

Motivations for Bible Study

Introduction:

1. Refer to recent sermons:
 - a. Some lessons to be learned from one day's Bible Reading Schedule.
 - b. Can We Understand the Bible Alike?
 - c. Hindrances to Bible Study.
2. God wants every person to obtain a good working knowledge of the Bible.
 - a. 2 Tim. 2:15; Eph. 5:17; John 8:32; 1 Peter 2:1-2; 1 Peter 3:15; 2 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 3:18, etc.
3. God is displeased when His people neglect to take advantage of their opportunities to learn His will.
 - a. In the Old Testament His people were often destroyed for lack of knowledge, Hos. 4:6.
 - b. In the New Testament His people were often rebuked for failing to grow in the knowledge of His will, Hebrews 5:12-14.
4. But to obtain a good working knowledge of the Bible requires a lot of regular, diligent, daily Bible study!
 - a. And diligent study is hard work, Eccl. 12:12!
 - b. And this requires motivation!
5. Lesson Title: Motivations for Bible Study.
6. Motivation Defined:
 - a. "The force that compels us to action. It drives us to work hard and pushes us to succeed." Motivation influences our behavior and our ability to accomplish goals."
 - b. "The process that initiates, guides and maintains goal-oriented behaviors."

Note: In the business world "evidence proves that proper motivation can significantly impact the quality and quantity of work performance." But this is also true in the spiritual realm! Note Phil. 2:12-13.

Discussion:

- I. **Properly understood, there are two main kinds of motivation.**
 - A. Fear Motivation.
 1. Some of us learned about fear motivation early in life. Prov. 22:15; 23:13-14.
 - B. Incentive Motivation.
 1. For most people, incentive motivation is why people go to work on a regular basis. 2 Thess. 3:10; 1 Tim. 5:8.
- II. **God has always demanded obedience on the part of His people.**
 - A. In the Old Testament:
 1. Gen. 22:18; 26:5; Ex. 19:5; Deut. 4:30; 11:27-28; Isa. 1:19.
 - B. In the New Testament:
 1. Matt. 7:21,24-27; Acts 5:29; 2 Thess. 1:8; Heb. 5:9; Rev. 22:14.
- III. **As It Relates to obedience unto God, we are primarily influenced by both kinds of motivation.**
 - A. Fear Motivation.
 1. Matt. 10:28; 2 Thess. 1:7-9; 2 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12-15.
 - B. Incentive Motivation.
 1. Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 15:58; Eph. 1:3; Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Pet. 1:3-4; Rev. 2:10; Rev. 22:14.
- IV. **Motivations for Bible Study.**
 - A. Fear Motivation.
 1. Judgment day is coming! Rom. 14:12; 2 Cor. 5:10; Acts 17:30-31.
 2. We will be judged by the word of the Lord, John 12:48; Rev. 20:11-15.
 3. Like Belshazzar, Daniel 5, if we have not learned and obeyed the will of God we will be weighed in the scales of judgment and "*found wanting!*" Intelligent, God-fearing people do not want that to happen!
 - B. Incentive Motivation:

Note: As it relates to motivations for Bible study, the bulk of our comments will fall under this category – that of incentive motivation. Properly understood, there are many incentives for daily Bible study!

 1. To have God's approval! 2 Tim. 2:15.
 - a. It is common for people in general to desire the approval of others, whether it be family, friends, co-workers, etc. Sometimes people take it too far. Cf. Young people joining gangs, or engaging in various forms of drug activity.
 - b. But the approval of God is more to be desired than the approval of any, or all, others!

2. To know God! Jer. 9:23-24; John 17:3; I John 4:6-7.
 - a. To know of His love, His goodness and severity, grace, jealousy, long suffering, faithfulness, etc.
3. To become more like God! 2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 5:1-2; Gal. 5:22-23.
4. To have light on our path! Ps. 119:105; I John 1:7.
 - a. It is foolish to stumble in the dark when it is possible to walk in the light!
5. To avoid sin! Psalm 119:11; Matt. 4:4,7,10; Prov. 9:11-18.
6. To grow in faith! Rom. 10:17; John 20:30-31.
 - a. To grow physically, we must feed our bodies; to grow spiritually we must feed our faith.
7. To obtain wisdom, Prov. 1:1-2; 9:10; 15:1; 16:18, etc.
8. To find examples to follow. I Cor. 11:1; Heb. 10:39; 11:4,7,8,25; 12:1-2,
9. To be able to teach others, 2 Tim. 2:2; I Pet. 3:15; I Peter 4:11.
10. To be able to resist and refute false doctrine, Titus 1:9; I Tim. 6:12; Jude 3.
11. To enjoy God's blessings! Rev. 1:3; Psalm 1:1-3.
12. To go to heaven.
 - a. To go to heaven we must do the will of God, Rev. 22:14.
 - b. But we can't do the will of God unless we know the will of God, John 8:32; Rom. 6:17-18.

Conclusion:

1. We have cited a few of the reasons why one should daily study and meditate upon the word of God. Many more reasons could be cited. Conversely, one would be hard pressed to find just one reason why a person should not study his Bible!
2. But it is not enough just to read our Bibles. We must obey its instructions! James 1:21-22,
--Bobby Witherington, January 17, 2016