

What About... Studying the Bible

Excerpts from Dr. Howard Hendricks Youtubes, collected by Ellen DeWitt



The Bible will keep you from sin, and sin will keep you from the Bible.

To study means to devote time and attention to acquiring knowledge. Some questions to ask:

- What did I learn about God, His character, His desires, His actions?
- What did I learn about mankind as depicted by God? How does God look at me, what I do, compared to how I think about what I do?
- What can I learn about the work of Satan? What is his strategy that works with me?
- What is the effect of the work of God in me? What is He teaching me now at this point in my life? With the family I have? With the people I know? With the health/illness I have?

Reasons to Study

1. Studying the Bible is essential for growth—*Like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation* (1 Peter 2:2).

- Your attitude—long for it. The more you do it, the more you want to do it. It pleases God that you want to know what He says! [What would someone think who sends you an email but you won't read it? You have someone else read it and just tell you what it says.]
- Your appetite—develop a taste for it (for example, when young, you may not like vegetables, but as you eat them more and more, you develop a taste for them).
- With an aim to grow—you go where you aim. Aim for spiritual growth. Many read their Bibles just to get it done, to put in the time, they have no spiritual aim. They just think what they have always thought.

2. It is necessary for spiritual development—*Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food* (Hebrews 5:11-14).

- *By this time*—it takes time to develop, as it does with most things. Also, as with most things (sports, exercise, skills, relationships), if you do

not practice, you become dull (lacking interest, not perceiving distinctly). It is your decision to grow or become dull.

3. It is necessary to become spiritually effective—*All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate* [Gk “qualified”], *equipped for every good work.*

- It is for teaching—as situations come up, you have opportunities to teach, to make known the morality of the Bible, with your family, friends, acquaintances, even strangers.
- It is for reproof—what in your life is God trying to change? What action? What feelings? What beliefs? What opinions?
- It is for correction—God does not just want you to be aware of wrong things or beliefs in your life, He wants to correct them. Most religions believe they are right. They do not want you to even think about correcting what they are teaching you to believe.
- It is for righteous living—This is something that truly sets the Bible apart from religions. Most religions want you to do what they say is right. What does righteous living look like? The goal is to be righteous in God's eyes, not in people's or religion's eyes. Have eternity's values in view.