

Messenger of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16)

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Study

"I will study and get ready, and perhaps my chance will come." – Abraham Lincoln

"As turning the logs will make a dull fire burn, so changes of studies a dull brain." – Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

"You have to study a great deal to know a little." – Montesquieu

"I believed in studying just because I knew education was a privilege. It was the discipline of study, to get into the habit of doing something that you don't want to do." – Wynton Marsalis

"He who devotes sixteen hours a day to hard study may become at sixty as wise as he thought himself at twenty." – Mary Wilson Little

Many people enjoy reading their Bibles, and for that we thank God. But it is amazing how few really know how to study their Bibles.

A surface reading of the text can give an individual a basic understanding of sacred literature. But think how much more can be gleaned when one starts applying the principles that lead to a diligent study. This means learning about the author of the text and the readers. It envelops an understanding of the history and culture of the time. One must also take into account the purpose the author has in mind and the context of the discussion.

Then comes the understanding of passages, sentences, phrases, and even words. And yes, there are a variety of tools that can help one better understand and appreciate the author and what he is saying to his readers. Bible dictionaries, character studies, lexicons, topical Bibles, word studies, an atlas, and even commentaries can help the student in determining the meaning of the text. And it helps to have more than one translation of Scripture lest you misunderstand the author's intent.

We are so blessed in our time to even have Bible software for our computers and hand held devices. Many of these tools are readily available at hand to ensure a better appreciation of Scripture.

Is this an effort to discourage reading the text? Not at all. But hopefully it helps us to realize that there is so much more we can learn.

"Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15, KJV). "These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11).

Good Bible students dive into the text, and when they do, they are richly rewarded!