

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

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

"I'm not telling you it's going to be easy, I'm telling you it's going to be worth it." – Unknown

"I spent six years in Bible study because I needed to get grounded. People really need to spend time in the Bible getting to know the God they claim to love." – Willie Aames

"It's only those who are persistent and willing to study things deeply, who achieve the master work." – Paulo Coelho

It is amazing how few people really understand what it means to *study*. Many sources refer to devotion to books, but it goes beyond that. One source noted, "A detailed investigation and analysis of a subject or situation."

So many who spend any time with the Bible, are content merely to read the text. While reading does have profit, there is so much more than one can benefit from in a rich study of the sacred text.

To enjoy a study, it is valuable to know not only what was written, but who wrote it and to whom? You can search out parallel passages, and learn something of the background of those under consideration. In addition, there are word studies, geography, and archaeology to enhance your knowledge. It helps to have a good Bible dictionary, Greek-English Lexicon, and grasp of the history. Sometimes commentaries can be helpful, but a word of caution, as some commentaries may look upon passages with a slant. And sometimes the most helpful course of action is to look at other translations to help you understand a passage better.

Two passages stress the importance of a thorough investigation of Scripture. Speaking of the Bereans, "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). "Be diligent ("study", KJV) to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). The original word translated "diligent," means, "to make an effort."

Peter admonishes, "...always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you..." (1 Pet. 3:15). Without a true *study* of the biblical text, you cannot be in a position to offer an answer or defense for what you believe.

Prayerfully you will see the wisdom in not just reading, but studying God's Word.