 119:130) **The Bible quickens our minds and spiritual discernment.** It provides the necessary wisdom, insights, understanding, and enlightenment for every area of our lives.

**9. It Imparts Comfort and Consolation in Times of Testing** — “This is my comfort in my affliction, for Your word has given me life.” (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) **The scriptures ease our turmoil, and supply soothing comfort to our mind and emotions.**

**10. It Strengthens and Edifies Us** — “Strengthen me according to Your word.” (Ps. 119:28). “And now, brethren, I commend you to God and the word of His grace which is able to build you up.” (Acts 20:32) **The scriptures strengthen and sustain the inner man.**

**11. It Causes Us To Be Approved** — “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Tim. 2:15, K.J.V.) **The Scriptures enable our life, labor, and efforts to be acceptable before God and others.**

**12. It Imparts Hope** — “For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, **that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.**” (Rom. 15:4)

**13. It Gives Us Answers to the Challenges, Problems, and Confrontations of Life** — “So shall I have an answer for him who reproaches me, for I trust in Your word” (Ps. 119:42) **The scriptures equip us with all the necessary answers for life.**

**14. It Imparts Stability and Strength** — This is forcefully illustrated in the story of the man who built his house on a rock. (Lk 6:47-49; 1:1-3)

**15. It Secures Salvation** — “Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, **for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.**” (1 Tim. 4: 16)

## PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR SUCCESSFUL STUDY

There are several fundamental steps for successfully establishing a consistent habit of basic Bible devotions. If we will carefully review the following checklist of helpful suggestions and implement them, we will insure a rewarding relationship with the Word of God.

**1. We Must Establish a Consistent, Daily Pattern of Bible Reading** or we will quickly slip into an erratic, irregular relationship with God's Word. Paul commended the Berean Christians because they "searched the Scriptures daily." (Acts 17:11) Successful Bible reading and study depends upon this fundamental first step. **We must structure our schedules and redeem our time in order to achieve success.** This is an essential discipline which we must cultivate in order to build a healthy and profitable pattern of Bible study and reading. **New Christians are recommended to begin their Bible reading in the New Testament, preferably in the gospels. They should not begin with the more difficult books such as Revelation or the Old Testament prophets.**

## **2. Select a Bible Version and Translation Which is Suitable to Your Personal Reading Tastes and Abilities.**

Many Christians have difficulty developing regular disciplines in the Bible simply because they get off to a wrong start - their Bible version is confusing and incomprehensible. If the King James Version is difficult to read, you should consider other recommended versions such as the New King James Bible or the New International Version. Furthermore, the size of binding and print can also be a subtle hindrance and turn-off to Bible reading. For this reason, **a Christian should select a Bible with a comfortable and easy to read type size. It should also be large enough to handle easily.**

## **3. Keep a Bible Diary or Notebook. Get in the habit of recording the insights which you glean from your daily reading and study.**

This will help reinforce the truths you have learned and the revelations you have received. Also, don't be afraid to mark your Bible. Underline or highlight important verses, key words and phrases, and record notes and observations in the margins. Keeping notes is one of the first steps to more advanced types of systematic Bible study.

**4. Meditate Upon What You Have Read.** Learn to develop more than a superficial relationship with your Bible. Take time to pause and thoughtfully consider what you have read. God commends the man whose “*delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law he meditates day and night*” (Ps. 1:2). The word “meditate” means to “chew the cud”. Our meditation should be like the action of a cow which chews up a lump of grass, swallows it, and brings it up again, and chews on it some more. We should not hastily gulp down the Word of God without reflecting some more. We should discipline ourselves to reconsider and thoughtfully ponder upon what we have read throughout the day.

Paul essentially encouraged Timothy to do this when he stated, “**Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things**” (2 Tim. 2:7). The process of meditation is the pathway to deeper insights and understanding. It helps us comprehend the truths we have read and apply them to our life situations. **Meditation transforms our reading from a religious exercise into a deeply rewarding experience.**

**5. We must Personalize the Word of God** Reading the Bible must involve more than our “getting into the Word”. It must involve the Word “getting into us”. **Our meditation should include the dimension of personalizing the truths we have received and considering how they practically relate to our lives and apply to our life situations.** Personalizing the scriptures takes our study out of the realm of the abstract and into the realm of personal intimacy and relatability. Personalizing the scriptures transforms our reading into a vital, living experience which causes the Word of God to become alive in us.

There are some basic keys for stimulating successful personalization of the scriptures. Our meditation will come alive if we will remember to ask the following questions: **1) WHO** were the people involved?; **2) WHAT** happened, **WHAT** were the ideas expressed, **WHAT** were the results?; **3) WHERE** did the events take place — **WHERE** is the setting?; **4) WHEN** did the events take place?; **5) WHY** did it happen?; **6) HOW** does it relate to me?

Some further guidelines for successfully personalizing the scriptures focuses upon the following questions: **1) Was there a sin for me to avoid? 2) Was**



there a promise to claim? **3)** Was there an example to follow? **4)** Was there a command to obey? **5)** Was there a new truth learned which can help me mature as a Christian?

**6. We Should use Bible Helps and Reference Books to Assist Us in Our Bible Study.** Bible handbooks such as “Halley’s Bible Handbook”, a Bible dictionary, and a good study Bible such as the “Thompson Chain Reference Bible” are extremely helpful tools for basic Bible reading and study. Using these aids alongside of our daily reading can help provide further insight. They contain a wealth of facts and information which can enrich our Bible knowledge. **We should also consider supplementing our reading with other Bible translations and parallel versions such as the “Amplified Bible” or the “The Message Bible” to enhance our understanding and comprehension.**

**7. We Must Pray.** Our Bible reading will become much more fulfilling if we will simply ask God to anoint our minds and minister revelation, insight, clarity and understanding. Before we begin our reading, we should pause to pray and seek God for divine assistance.

## ADDITIONAL TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

There are several additional tips which can help us insure a successful pattern of daily devotions in the Word of God:

**1. Set a Reasonable Reading Pace — Some Christians establish a self destructive pattern of Bible reading by biting off more than they can chew.**

They establish a self-defeating schedule which requires an unrealistic amount of daily reading which they can not handle on a consistent basis. The result is that their Bible reading soon becomes a drudgery. **A minimal amount of reading is preferable.** A recommended amount of chapters which the average Christian can maintain on a regular reading basis is two or three per day.

**2. Read Your Bible Even If You Don't Feel Like It — If we read the Bible only when we feel like it, we will end up with an inconsistent, erratic, and infrequent pattern of study.** Daily devotions in the Word is a discipline which demands diligence, determination, and a measure of sacrifice. However, the rewards for our labor will far outweigh any effort on our part.

**3. Read When Your Mind is Alert** — One of the best times to read the Word is in the morning before the distractions and cares of the day's activities have taken their toll. Our minds are usually refreshed and uncluttered in the morning.

**4. Set Aside a Specific Time and Place to Read** — Whether it is more convenient to read in the morning or evening, we should endeavor to have a specific location and established time to read rather than rely on a sporadic, hit or miss, hit and run schedule.

**5. Don't Develop Bad Bible Reading Habits** — Our reading must be consistent. If we play "scripture roulette" by skipping around on a spasmodic, haphazard, undisciplined manner, we will only reinforce inconsistency. We should read each book through and consecutively before moving on to another book or switching to another text or Testament. **We must guard against any erratic, free-floating patterns of reading which can undermine a consistency in the Word.**

**6. Don't Get Caught Up with Elaborate and Complicated Patterns of Bible Study to Begin With.**

— We should endeavor to establish a basic system of daily devotions in the Word of God before moving on to more advanced and complex systems of study. **Even our daily reading schedule should be as simple as possible.** Whether we read the Bible straight through in a year, or alternate between books in the Old and New Testaments, we should adopt a yearly reading schedule which is easy to follow and keep track of. **The important thing is to select a reading plan which is best suited for you and structured to encourage consistency.**

**7. If You Miss a Day, Don't Give Up!** — It takes time to reinforce a consistent habit. **If you miss a day or two in your reading, don't become discouraged and disillusioned. Simply resume your reading schedule where you left off and get back on track.**

## **THE RESULTS OF NEGLECTING GOD'S WORD**

The negative consequences of neglecting God's Word are many, but the primary result can be summed up with the words "spiritual weakness". A failure to consistently partake of the Word of God parallels the effects of failing to eat food in the natural. Many Christians are spiritually unhealthy, anemic, and malnourished simply because they do not eat the Word on a regular basis. Many of the problems and perplexities we suffer are the direct by-product of trying to subsist on a starvation diet. Spiritual weakness, inefficiency, and inability are often linked to improper spiritual nourishment.

The Israelites had to gather "manna" each day in order to survive. Jesus also revealed that "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). In order to live, we must likewise gather a portion of the Word each day. Sound spiritual health absolutely depends upon a wholesome spiritual diet.

## THE NEED FOR APPLICATION

The Bible will do us no good sitting on the proverbial shelf gathering dust. Just owning an expensive leather Bible or consistently carrying it around without availing ourselves of its truths will not automatically profit us or guarantee spiritual growth.

Furthermore, reading the Bible is only the first step. Reading schedules, timetables, study methods and techniques will not benefit us if we do not apply the Word to our lives. Our meditation and personalization of the scriptures should lead us to become “doers of the word, and not hearers only.” (James 1:22)

We must not neglect the study of God’s Word but, ultimately, we must practically apply God’s Word to our life. Our prayers for spiritual insight and understanding must be coupled with a resolute desire and determination to obediently respond to the truths we receive through our Bible reading and study. At the point of obedience the Word of God truly energizes and becomes flesh in us.

## CONCLUSION

We have carefully considered the subject of “Your Bible and You”. We have examined the spiritual necessity and significance of the Bible in relationship to the Christian experience. We have also reviewed the fundamental steps towards developing a profitable pattern of consistent, daily devotions in the Word of God.

We have seen that the Bible is a vast storehouse of inexhaustible riches which are ours for the taking. If we will recognize this reality and respond to the basic steps for establishing a regular habit of Bible reading and study, we will have unlimited access to a wealth of potential blessings and benefits.

We also recommend that you read the Mannahouse counseling booklets entitled, “Is the Bible the Word of God?”, “How Did We Get the Bible?”, and “Building a Strong Prayer Life”. For a brief overview of the main points in this booklet, please re-read the boldly printed words on each page.



# CAMPUS LOCATIONS

## PORTLAND CAMPUS

9200 NE Fremont St  
Portland, Oregon 97220

## TIGARD CAMPUS

12244 SW Garden Pl  
Tigard, Oregon 97223

## MILL PLAIN CAMPUS

14311 SE Mill Plain Boulevard  
Vancouver, Washington 98684

## EUGENE CAMPUS

89780 N Game Farm Road  
Eugene, Oregon 97408

## ONLINE SERVICE

[live.mannahouse.church](https://www.live.mannahouse.church)  
Youtube and Facebook

[WWW.MANNAHOUSE.CHURCH](http://WWW.MANNAHOUSE.CHURCH)

503.255.2224



SCAN FOR SUNDAY  
SERVICE TIMES

WRITTEN BY: WILLIAM R. KIMBALL

COPYRIGHT © 1985 CHRISTIAN EQUIPPERS INTERNATIONAL | [WWW.EQUIPPER.COM](http://WWW.EQUIPPER.COM)