

The Hand Illustration

Jim Downing

I. Introduction.

A. Reading, hearing, and studying the Word of God.

B. We need to feed on it to be healthy, study it to be intelligent, memorize it to be skillful, meditate on it to be spiritual, and apply it to be mature.

II. Method 1: reading.

A. Reading the Word brings health to us. (Proverbs 3:1, 8; Revelation 1:3)

1. Some object to not remembering what they read, but although people do not remember what they ate, they are nourished by it. Taking in nourishment does not depend upon memorizing the menu.

2. God's Word is better than necessary food. (Job 23:12; Jeremiah 15:16)

3. There is value to reading the Word whether you remember everything or not. (1 Timothy 4:13)

B. A plan.

1. Early in life spend a lot of time in the Gospels, Epistles and some Old Testament.

2. Time should depend upon age and spiritual needs.

III. Method 2: hearing.

A. It is essential. (Revelation 1:3; Romans 10:14)

B. However, sometimes in hearing we only get a little "whiff" of the Word of God.

C. The Bereans tested everything that was said by checking the Word of God.

D. As a sequel to reading the Word we need to hear it. (John 20:16-17; Acts 20:28, 32)

IV. Method 3: studying. (2 Timothy 2:13)

A. Requirements of a good Bible study:

1. Original investigation.

a. Epistles were not originally delivered with ten commentaries.

b. Original discovery is always the best.

2. Written reproduction.

a. The difference between reading and studying is the difference between the presence and use of a pencil and paper.

b. We systemize the truth in our own minds, we get it down in our mind and we are finally able to present it.

3. Personal application.

a. It is unusual for a person to look into a mirror and not see something that needs an adjustment and not make that adjustment. (James 1:22)

b. It is therefore an oddity for a person not to take immediate action when he sees a problem in his character.

c. The first chain in character building is a knowledge of the Word of God.

a. There are few second generation Christians because there is a larger emphasis on teaching Bible knowledge over conviction.

b. One needs to know, develop a conviction, and finally apply it into action for character building.

4. Systematic and progressive.

a. One of the most challenging questions is determining how one will master the English Bible.

b. Everyone needs a plan which approaches the Bible step by step.

1. One approach is through books. Others include characters, chronology, and topics. Any method is a good method if mastery is the intent.

5. "Pass-on-able."

a. One needs to develop a plan that can be extended to someone else.

b. Suggestion: reading the Bible in large quantities would prevent a need for people to receive counsel.

c. There is no higher service you can render than giving someone a method to get into the Bible.

V. Conclusion.

A. Satan's primary objective is to get you from the Word of God.

B. Regular nourishment from the Word results in a quality of life that cannot be compared.

Application questions.

1. Explain in your own words the method for studying the Bible. Why is reading and hearing not enough?

2. The speaker warns that Satan wants us not to be in the Word of God. What other reasons can you think of for staying regularly in God's Word?

3. Do you have a plan for getting into God's Word? What is your opinion of the speaker's plan? Develop or refine your plan here for mastering the English Bible. Be specific.
