

## THE HOLY SPIRIT AN AID TO BIBLE STUDY

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The Holy Spirit has been given as an aid in the study of God's word. Jesus promised, "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Those who are under the training of the Holy Spirit, will be able to teach the Word intelligently. When the Bible is made the book of study, with earnest supplication for the Spirit's guidance, and a full surrender of the heart to be sanctified through the truth, it will accomplish all that God has promised.

The results of such study will be well-balanced minds. The understanding will be quickened; the sensibilities will be aroused; the conscience will become sensitive; the sympathies and sentiments will be purified; a better moral atmosphere will be created; and a new power to resist temptation will be imparted.

The knowledge of God is not to be gained without mental effort, without prayer for wisdom. We should search, diligently search, for its hidden treasures, and seek wisdom from heaven that we may be able to distinguish between human inventions and the divine commands. The Holy Spirit will aid the seeker for great and precious truths which relate to the plan of redemption. A casual reading of the Scriptures is not enough. We must search, and this implies a doing of all that the word implies. As the miner eagerly explores the earth to discover its veins of gold, so we are to explore the word of God for the hidden treasures that Satan has so long sought to hide from man. The Lord says, "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."

The great error of the Romish church is found in the fact that the Bible is interpreted in the light of the opinions of the "fathers". These opinions are regarded as infallible, and the dignitaries of the church assume that it is their prerogative to make others believe as they do. Those who do not agree with them are pronounced heretics. But the word of God is not thus to be interpreted. It is to stand on its own eternal merits, to be read as the word of God, which declares his will to the people.

The blessed Bible gives us a knowledge of the great plan of salvation, and shows us how every individual may have eternal life. Who is the author of the book?— Jesus Christ. He is the True Witness, and he says to his own, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." The Bible shows us the way to Christ and in Christ eternal life is revealed. Jesus said to the Jews, and to those who gathered about him in multitudes, "Search the

Scriptures.” The Jews had the Scriptures which testified of Christ, but they were not able to discern Christ in the Scriptures. The truths of the Old Testament they had so mingled with human opinions that its teachings were mystified, and the will of God to man covered up. Christ’s sermon on the mount virtually contradicted the doctrines of the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees. They had so misrepresented God that he was looked upon as a stern judge, incapable of compassion, mercy or love. They presented to the people endless maxims and traditions that had no “Thus saith the Lord” for their authority. Though they professed to know and to worship the true and living God, they wholly misrepresented him and his character as revealed in his Son. Christ labored constantly to sweep away those misrepresentations, that the confidence of men in the love of God might be restored. He taught man to address the supreme Ruler by the new name “Our Father”. This name represents our true relation to him, and when spoken sincerely by human lips, it is music in the ears of God. Christ leads us to the throne of God by a new and living way.

Men need not the dim light of tradition and custom to make the Scriptures comprehensible. It is just as sensible to suppose that the sun, shining in the heavens at noonday, needs the glimmerings of the torchlights of earth to increase its glory. In the Bible every duty is made plain, every lesson is comprehensible. The gift of Christ and the illumination of the Holy Spirit reveal to us the Father. The Word is able to make men and women and youth wise unto salvation. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” No other book is so potent to elevate the thoughts, to give vigor to the faculties, as the broad, ennobling truths of the Bible. If God’s word were studied as it should be, men would have a breadth of mind, a nobility of character, and a stability of purpose that is rarely seen in these times.

Little benefit is to be derived from a hasty reading of the Scriptures. One may read the whole Bible through, and yet fail to see its beauty or to comprehend its depth of meaning. One passage studied until its significance is clear to the mind, and its relation to the plan of salvation evident, is of more value than the perusal of many chapters with no definite purpose in view and no positive instruction gained. Keep your Bible with you. As you have opportunity, read it; fix the texts in your memory. Even while you are walking in the street, you may read a passage and meditate upon it, thus fixing it in the mind.

Never should the Bible be studied without prayer. Before opening its pages, we should ask for the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, and it will be given. When Nathaniel came to Jesus, the Saviour exclaimed, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guilt.” Nathaniel said, “Whence knowest thou me?” Jesus answered, “Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.” And Jesus will see us also in the secret place of prayer, if we will seek him for light, that we may know what is

truth. Angels from the world of light will be with those who in humility of heart seek for divine guidance.

The Holy Spirit exalts and glorifies the Saviour. It is his office to present Christ, the purity of his righteousness, and the great salvation that we have through him. Jesus says, "He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." The spirit of truth is the only effectual teacher of divine truth.

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