

HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

By Titus Chu

TAKING CARE OF OUR PERSON: BEING SIMPLE, CONSECRATED, AND SPIRITUAL

When we study the Bible we must be simple in our person. The greatest difficulty for every Bible student is to remain simple. No one likes to be common in his study of the Bible. We all prefer to be original and have our own complicated interpretation. This causes us to deviate from the simplicity we should have towards Christ (2 Cor. 11:3). As we study the Bible we must be simple and pure in our person. Our attitude should be, "When I come to the Bible I only want to receive and enjoy Christ." We study the Bible in order to be with the Lord, pursue the Lord, and enjoy the Lord. This simplicity will allow the Lord to speak to us through the word. If our person is simple it will be easy to receive the Lord's speaking. The more we experience the Lord's speaking through our study of the Bible, the more riches we will accumulate.

Our simplicity will bring in a personal consecration. We must be consecrated when we read the Bible. To be consecrated means that we have the "guts" to read the Bible as the Bible. Most of us read the Bible selectively. If we like a verse, we keep it and treasure it. If we don't like a verse, we ignore it or explain it away. If we come to the Bible with a proper consecration, then God's word can be unveiled to us much more than we realize. For example, here are some verses that most of us would avoid: "And all those who believed were together and had all things common; and they sold their properties and possessions and divided them to all, as anyone had need" (Acts 2:44-45). When we read these verses we will quickly respond, "This is not at all realistic." Why? Because these verses interfere with our privacy and our self-interest. These verses can never be real to us, because they are too demanding. They are against our culture and against our practice. So we exercise our logic and say, "That

doesn't work," or, "That doesn't apply to us in today's age. It was a special situation." We may win the argument with our logic, but in the process we lose the Lord Himself. We lose the opportunity for these verses to work in us and touch our person. Then these verses are no longer ours, and the Lord can no longer use them to speak to us. There are many verses like this in the Bible. For this reason, when we come to the Bible we need to be consecrated people. That means we tell the Lord, "Lord, I love You. I want to take the Bible as the Bible. I want to take Your word as Your word. I consecrate myself to You so that You can speak to me. I want to open myself to You in Your word so that You can touch me in any way You like."

When we study the Bible we also must be spiritual. "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words which I have spoken to you are spirit and are life" (John 6:63). We need to be spiritual in our person because the word is Spirit. We must exercise our spirit so that we can contact and receive the Spirit in the Bible. This is closely related to being consecrated, because it is only by being spiritual that we can fulfill what the Bible tells us. For example, here is another verse that we avoid: "We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brothers. He who does not love abides in death" (1 John 3:14). To us this verse is almost impossible. When we consider all the brothers we know, we have our preferences. There are some brothers that make us happy, and there are some that make us frustrated. When we read in 1 John 3:14 that we must "love the brothers," we think about the price involved. Then we quickly move on so that it won't affect our life. For this reason we first need to be consecrated and take this verse from the Lord. Then at the same time we must be spiritual. When we begin to enjoy this verse in our spirit, the word becomes operative. The Lord may lead us to another verse: "No one has beheld God at any time; if we love one another, God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us" (1 John 4:12). Perhaps we will begin to enjoy the phrase, "God abides in us, and His love is perfected in us." As we exercise our spirit over this verse, the love for our brothers will become so normal. Then the reality of this verse will become a simple outflow. We must be a spiritual person and touch the

Bible with our spirit. If we take care of being simple, consecrated, and spiritual in our person as we read and enjoy the Bible, then we will be enlightened and strengthened by the Lord's speaking to us.

TAKING CARE OF OUR WAY: FACTS, INSPIRATIONS, TRUTH, AND LIGHT

When we study the Bible we must also have the proper way. That means we must begin by learning what the facts are. In other words, what does the Bible really say? Every time we come to the Bible we should have the perspective, "I don't really know the Bible." One of our greatest difficulties is that we have an answer for everything. We know what every verse means, and if we don't, we quickly use the footnotes. We should realize that even if our answers are excellent, they can only help us at certain times. Every time we read the Bible we should always assume that we don't know what it says, and we don't have all the answers. As we spend time in the Bible we should put aside our typical understanding and consider the facts in a fresh light. This means we should also ask questions. Why does a certain verse say "Jesus Christ," and not "Christ Jesus"? Why does another verse speak of what "God" is doing, and not what "the Lord" is doing? When we consider and learn the facts of the Bible in this way, we will be surprised at how many riches we will discover.

As we learn the facts of the Bible certain things will inspire us. We may be inspired by a certain word or a particular phrase. If we are spiritual in our reading, then the facts of the Bible will bring us to inspirations. If we don't first learn the facts, and then let the facts inspire us, we are no different from students at a theological school. As we study the facts in the Bible we need to pay attention to the anointing and to the sense of the Lord's presence. Then we will be inspired, and these inspirations will cause the Bible to become alive to us. Our study of the Bible should inspire us and lead us to contact the Lord in prayer.

After facts and inspiration, we must also learn the truth. Without first knowing the facts of the Bible and being inspired by them, the truth we learn will be merely doctrine to us. This requires our person to be spiritual. The truth can be defined as the accumulation of unveiled facts. When we have accumulated a large number of facts that the Lord has unveiled to us, and these facts have thus become life-giving inspirations, then we will be able to know the truth.

The fourth item we need as we study the Bible is light. Light is simply the consummation of all the previous items. Light is the consummation of the facts, inspiration, and truth that we have enjoyed. Light is also the result of being a proper person as we study the Bible. Again, we need to be simple, consecrated, and spiritual. Every time we read the Bible we should find the anointing. We should feel peaceful, restful, and full of the Lord's presence during our study in the word. We must touch the Spirit of the Bible with our spirit while we labor in facts, inspiration, and truth. All of this together will consummate in light.

This article is available online at
MinistryMessages.org.

© 2002 Titus Chu

The date and location of this message
are not known.