

MAJOR CONSEQUENCES OF NOT STUDYING THE SCRIPTURES

Introduction

1. God's Word Is The Christian's Guide For Living A Righteous Life:

- a. **Authority Of Scripture:** The Bible claims divine authority, with God Himself as its ultimate author. It is not merely a human composition but is God-breathed, infallible, and unchanging (2 Timothy 3:16-17). This verse underscores the divine origin and purpose of Scripture, highlighting its role in shaping our beliefs, behavior, and character.
- b. **Revelation Of God's Character And Will:** Through the Bible, God reveals His character, attributes, and will to humanity. It provides insights into God's love, justice, mercy, and holiness, offering a clear picture of who He is and how He desires us to live (Psalms 119:105). This verse illustrates how the Word of God illuminates our path, guiding us through life's journey and helping us make righteous decisions in accordance with God's will.
- c. **Instruction For Righteous Living:** The Bible serves as a comprehensive guide for living a righteous and holy life. It provides moral principles, ethical standards, and practical wisdom to navigate the complexities of human existence (Psalms 19:7-8). These verses affirm the transformative power of God's Word, which revives the soul, imparts wisdom, brings joy, and enlightens our understanding.
- d. **Standard For Evaluating Truth And Error:** In a world filled with competing ideologies and moral relativism, the Bible serves as the ultimate standard for discerning truth from error. It provides a solid foundation upon which we can build our beliefs and convictions (Hebrews 4:12). This verse portrays the dynamic and penetrating nature of God's Word, capable of exposing the innermost thoughts and motives of the human heart, thereby guiding us in the path of righteousness.
- e. **Transformation Of Character And Conduct:** Through the power of the Holy Spirit working through the Word of God, Christians are transformed from within, conforming more fully to the image of Christ. The Bible provides the means by which our minds are renewed, our hearts are purified (Ephesians 4:23; Colossians 3:10; 2 Corinthians 4:16), and our lives are aligned with God's purposes (Romans 12:2). All these verses underscore the importance of renewing our minds through Scripture, enabling us to discern God's will and live in a manner pleasing to Him.

By emphasizing the Bible as God's Word and a guide for living a righteous life, we acknowledge its supreme authority, relevance, and transformative power in shaping our beliefs, values, and conduct. As we immerse ourselves in Scripture, allowing its truths to penetrate our hearts and minds, we are equipped to walk in obedience, wisdom, and righteousness before God and others.

2. Why Personal Bible Study Is Essential

- a. Personal Bible study is indispensable for every Christian. It affirms the authority of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16-17), reveals God's character and will (Psalms 119:105), provides instruction for righteous living (Psalms 19:7-8), establishes a standard for truth (Hebrews 4:12), and transforms our character and conduct (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:23; Colossians 3:10; 2 Corinthians 4:16).
- b. Engaging with the Bible personally ensures that we are equipped, guided, and transformed, enabling us to live a life that glorifies God and aligns with His purposes. Encouraging consistent personal Bible study will deepen our faith and strengthen our walk with Christ.
- c. In this lesson, we shall focus on the three major consequences of neglecting this essential duty.

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3. Tying Two Lessons Together:

- a. In our previous lesson, we explored the crucial question, “**What Is The Source Of Your Beliefs?**” We delved into the various influences that shape our convictions and the importance of critically examining their origins. We discovered that beliefs often stem from a tapestry of internal reflections, external influences, and personal experiences. This examination underscored the need for a solid foundation rooted in Scripture to ensure our beliefs align with God’s truth.
- b. Building on that foundation, today's lesson emphasizes why personal Bible study is essential for every Christian. Just as we examined the sources of our beliefs to seek truth, we must now turn to the Word of God as our ultimate guide. Personal Bible study is indispensable because it affirms the authority of Scripture (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**), reveals God’s character and will (**Psalms 119:105**), provides instruction for righteous living (**Psalms 19:7-8**), establishes a standard for truth (**Hebrews 4:12**), and transforms our character and conduct (**Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:23; Colossians 3:10; 2 Corinthians 4:16**).
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By tying these two lessons together, we see a comprehensive approach to spiritual growth: understanding the foundation of our beliefs and ensuring they are deeply rooted in the transformative power of God’s Word. This holistic view equips us to live out our faith with confidence and integrity.

Three Major Consequences Of Not Studying The Scriptures

1. Lack Of Spiritual Growth

- a. Stunted spiritual maturity:
 - 1) Scripture: “So put away all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander. Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation” (**1 Peter 2:1-2**).
 - 2) Explanation: Just as infants need milk to grow, Christians need the nourishment of God’s Word to mature in their faith. Without regular intake of Scripture, spiritual growth is hindered, leading to immaturity (**Hebrews 5:12**) and vulnerability to sin (**Psalms 119:9-11**).
 - 3) Example: A plant with shallow roots cannot grow strong and tall (cp. **Matthew 13:5-6**).
- b. Inability to discern right from wrong:
 - 1) Scripture: “For everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil” (**Hebrews 5:13-14**).
 - 2) Explanation: Without studying the Scriptures, believers remain spiritually immature and unskilled in distinguishing good from evil (**Philippians 1:9-10**), akin to infants who can only handle milk.
 - 3) Example: Just as children need to grow and learn right from wrong, and to make wise choices, Christians need Scripture to develop discernment.
- c. Weak prayer life:
 - 1) Scripture: “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you” (**John 15:7**).
 - 2) Explanation: A robust prayer life is closely tied to an intimate knowledge of God's Word. Without regular engagement with Scripture, our prayers may lack depth and alignment with God's will (**1 John 5:14**).
 - 3) Example: Just as a conversation deepens with knowledge of the other person, our prayers become more powerful and effective when grounded in Scripture.

2. Vulnerability To False Teachings

a. Susceptibility to deception:

- 1) Scripture: “For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions” (2 Timothy 4:3).
- 2) Explanation: Without a firm grounding in the Bible, Christians are more likely to be led astray by teachings that cater to their desires rather than the truth of God’s Word (Colossians 2:8).
- 3) Example: Sheep without a shepherd are vulnerable to predators (Ezekiel 34:8); likewise, believers without the guidance of Scripture are susceptible to false doctrines.

b. Lack of doctrinal stability:

- 1) Scripture: “So that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes” (Ephesians 4:14).
- 2) Explanation: Regular engagement with the Bible helps believers become grounded in sound doctrine, preventing them from being swayed by every new teaching.
- 3) Example: A ship without an anchor is easily tossed by the waves; similarly, Christians without biblical grounding are easily influenced by false teachings.

c. Erosion of faith:

- 1) Scripture: “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen” (2 Peter 3:18).
- 2) Explanation: Continuous study of Scripture strengthens faith and builds a deeper understanding of God's promises. Neglecting this practice can lead to a weakened faith foundation (Hebrews 2:1).
- 3) Example: Just as muscles weaken without exercise, faith diminishes without regular nourishment from God's Word.

3. Weakness In Spiritual Battles

a. Inadequate defense against temptation:

- 1) Scripture: “I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you” (Psalms 119:11).
- 2) Explanation: The Bible equips believers with the knowledge and strength to resist temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13). Without it, they are less prepared to face spiritual challenges.
- 3) Example: Jesus used Scripture to counter Satan’s temptations in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11).

b. Lack of spiritual armor:

- 1) Scripture: “Take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm” (Ephesians 6:13).
- 2) Explanation: The armor of God includes the “sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Ephesians 6:17). Without regular study of Scripture, believers lack the full armor needed to stand firm against spiritual attacks.
- 3) Example: A soldier without his weapon is defenceless in battle; similarly, Christians without knowledge of Scripture are vulnerable in spiritual warfare (2 Corinthians 10:3-4).

c. Limited effectiveness in ministry:

- 1) Scripture: “Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching” (2 Timothy 4:2).

- 2) Explanation: Effective ministry relies on a deep understanding of the Bible to teach, encourage, and correct others. Without a solid grasp of Scripture, our ability to minister to others is significantly diminished (**Colossians 3:16**).
- 3) Example: Just as a teacher must know their subject to teach effectively, Christians must know the Bible to minister effectively.

Conclusion

In this lesson, we have focused on the three major consequences of neglecting this essential duty.

1. Personal Bible study is indispensable for every Christian.
 - a. It affirms the authority of Scripture (**2 Timothy 3:16-17**).
 - b. It reveals God's character and will (**Psalms 119:105**).
 - c. It provides instruction for righteous living (**Psalms 19:7-8**).
 - d. It establishes a standard for truth (**Hebrews 4:12**).
 - e. It transforms our character and conduct (**Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:23; Colossians 3:10; 2 Corinthians 4:16**).
2. Engaging with the Bible personally ensures that we are equipped, guided, and transformed, enabling us to live a life that glorifies God and aligns with His purposes.
3. Encouraging consistent personal Bible study will deepen our faith and strengthen our walk with Christ.

Applications:

1. **Cultivate A Habit Of Daily Bible Study (Joshua 1:8):** To ensure spiritual growth and maturity, make a deliberate effort to incorporate daily Bible study into your routine. Set aside a specific time each day to read and meditate on Scripture, allowing God's Word to guide and transform your life. Use study tools such as commentaries, devotionals, and Bible apps to deepen your understanding. By consistently engaging with the Bible, you will develop a stronger foundation in your faith, enabling you to discern truth from error and grow closer to God.
2. **Strengthen Your Prayer Life With Scripture (John 15:7):** Integrating Scripture into your prayer life can enhance your spiritual depth and alignment with God's will. Use Bible verses as a basis for your prayers, allowing God's Word to shape your requests and praises. Reflect on biblical prayers, such as The Lord's Prayer or the Psalms, and incorporate their elements into your own prayers. Keeping a prayer journal can help you track how Scripture influences your prayers and how God responds, fostering a more intimate and powerful prayer life.
3. **Guard Against False Teachings Through Scriptural Knowledge (Acts 17:11):** In a world filled with diverse and often conflicting teachings, grounding yourself in Scripture is crucial for maintaining doctrinal stability and discernment. Always verify teachings and doctrines against the Bible. Participate in Bible study groups or doctrinal classes to reinforce your understanding of core Christian beliefs. By prioritizing a thorough and accurate understanding of Scripture, you will be better equipped to recognize and reject false teachings, ensuring that your faith remains anchored in God's truth.



Questions:

1. Why is personal Bible study indispensable for Christians?
2. What are the three major consequences of not studying the Scriptures?
3. How does neglecting Bible study affect spiritual growth?
4. What role does Scripture play in defending against false teachings?
5. How can regular Bible study enhance a Christian's effectiveness in sharing the gospel?