

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 8/9/92
Deuteronomy 6:4-9 "The Fruit of Bible Study"

Intro: Humorous story..2 men betting about the Lord's prayer, "Now I lay me down"

It is a privilege to have God's Word. But what should we do with it? Carry it to church and listen to someone teach us? Yes, that's good. But tragically there are lots of Christians who go no further than that.

Present Study--"How to Study the Bible"

Our Approach Tonight:

1. Study Deut 6 to see the Fruit of Bible Study
2. Practical Experience in an actual Inductive Bible study of Philippians

Q: What benefit is there in Bible study? What fruit will it bear?

Proposition: Deuteronomy 6:4-9 will give us a taste of the fruit of Bible study. There are 3 ingredients related to fruitful Bible study.

- I. A Proper Recognition of God (4)
- II. A Proper Relationship with God (5)
- III. A Proper Response to God's Word (6-9)
 - A. Take it in (6).
 - B. Give it away (7-9).
 1. To your children (7).
 2. To your community (8-9).

I. A Proper Recognition of God (4)

V 4 "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord."

We'll never get anything out of Bible study until we approach it with a proper recognition of God. We must have a clear picture of Who He Is, of What He is like.

This passage is one of the most famous texts in Scripture for the Jews. It's know as the Shema. It's the basic confession of faith in Judaism.

Background:

Deuteronomy = second law

Remember the setting. God had chosen a people to be his own, the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They sojourned in Egypt for 400 years, and grew into the mighty nation of Israel. But they were in severe bondage. They had no land of their own.

So God raised up Moses to deliver them. He told them He had prepared a Promised Land. On the way there, out in the desert of the Sinai peninsula, God gave His covenant people something very special. The Torah. His holy Law. Why? What was the purpose of the Law? Keep it so they could become God's people? No. The Law was intended to show them how to live as God's covenant people.

Well, the trip to the Holy Land took a 40 year detour, due to disobedience at Kadesh Barnea. An entire generation passed away. The second generation took their place, and prepared to enter the Promised Land. Were they ready? Not yet.

Moses gave them the second law--Deuteronomy. The book of Deut repeats the covenant stipulations laid out in Exodus, but this time for the second generation.

1. He challenged the new generation (4:1-6 "Now therefore hearken")
2. He repeated the 10 Commands (Ch 5)
3. He exhorted them to put these commands into practice in the Promised Land (6:1-3). Once there they would confront a pagan, wicked, polytheistic culture.

Think about something. The Law was God's revealed Word for His people. It was extremely important. But what were they supposed to do with the Scriptures? What did God want His people to do with His Word? Moses told them in Deut 6.

6:4 "Here O Israel..."

Q: What does 6:4 mean?

A: It means that we recognize this about God--He is totally unique!

Application: Bible study must start there. With a humble recognition of Who God is. Don't approach your Bible with a point to prove, an axe to grind. Come first with the reverent admission that God is God.

Illust:

II. A Proper Relationship with God (5)

V 5 "And thou shalt love..."

I cringe when I hear people talk about the Old Testament, and say, "Well God was different there. In the OT you see His wrath, His holiness, but in the NT you see His love." Really? I see quite a bit of holy wrath in the last book of the NT, and I see quite a bit of love in Deuteronomy! He's the same God!

Q: And what does He want from His people in both the OT and NT?

A: For us to LOVE Him! V 5 "Love the Lord..."

To love the Lord is to be rightly related to Him. I show I love Him when I choose to give Him His rightful place in my life. I show I love Him when I obey and serve Him. I show I love Him by submitting my life to His Holy Word.

Key: If I don't have a proper relationship with God, Bible study will be futile.

Illust:

Tran: There are 3 ingredients related to fruitful Bible study, acc to Deut 6. A proper recognition of God, a proper relationship with God, and...

III. A Proper Response to God's Word (6-9)

What did Moses tell the Israelites to do with God's Word? Two things. Take it in. And give it away! And the order is critical.

A. Take it in (6).

V 6 "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart."

Listen to Moses. He says, "Internalize God's Word. Take it in." Why? You can't live what you don't know. And you can't give what you don't have. So take it in?

Think about it: We've got it made today. We have our own copy of the Scriptures. The Jews in Moses' day did not. They didn't have any printing presses! Very few would ever SEE a copy of Scripture. How did they take in the Word? They had to internalize God's Word by hearing it in public meetings, memorizing what they heard, and reviewing it in their minds later.

Challenge: Make Bible study a habit. Get into the habit of taking it in!

Notice the next step. It's thrilling. One of the great fruits of Bible study happens after we take it in.

B. Give it away (7-9).

Where did God want His people to give away His Word? In 2 places.

1. To your children (7).

V 7 "And thou shalt teach them unto thy children..."

I'm impressed by how natural this says the teaching of Scripture should be in our homes. Moses says we should talk about Scripture in the flow of daily life.

Notice the various times and places Moses says parents ought to give the Scriptures to their children:

- when sitting in your house (watching TV? at dinner table? on couch?)
- when walking by the way (in the course of daily routine)
- when you lie down and get up (bedtime)

NIV V 7 "Impress them on your children."

Challenge: We must start early with our kids. If you're thinking, "My teenager turns me off when I try to talk about the Bible with him." Maybe it's because he doesn't see the importance of God's Word in YOUR life. Maybe it's because you're not teaching, but nagging. Maybe it's because it's such a shock to him, that for the first 14 years of his life you didn't take the time to teach him the Scriptures, so why now?

Key: Parents, we must not expect the church to do what God holds us responsible to do.

Illust:

2. To your community (8-9).

Notice what else Moses told the people to do with the Scriptures.

V 8 "And they shall be a sign upon thine hand...frontlets..."

Picture: Phylacteries

V 9 "And thou shalt write them upon the posts of your house..."

Illust: Mezuzah

Application: In our homes...Scripture tapes, Scr Wall Hangings, etc

Q: Why on the doorposts?

A: As a reminder that every time I leave the house, I have an obligation. What is it? To reflect the character of my God by living in obedience to His Word. At work. At school. Wherever. I must never forget that when I'm out in the community, God's Word directs my life.

Illust:

Summary: There are 3 ingredients related to fruitful Bible study. It starts with a Proper Recognition of God. It demands a Proper relationship with God. And it requires we exhibit the Proper Response to God's Word--Our aim is to take it in, and give it out.

Now let's be very practical. How?

The Steps Involved in Bible Study:

Review: (from 2 weeks ago)

Key: Effective Bible study requires a method.

Q: What steps should we follow when we study the Bible?

A: Howard Hendricks, in his book "Living By the Book", suggests 3.

Transp: "Observation, Interpretation, Application" cartoon

Ask these key questions:

1. Observation--What do I see?
2. Interpretation--What does it mean?
3. Application--How does it work? How does it apply to my life?

Illust: Article in US News, Aug 3, 92, "Bible Thumpers," about how politicians use catch phrases from the Bible as political slogans.

There is desperate need for careful observation and interpretation when it comes to Bible study. Without careful observation and accurate interpretation, we'll come up with improper application.

Challenge: Learn to be observant when you read.

I must be a biblical detective if I want to succeed in Bible study. I'm on the lookout for clues. No detail is trivial. Every fact is important.

Transp: Observation (Hend, 45)

Each step is critical. But perhaps the most neglected is the first. Observation. One of the common reasons people give for their frustration with the Bible is that it's boring. But may I suggest to you that the reason people think it's boring is because they don't know what to look for. They haven't learned how to observe.

Illust: Agassiz--fish assignment

Practical Suggestions:

1. Have a notebook and paper handy (WOL Quiettime good)
2. Have a good Study Bible

3. Memorize the books of the Bible (it will save you time in long run)

Q: What kind of things should I look for as I study the Bible?

A: Look for specific things. We've been using Philippians as an example.

Discuss: (write down)

1. Author and Occasion of the Book?
2. What topics are addressed in Philippians?
3. What do you think is the MAIN topic in the book?
4. What literary form is Philippians?

To do this week: Observations--Read Philippians a chapter a day. Write down how each chapter contributes to the overall message. Underline key words.

Discuss:

--Why did Paul write Philippians?

--Is there a main, theme verse in the letter? (1:21; 3:10; 4:13)

--How do the chapters contribute to the overall message?

Working Outline of Philippians:

Theme of the Book: Jesus Christ

Chapter 1	Commitment to Christ	1:21
Chapter 2	Service to Christ	2:5
Chapter 3	Confidence in Christ	3:3
Chapter 4	Living in Christ	4:13
	--Our Thinking	
	--Our Perspective	
	--Our Provision	

That's step #1--Observation. In observation our aim is to ask, "What do I see?"

Now we're ready for step #2--Interpretation, "What does it mean?"

And step #3--Application, "How does it apply to my life?"

Illust: Let me show you how observation and interpretation relate.

Here's a true situation that happened to me.

Observation: Here are the facts. I walked up the sidewalk on Tuesday morning, July 28. I approached the side entrance door to the church. I saw feathers stuck to the glass on the door, about head height. 3 or 4 tiny feathers hanging there. From a small bird, perhaps a sparrow.

Interpretation: What do the facts mean? How did the feathers get there?

1. Option--neighborhood boys took glue and stuck feathers on the glass.
2. Option--
3. Option--A bird was flying along, didn't notice the door because of the clear glass, and did what? Flew right into the window!

Key: When it comes to Bible study, observing the facts/data is the first step. The next step is to correctly interpret the facts. That's your assignment in Philippians this week.