

Heart to Heart

Devotional Thoughts for Women

August 2017

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Becoming A Bible Student

We are frequently reminded of the importance and need to study our Bibles and many have a desire to do just that but don't really know where to begin. Reading the Bible? No problem, but studying it? How does one go about becoming a student of the Bible?

- **Pray** – Pray to God before you open your Bible, asking Him to help you learn something and to have a heart that is open to His will; He will guide you and help you as you study His Word.
- **Look it up** – As you study, you may want to sit by the computer or have a Bible dictionary (such as Easton's or Nave's), concordance (such as Strong's), and atlas available. As you read, you will run across words that you don't know the meaning of. Stop and look up the definitions, and write them down in a notebook. Then, go back and reread the verse containing the word and see if it makes more sense to you, now that you know the meaning of the new word. Check cross references listed in your Bible to help “connect the dots” and clarify. Also, if you are reading about different cities, rivers, or other geographical locations, stop and look them up in a Bible atlas or on a map in your Bible. This too, can help you understand more about what you're reading when you can “see” the locations being talked about.
- **Ask questions** – Have you ever been reading a chapter in the Bible and noticed a particular word or phrase being repeated several times? Things like that should get our

attention and prompt deeper study. Ask yourselves some questions such as “Why is this being repeated? What importance does it have?” Or if you see a verse that begins with “Therefore”, you ask yourself, “What is it there for? What came before that is now being summed up?” Asking questions also leads to the next step of digging deeper.

- **Dig deeper**– You don't have to read very far in the New Testament before you find the names of two groups: the Pharisees and the Sadducees, but you don't know where they came from or what they believe, etc. Look them up in a Bible encyclopedia or Bible dictionary and write down what you learn about them. Then every time you read about them in the New Testament, you understand much more about these two groups so that their conversations with Jesus and their treatment of Him and His disciples begin to make a lot more sense. Research any Bible subject you run across that you want to learn more about or that you are not familiar with.
- **Learn the Language** – It is interesting and helpful to research the meaning of certain words or phrases in the Bible from their original language. The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew and the New Testament was originally written in Greek. Sometimes our English translation or the ways our word meanings have evolved don't do justice to the original meaning. For example, in John 21, Peter and Jesus have a conversation where they use the English word “love” several times. A deeper study of the Greek words being used shows us that Peter and Jesus were actually using two different words with two different meanings. Studying this makes reading that passage much more meaningful. Strong's Concordance or a Greek/Hebrew lexicon is helpful for this step. You can also use online resources such as biblehub.com or the Net Bible (net.bible.org).

- **Memorize and Meditate** – As we read and study, it is important to keep hiding God’s Word in our heart by memorizing. We can certainly memorize Bible verses, but it is also helpful to memorize lists of things such as the judges of Israel, 12 sons of Jacob, the days of creation, etc. Think of your mind as a storage vault where you keep putting more and more information from the Bible. You will have it available to use for years to come! After you have spent time reading and studying the Bible, think about it during the day. This is what it means to meditate on it. Think about what you have learned and how you can use that to make changes in your life.

You may think this sounds like a lot of work, and you're right – it is! Paul urged Timothy to “*Be diligent*” in studying the word of God. (II Timothy 2:15) Bible study is much different from simply reading the Word. It takes time and effort to be a Bible student, but it will produce the fruits of knowing God, being able to share Him with others, and increasing our faith. ~Heather Pryor

Ladies Bible Class – This fall, we will begin a study of the book of Hebrews based on the book ***Perfected: God's Best Reserved For You***. Mark your calendars for September 16th!

Search the Scriptures

“Bible Students”

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| ___ 1. Ezra | a. He knew the scriptures from childhood. |
| ___ 2. Bereans | b. He said he loved the law of the Lord. |
| ___ 3. David | c. He was told to meditate on God's Word daily. |
| ___ 4. Timothy | d. He was an expert in the words of the Lord. |
| ___ 5. Joshua | e. They searched the scriptures daily. |

RECIPE CORNER

"She...provides food for her household." ~Prov. 31:15

Bumper crop of tomatoes? Try using them in these recipes which are full of tomatoey goodness!

FRESH TOMATO PIE

- 9 inch pie shell, pre-baked
- 1/2 onion, chopped
- 1 bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 3-4 tomatoes, chopped
- 1/4 cup fresh basil or 2 tsp. dried
- 2 cups Monterey Jack cheese
- 3/4 cup mayonnaise
- salt and pepper

In a large bowl, combine all of the chopped vegetables and basil. Pour into pie shell. Season with salt and pepper. In another bowl, combine the cheese and mayonnaise until blended. Pour over vegetables and bake pie at 350 degrees for about 45 minutes.

CUCUMBER & TOMATO SALAD

- 1 large cucumber – peeled and cut into chunks
- 2 tomatoes, cut into chunks
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/8 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 1/2 T. water
- 1/2 envelope Italian salad dressing mix

In a bowl, combine the vegetables. In another small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, vinegar, water and dressing mix until well-blended. Pour over vegetables and toss to coat well. Chill until ready to serve. Make and serve the same day.