

To Study, or Not to Study: That is the Question?

Introduction

- In Shakespeare's play, *Hamlet*, the much beleaguered Danish prince considers committing suicide with the opening words of the famous soliloquy, "To be, or not to be: that is the question?"
- We have a no less poignant decision before us as we consider Scripture: "To study, or not to study: that is the question?"
- Without at all being melodramatic, the question regarding Bible study is truly a question of whether we choose **spiritual life or spiritual death.**
- In Last lesson we looked at the A, B, C's of Bible study, we now turn our attention to looking at a few points concerning the question of Bible Study as we begin a new year.

Discuss:

II Timothy 2:15

1. The familiar KJV translation of II Timothy 2:15, "Study to shew thyself approved ...," is a use of the word "study" less common today than in 1611.
2. **Check ESV, NKJ, NASB.**
 - a. My grandmother used to speak of things she paid no attention to by saying, "I'm not studying that."
 - b. To "**study**" is to give serious **attention** to a thing.
 - c. Another translation is "Give diligence."
 - d. Of the eleven occurrences in the New Testament of the Greek verb spoudazo, the KJV translates as the word "study" only once (Gal. 2:10; Eph. 4:3; I Thess. 2:17; **II Tim. 2:15**; 4:9, 21; Titus 3:12; Heb. 4:11; II Pet. 1:10; 3:14).
 - e. Therefore, to "study" in the sense of II Timothy 2:15 is both to study the words of the Bible and to employ their teachings with zeal.
3. The Greek word is otherwise associated with ideas such as: "hasten to accomplish, exert oneself, give diligence, give earnest care, labor, move forward with eagerness."
4. In short, the way we deal with the handling of God's word is to be anything but casual and indifferent. (Example of Israel in this situation.)

A High View of Bible Study Fits the New Covenant Way of Things. Let me give you 9 points to jot down.)

1. We begin as Christians and continue as Christians by exercising the faith the word produces (Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 10:17; I Jn. 1:7).
2. Choosing Jesus is demanding (Matt. 10:32-39).
3. Self-denial and daily cross bearing are required (Lk. 9:23).
4. God's word sorts us out and lays us bare (Heb. 4:12-13).
5. Personal initiative and eagerness to learn are required (Matt. 7:7-8; 13:10-13).
6. The knowledge of Jesus provides us with all things dealing with life and godliness, and it allows us to partake of the Divine nature (II Pet. 1:2-4; cf. Rom. 8:29).
7. We are expected to grow as Christians (II Pet. 1:5-11; Heb. 5:12-14; Eph. 4:15).

8. Truth is precious (Ps. 119:105; Matt. 4:4; Mk. 4:14; Jn. 1:1, 14; 4:34; 6:68; Jn. 17:17).
9. The degree of our love will determine the degree of our success in studying the word (Jn. 14:15, 23).

Conclusion

1. As Hamlet struggled with whether to choose death or life, so must we struggle with the question.
2. To study, or not to study: that is the question?
3. Will we choose life, or death?
4. Will we accept our responsibilities, or avoid them?
5. To be, or not to be: that is the question?

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Nply Jan2010

Thanks to E Jones for thoughts