

Part 3, Chapter 2 – Studying the Bible Prayerfully and Obediently

Last week we looked at “Why Study the Bible?” because the “why” becomes the big factor in the “how” we study. This week we want to look at our response to God and His word. Our predetermined response, whether realized or unconscious, will greatly affect both “how” we study and what the outcome will be in our lives.

Day One:

Read *p. 109-110* from **multiply** and answer question #1 in your book.

Read Psalm 119. Notice the joy of the psalmist in the word of God. Before reading, ask the Lord to increase your joy in His word. Don't rush. Spend time luxuriating in God's presence. Expect Him to meet you. Enjoy!

What did God show you as you read? Did anything “leap off the page” or fit your situation just so perfectly? Note it below and thank Him for meeting you.

After reading Psalm 119 and perhaps even re-reading portions, read *p. 110-112* from **multiply** and answer questions 2-3 in your book.

Day Two:

Prayer and Understanding - Throughout this study we have encouraged you to pray asking the Holy Spirit to teach you and give you understanding. Why would we do this? We recognize that you are an intelligent, capable person. What's so special about studying the Scriptures that we encourage you to ask for help from the Holy Spirit every single time? Is it really necessary? Consider what the next passage has to say.

- 1) Read and observe **1 Corinthians 2:9-14** on the following page using the 5Ws and H. Remember to pray!

Who is the passage about? Who knows the thoughts of God?

What has God prepared?

Where does the Spirit search? Where else?

When does God reveal his preparations?

Why can't natural man accept the things of God?

How can we know the thoughts and gifts of God?

- 2) Note what you observe and add your own questions:

1 CORINTHIANS 2:9-14 NASB

9 but just as it is written,

“THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD,
AND *WHICH* HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN,
ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM.”

10 For to us God revealed *them* through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

11 For who among men knows the *thoughts* of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the *thoughts* of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God,

13 which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual *thoughts* with spiritual *words*.

14 But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.

3) Mark “*God*,” perhaps with a triangle. Then mark “*Spirit*” (of God). Be careful to distinguish “*spirit of the world/man*” from the Holy Spirit.

4) List what you observe from marking “*God*”.

10) In verse 12, what have we received? Why? What does it result in? (Hint: “*so that...*”) Who are we taught by according to verse 13?

11) What have we *not* received in verse 12? What does this result in in verse 13? Words taught by what?

12) What does Paul conclude about a “natural man?” Can he understand the things of God?

13) So given all of this, how are you able to understand the Scriptures? Can you do this yourself without the Holy Spirit? In conclusion, should you ask the Holy Spirit to teach you each and every time you approach the Scriptures? Why?

Read p. 112-114 from **multiply** and answer question #4 in your book.

Day Three:

Studying the Bible Obediently - Psalm 119, which you read in Day One, is an incredible piece of Hebrew poetry. It is an acrostic of the Hebrew alphabet. An English equivalent would begin the first stanza (section) with A, then B, then C, and so on with all the lines in the first stanza beginning with A, etc. Adding to its uniqueness, the Psalmist expresses his love for the Scripture with the 8 different Hebrew words used in the Old Testament tradition: law (*torah*), statutes, precepts, commands(ments), laws (*mishpatim*), decrees, word, and promise. Every stanza has at least 6 of these words. 6 stanzas use all 8.

Today we are going to return to Psalm 119 to take a look at verses 57-64 which is one of the stanzas that uses all 8 Hebrew terms. As you begin, ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate your heart and mind with the Scriptures in such a way that you are transformed into the likeness of Christ. [Note: The New International Version (NIV) printed below preserves the distinction of the 8 Hebrew words in the English translation. Not all English translations do.]

PSALM 119:57-64 NASB

⌌ HETH

- 57 You are my portion, LORD; I have promised to obey your words.
- 58 I have sought your face with all my heart; be gracious to me according to your promise.
- 59 I have considered my ways and have turned my steps to your statutes.
- 60 I will hasten and not delay to obey your commands.
- 61 Though the wicked bind me with ropes, I will not forget your law.
- 62 At midnight I rise to give you thanks for your righteous laws.
- 63 I am a friend to all who fear you, to all who follow your precepts.
- 64 The earth is filled with your love, LORD; teach me your decrees.

Please *DO NOT* read ahead in your study today.

- 1) Identify and highlight in the same color each synonym used by the Psalmist for the Scriptures. All 8 words should be marked the same way.

7) Then whom does he focus on? What does he do according to verse 59?

8) What is the result of being in God's presence in verse 60?

9) After the Psalmist seeks God, then considers and adjusts his own ways, where does he focus?

10) What two groups does he compare in the rest of the stanza? List what you learn about each group and his response to them. Why does he have that response?

11) What is his conclusion? What is his request?

12) Does your personal desire for the word mirror or contrast with the Psalmist's? Follow his example to seek the Lord. Consider your ways. Are there any adjustments needed?

13) Think about your relationships with others. What response do you need to have to them? Do you find yourself needing similar categories as the Psalmist? Do some people want to "rope" you into their wicked ways? How will you resist them?

14) Have you made friends with those who fear the Lord? Do you have more God fearing friends than not? How can you encourage them? Are you transparent enough with them so they can encourage you in your struggles? Or do you lean to isolation? Has that changed since joining your multiply group?

15) What conclusions can you draw about your life? What is your prayer to the Lord? Write it out.

Read *p. 115-117* from **multiply** and answer question #6 in your book.

- 4) Write out Hebrews 12:1-3. Make your own observation worksheet by handwriting it larger and leaving some space between the lines. Handwriting actually helps your brain form additional connections so you memorize it more easily. Plus we want you to know that you can do this with any section of scripture that you want to study in the future. You don't have to have a "pre-fab" study. You can discover the word for yourself because the Holy Spirit is *your* teacher! Then be sure to bring your discoveries to your group for even more insight and encouragement as others share their discoveries too.

Therefore, since...

5) Draw a BIG box around “*therefore.*” What is the motivation for the conclusion the writer of Hebrews draws? Who are the witnesses? Remember the context.

6) What does the writer of Hebrews conclude? What three actions does he want us to do in verses 1-2? (Hint: “*let us...*”)

a.

b.

c.

7) What are we to “*lay aside*” (“*throw off*” NIV)? How much? Why?

8) How are we to run? What are we to run?

9) What are we to fix our eyes on? Why?

10) Let's reason together for a minute. In a marathon, a runner makes many choices before the race even begins – Will I run? How/Will I train? But does the runner lay out the course? Does he determine where the finish line is? What must the runner do to get to the finish line?

11) According to verse 2, who is Jesus? So what does He want to develop in you?

12) What race was set before Jesus? What did He endure?

13) What was His motivation?

14) What did He do after crossing the finish line? Where? How does this relate to His motivation?

15) What is your motivation in verse 3? What will this do for you?

16) Most marathoners will train adding distance to their runs over time and include a single run of 22 miles before they taper off and rest leading to the actual race day. They never actually run 26 miles until the race because the last four miles are “all heart.” How does this relate to verse 3? What can you know about the race set before you?

17) Who has run the race before you? Don't forget Hebrews 11! How does that help you with your race?

6) **Hebrews 4:12**- What reveals and judges our thoughts and intentions? How is it described?

7) Read and observe **James 1:22-27** printed at the end of the lesson. Pray!
Use the 5 Ws and H.

Who is this written to?

What does James direct them to do?

Where should one look intently?

When does a hearer forget?

Why is a man blessed in what he does?

How does pure and undefiled religion act?

Add your own questions and answers as you study. This is a skill that takes practice and patience to develop over time. But the payoff is HUGE for you and your disciples!

a) After your observations, briefly summarize the message of this passage in a couple of sentences. What's it about?

b) Go back through the passage and list the things we are to do and not do/put aside. Note the verse where you found it so it's easier to discuss your findings in your group.

<u>DO</u>	<u>NOT DO/PUT ASIDE</u>

- c) In verse 19-20, why are we to be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger?
- d) Are you slow or quick to anger? Perhaps you'll recognize it better if we call it "frustrated" or "stressed-out?" No matter what we call it, it's still anger. There are daily opportunities to be angry – traffic, boss, the competition, teachers, spouse, kids, parents, dating or not, taxes.... Is it a habit in your life to be angry? According to verse 20, what is the result? Take time to confess the anger in your life and ask the Lord for His mercy and help to transform this part of your life.
- e) Quickly put a box around "*therefore*" and re-read verse 21, because after that last question we need help fast! What help is offered? What two things does James direct us to do?
- i. Put aside _____ and _____
 - ii. Receive _____
- f) How are we to receive this? What is the result?
- g) If we do these things, what does that prove according to verse 22?

- h) What illustration does James use to describe someone who only “*hears*” the word?
- i) What is the contrast in verse 25? What is the result in this person’s life? Which one do you want to be hearer or doer?
- j) According to verse 26, what does the tongue reveal? Who is he really deceiving? What is this person’s religious effort worth? How is your tongue doing? (If you’re struggling, you may want to review the Scriptures in Lesson 1-3, Day 4 on the tongue.)
- k) What is James’ conclusion in verse 27?
- l) Review the passage one more time. What will keep us from being hearers and not doers of the word? What will transform our lives?

Read *p. 119-121* from **multiply** and answer questions 8 and 9 in your book. Finish in prayer.

JAMES 1:19-27 NASB
OBSERVATION WORKSHEET

- 19 This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear,
slow to speak and slow to anger;
- 20 for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.
- 21 Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in
humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.
- 22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude
themselves.
- 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who
looks at his natural face in a mirror;
- 24 for *once* he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately
forgotten what kind of person he was.
- 25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the *law* of liberty, and abides
by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man
will be blessed in what he does.
- 26 If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue
but deceives his *own* heart, this man's religion is worthless.
- 27 Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of *our* God and Father is this: to visit
orphans and widows in their distress, *and* to keep oneself unstained by the
world.