

Back to the Basics of Bible Study

“One beautiful, bright Sunday morning, everybody in the town of Lewiston got up early and went to their local church...at NFBC, right? And before the services started, the townspeople were sitting in their pews and talking about their lives, their families, etc., you know, fellowship.

Then all of a sudden, the devil himself popped up right in front of the congregation. Well, everyone started screaming and running for the front entrance, and they were trampling over each other in a frantic effort to get away from the devil.

And so the next thing you know, everyone had evacuated the Church facilities, except for one guy, Russ. He just sat calmly right there in his pew, not even moving. He was seemingly oblivious to the fact that God’s ultimate enemy was right there in his presence.

So this obviously confused Satan a little bit, so he walked up to Russ and said, ‘Hey! Don’t you know who I am?’

And Russ replied, ‘Yep, sure do.’

And so Satan asked, ‘Well, aren’t you afraid of me?’

And Russ said, ‘Nope, sure ain’t.’

And so Satan he was a little perturbed at this and so he asked again, ‘Well, why aren’t you afraid of me?’

And Russ calmly replied, ‘I’ve been married to your sister for over 48 years.’”

Now folks, how many of you would say Russ is **absolutely dead** when he goes home today? Wow! I mean, comparing your wife to the devil’s sister? Whoa! And folks, but maybe it’s just me, but how many of

you guys would say there must be some **serious strain** going on in Russ and Mary Jane's relationship there? I don't think you need to be a prophet to figure that out! And folks, believe it or not, I see this same kind of **serious strain** happening to Christians all the time. Only it's not in their earthly marriage, it's in their spiritual marriage with Jesus Christ! And it's not when they find out that their spouse compared them to the devil's sister. It's when they consider hanging out with God **as if it were spending time with the devil's sister!** Can you believe that?

And so that's the obvious question, "How in the world did it ever get that way? How did it ever become a detriment to spend time with God, the Creator of the Universe? It didn't start off that way, right? I mean, when we first got saved, we couldn't wait to spend time with God, we longed for God, we really loved God, right? And so that's the question is, "How did it ever get like that?" Well folks, as we've been seeing, what I've learned over the years is it's simply this...when we **lose sight** of what we have in Jesus Christ, what He died on the cross for...the joy set before Him...**A beautiful loving intimate personal relationship with the Creator of the Universe. That's what He died on the cross for!**

And folks, I'm telling you, when we lose sight of that, all of a sudden, just like that, overnight, your once loving vibrant walk with Jesus Christ,

just turned into dry, stale, stupid, boring, man-made religion called Churchianity. Not Christianity...Churchianity! And as we've been seeing folks, this is a deadly horrible wretched disease! It's rotten! It's totally rotten! And once you get infected with that thing, you start crying out one of two things..."Help! I'm a Christian and I can't grow up!" or "Help! I'm a Christian and I'm dead as a stump!" You ever been there? Yeah, **unfortunately** it happens all the time

Therefore, to stave off this deadly horrible disease called Churchianity, we're going to continue in our study called, **Back to the Basics**. And what we're doing is **revisiting** all the **Basics of Christianity** but this time, we're doing it **through the eyes of a relationship**, a loving relationship, a personal relationship with the Creator of the Universe! And so hopefully this time we can recapture the **right motive** for doing what we do as Christians **and this time...stay there!** Amen?

And so far we've already seen that the **first basic thing** we need to get reacquainted with through the eyes of a relationship was **The Basics of Prayer**. The **second basic thing** we need to get reacquainted with through the eyes of a relationship was **The Basics of Worship**. And last time we saw the **third basic thing** we need to get reacquainted with through the eyes of a relationship was **The Basics of Serving**. And what we saw there was that

serving, i.e. serving other people with the same love that Jesus served to us, wasn't something mystical or magical or something that only super duper talented people know how to do. No! Anybody can do it! A cup of cold water, hand out some clothes, invite a stranger in, or go visit a prison, right? Hello! Anybody can do that stuff, right? That's the examples Jesus gave! And then we saw that **when you do it**, we don't do it with an attitude of Timelessness, Selfishness, or Defeatedness! Are you kidding me! We wouldn't do that in a normal loving relationship, so the point is this. Why would we do that in our normal loving relationship with Jesus? Amen? And as we saw, once we realize this, we're finally on our way to getting rid of this goofball Churchianity stuff, amen?

But that's not all. The **fourth basic thing** of Christianity that we need to get reacquainted with through the eyes of a relationship is **The Basics of Bible Study**. But don't take my word for it. Let's listen to God's.

Joshua 1:1-8 "After the death of Moses the servant of the LORD, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' aide: Moses My servant is dead. Now then, you and all these people, get ready to cross the Jordan River into the land I am about to give to them – to the Israelites.

I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses. Your territory will extend from the desert to Lebanon, and from the great river, the Euphrates – all the Hittite country – to the Mediterranean Sea in the west. No one will be able to stand against you all the days of your life.

As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people

to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them. Be strong and very courageous.

Be careful to obey all the law My servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.”

Now folks, according to our text, we've got some pretty good news going on here. First of all, how many of you guys have ever faced a challenge in life? Uh uh! We all face challenges, don't we? And apparently in this text, there are three things we need to do in order to **face those challenges**, just like Joshua learned, right? What'd it say? **One**, we need to know that God will never leave us nor forsake us, in our time of need, right? Isn't that wonderful? He's with us wherever we go now as His child. We have a relationship. A beautiful loving intimate personal relationship with the Creator of the Universe. That's the whole theme of our study! **Two**, we need to be strong and courageous knowing that **God** will fulfill His promises. In other words, He will do what He says He's going to do, you don't need to freak out or be afraid. And **three**, we need to chew on His Words day in and day out, so much so that it's always on our hearts, always on our minds, and always coming out of our mouths, right? **Why?** What was the pay off? So that we might be prosperous and successful in **all** we do, right?

And so here's the point. Surely that's what we're doing, right? I mean, surely we're pouring over the Bible day in and day out, studying it, chewing it, reading it, devouring it, digesting it, doing whatever we can to get it inside of us so we can be prosperous and successful in all we do, right? Eeeench! Wrong answer! Folks, let's be honest. For most of us, when it comes to studying the Bible, we're always looking for **shortcuts**. In fact, we're hoping somebody can break it down in 60 seconds or less for us. Isn't that our attitude? You know, just **find some shortcut** or **find resource** that someone's invented somewhere to just get it done and over with, right? I mean, you've seen the 60 minute Bibles out there, and the 60 second devotional for the busy hurried person, and the 600 different ways it seems to just cram it in get it done, right? Get on with life! But people, that's not what we just read! We're supposed to take our time and chew on it day in day out as much as we can! It's the ultimate source of strength and encouragement **and** it'll bless us in all we do? Why would you want to shortcut that, right? Hello!

Therefore, let's get **Back to Basics!** Let's revisit this topic of Bible study **but this time** through the eyes of a beautiful loving intimate personal relationship with the Creator of the Universe! And let's dispel this goofball Churchianity stuff once and for all!

And the **first basic question** we need to ask ourselves if we're going to dispel this goofball Churchianity stuff is, "**Why Do We Study the Bible?**" Well, folks, I think it's pretty obvious once we **retake a look** at this passage of Scripture. Let's take a look.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

Now folks, here's my point in bringing this passage up this time. For some reason, we always seem to focus on the second half of this passage of Scripture, and rightly so, but we skip over the first half of this passage that I personally think is the most profound! What did it say there? All Scripture is what? **God-breathed!** And folks, this isn't just speaking of the reliability of the Bible. No! It's this. This is what I think we miss. "**Why do we study the Bible?**" Let me see if I can be as blunt as I can...**BECAUSE IT CAME... FROM...GOD!!!!** People, **are we crazy!** This book, the Bible, came from the Creator of the Universe!!!! It's not just a book to know how to live a life that is **pleasing to God!** No! It's literally a book that **came from THE HAND OF GOD!** The Creator of the Universe!!!! Do you get it? Isn't that mind blowing?

And so here's the point. Who in their right mind **wouldn't want to read** let alone **study it**, right? I mean, forget that stupid newspaper! Forget a

best-selling novel, and forget that stupid Dow Jones report or weather report! **This is from God!** Who created both Mr. Dow and Mr. Jones and **Who's in control of the weather**, right? Hello! Who wouldn't want to read that? Shouldn't that be the first thing we be **reporting to** in the morning?

And people, what a report it is! The Bible not only tells me how to live a life that is pleasing to God, and how to be successful wherever we go like with Joshua, but it even tells us where we're going to go when we die! And the good news is, we don't even have to wonder about it! The Bible says that if I would just I entrust our lives to Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on the cross as payment for our sins, then He'll forgive us, and take us to heaven **when we die**...**AND** listen, the moment we do that, **at that very moment**, before we get to heaven, we just became a **child** of God...the Creator of the Universe. Isn't that incredible? And so that means **now**, all the promises and feelings that God has towards His children that's recorded for us in the Bible, have just become **personally** applicable to me! Isn't that awesome?

And folks, I'm telling you, when you take a look at those promises and feelings recorded for us in the Bible, that God has towards His own children, it literally transforms the Bible into one giant **love letter** from God. Here, check it out for yourself.

My Child,

You may not know me,
but I know everything about you.

Psalm 139:1

I know when you sit down and when you rise up.

Psalm 139:2

I am familiar with all your ways.

Psalm 139:3

Even the very hairs on your head are numbered.

Matthew 10:29-31

For you were made in my image.

Genesis 1:27

In me you live and move and have your being.

Acts 17:28

For you are my offspring.

Acts 17:28

I knew you even before you were conceived.

Jeremiah 1:4-5

I chose you when I planned creation.

Ephesians 1:11-12

You were not a mistake,
for all your days are written in my book.

Psalm 139:15-16

I determined the exact time of your birth
and where you would live.

Acts 17:26

You are fearfully and wonderfully made.

Psalm 139:14

I knit you together in your mother's womb.
Psalm 139:13

And brought you forth on the day you were born.
Psalm 71:6

I have been misrepresented
by those who don't know me.
John 8:41-44

I am not distant and angry,
but am the complete expression of love.
1 John 4:16

And it is my desire to lavish my love on you.
1 John 3:1

Simply because you are my child
and I am your Father.
1 John 3:1

I offer you more than your earthly father ever could.
Matthew 7:11

For I am the perfect father.
Matthew 5:48

Every good gift that you receive comes from my hand.
James 1:17

For I am your provider and I meet all your needs.
Matthew 6:31-33

My plan for your future has always been filled with hope.
Jeremiah 29:11

Because I love you with an everlasting love.
Jeremiah 31:3

My thoughts toward you are countless
as the sand on the seashore.

Psalms 139:17-18

And I rejoice over you with singing.

Zephaniah 3:17

I will never stop doing good to you.

Jeremiah 32:40

For you are my treasured possession.

Exodus 19:5

I desire to establish you
with all my heart and all my soul.

Jeremiah 32:41

And I want to show you great and marvelous things.

Jeremiah 33:3

If you seek me with all your heart,
you will find me.

Deuteronomy 4:29

Delight in me and I will give you
the desires of your heart.

Psalms 37:4

For it is I who gave you those desires.

Philippians 2:13

I am able to do more for you
than you could possibly imagine.

Ephesians 3:20

For I am your greatest encourager.

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

I am also the Father who comforts you
in all your troubles.
2 Corinthians 1:3-4

When you are brokenhearted,
I am close to you.
Psalm 34:18

As a shepherd carries a lamb,
I have carried you close to my heart.
Isaiah 40:11

One day I will wipe away
every tear from your eyes.
Revelation 21:3-4

And I'll take away all the pain
you have suffered on this earth.
Revelation 21:3-4

I am your Father, and I love you
even as I love my son, Jesus.
John 17:23

For in Jesus, my love for you is revealed.
John 17:26

He is the exact representation of my being.
Hebrews 1:3

He came to demonstrate that I am for you,
not against you.
Romans 8:31

And to tell you that I am not counting your sins.
2 Corinthians 5:18-19

Jesus died so that you and I could be reconciled.
2 Corinthians 5:18-19

His death was the ultimate expression
of my love for you.
1 John 4:10

I gave up everything I loved
that I might gain your love.
Romans 8:31-32

If you receive the gift of my son Jesus,
you receive me.
1 John 2:23

And nothing will ever separate you
from my love again.
Romans 8:38-39

Come home and I'll throw the biggest party
heaven has ever seen.
Luke 15:7

I have always been Father,
and will always be Father.
Ephesians 3:14-15

My question is...

Will you be my child?
John 1:12-13

I am waiting for you.
Luke 15:11-32

**Love, Your Dad
Almighty God**

Folks, I don't know about you, but to me it's common sense. **Why do we study the Bible?** Because it's a personal love letter from Almighty God to His children in whom He's desperately head over heels in love with, and

He's waiting for us to read about it! Isn't that amazing? No wonder the devil doesn't want us in that book! I'll take that any day of the week over a stupid newspaper! Amen? And folks, once we realize this, we're finally on our way to getting rid of this goofball Churchianity stuff, amen?

But that's not all. The **second basic question** we need to ask ourselves if we're going to dispel this goofball Churchianity stuff is, "**What is Bible Study?**" Well let's take a look.

2 Timothy 2:15 "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth."

Now folks, here's my point with bringing up this passage. The phrase there, "do your best" is actually the Greek word "spoudazo." And it means, "to make haste, to exert oneself, to give diligence to, or to literally **study**. And so therefore, Paul made it absolutely clear that if we want to present ourselves to God as **one approved**, then what do we got to get busy doing? We got to get busy **studying the Bible**, right?

And notice it was something we can all do. How many of you guys can **exert yourself**? It's called moving. Try it! Hey, you guys are professional exerters...wow! Or how many of you guys can **make haste**? Not haste, that's my cooking, but haste! That means to hurry up and get after it. You know, like you did on Black Friday? We can all do that, right? Or

how many of you guys can **give diligence** to something? You know, like making sure everybody had 47,000 pounds of bloated bird meat the other day! Well guess what? That's all **Bible study** is folks! You just exert yourself, make haste and give diligence, just like you do with all other kinds of stuff, **only this time**, it's applied to the Bible! That's it!

And yet, herein lies our problem. For some reason, we think **Bible study** is some mysterious religious thing that only the "super duper intelligent" or "the brainiac bookworms" know how to do, right? No! Are you kidding me? That's not what Paul said. He just said it was "to make haste" or "to give diligence to," just like we do with other things, **only this time**, it's applied to the Bible! You don't need to have a high I.Q to study the Bible. Anybody can do it!

In fact, let me break it down for you in even simpler terms, the Crone translation, in the context of a relationship. Here it is. **Bible study** is simply **excitedly discovering information about someone or something that's important to you**. And of course in this context, that **Someone** or **something** is God. That's all it is. We're just excitedly discovering information about God. That's it! That's **all Bible study is**. Nothing more. Nothing less.

And again, just like with prayer, worship, and serving, God picked something we could all do folks, **yes even Bible study**. Let me demonstrate it to you. For instance, how many of you can read about some topic or some person that you consider interesting or important? Well guess what? You know how to **study the Bible** whether you realize it or not. Turn to somebody and say **you Brainiac** you! Or how many of you guys can to read and digest a multitude of facts and figures about a particular topic of you find interesting? Well guess what? You have the ability to **study the Bible** whether not you realize it or not. Turn to somebody and say **you book worm** you! Or here's one. How many of you guys have been able to passionately read for hours and hours a best selling novel, or even a Christian novel? Well guess what? You have the ability to **study the Bible** for hours and hours whether not you realize it or not. Turn to somebody and say **you person with a high IQ!** Folks, that's all **Bible study** is. Nothing more. Nothing less. It's not that complicated. It's something we can **all do** and in fact we're **already doing**...in other areas.

And that's precisely the point. Surely, come on, if ever there's one book on the planet that we're pouring over day in day out, studying it, memorizing it, reading it passionately for hours and hours and hours, it's the Bible, right? I mean, this is from God, the Creator of the Universe and it

contains all His wonderful promises to His children and how much He loves us and cares for us and all the great things He has in store for us, right? I mean, surely we're reading that before anything else, right? Eeeench! Wrong answer! Folks, let's be honest. When it comes to studying the Bible, it's not something we **look forward** to, that we exert ourselves to. Are you kidding me? It's something we **make excuses to not have to do!** And people, I'm telling you, once we get here, it produces two more horrible side-effects of Churchianity.

And the **first side-effect** is **We Set Ourselves Up for Major Messes!** Hey folks, I don't know if you've noticed or not, but our lack of Biblical knowledge can sometimes come back to bite us, when we least expect it! **And so here's the point.** How many messes in life could we avoid if we'd just get back to Bible study, right? To knowing the Bible more? And let's be honest. Sometimes the messes we create in life aren't that funny at all, are they? Not at all folks! And so people that's why the Bible says when we studying it, it actually helps us to create **less messes**, not more! Check it out!

Psalm 119:2,5,9,93,105 "Blessed are those who keep His statutes and seek Him with all their heart – they do no wrong but follow His ways. Oh, that my ways were steadfast in obeying Your decrees! Then I would not be put to shame when I consider all Your commands. How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to Your Word. I will never forget your precepts, for by them You have preserved my life. Your Word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path."

In other words, **it keeps me out of the dark and helps create less messes!** Hey folks, according to the Psalmist there, if we're sick and tired of creating messes in life, and walking around in the dark, and going down the wrong path, and ending up in shameful rotten situations, what do we need to do? Hello! We need to be studying the Bible, right? With all our heart, never forgetting, and being steadfast about it! That's what it said! And notice it was for what? **Our benefit**...not torture! It creates less messes! And folks, I'm telling you, once we realize that, we're finally on our way to getting rid of this goofball Churchianity stuff, amen?

Oh but that's not all. The **second horrible side-effect** is **We Dry Ourselves Up with Major Sand Pits**. Oh people, it's bad enough that a lack of Bible study starts to create more messes in life, but then we make matters **even worse**, by turning **other things other than God and His word** for relief in life! And that's about as dumb as a person actually preferring to drink sand when they have perfectly good crystal clear refreshing water right before them! I mean, how many of you guys would say that a person like that is probably not the sharpest knife in the drawer, you know what I'm saying? Their a few clowns short of a circus. A few fries short of a Happy Meal. A few peas short of a casserole. The cheese had done slid off their cracker. Theycouldn't pour water out of a boot with instructions on the heel.

They're about as smart as bait. Their chimney's clogged. They forgot to pay his brain bill. They fell out of the stupid tree and hit every branch on the way down. Their intellect is only rivaled by garden tools. Their wheel's a spinnin' but their hamster's done dead! Hello! You know what I'm saying? Kind of like those people you're related to but you don't want anybody to know about, so you try to keep it a secret? Which I always thought was kind of weird because it's said that 1 out of every 3 three Americans is suffering from some form of mental illness. So think about it. If you think of two of your best friends and their OK, it must be you! That's right! Believe it or not folks, each of us is somebody else's weirdo! But seriously, how many of you would say that drinking sand, as opposed to water, is probably one of the dumbest things you could ever do, **especially** when you got perfectly good water right in front of you, right? Hello! Well folks, believe it or not, that's what the Bible says we're doing when we turn to other things for relief in life, rather than God and His Word! You talk about dumb!

Jeremiah 2:12-13 “Be appalled at this, you heavens, and shudder with great horror, declares the LORD. My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken Me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.”

Hey folks, whether you realize it or not, the Bible says when we go somewhere other than God and His Word for relief in life, we just basically preferred **sand** over **water**! What's it say? We're digging broken cisterns

that cannot hold water or in other words, sand pits, right? We're means we're acting **just as dumb** as fish bait are that relative we don't want anyone to know about! And if you don't believe me, then pay attention to our behavior. When we're hurting in life and everything's falling apart all around us, what do we do? Turn to God? Turn to Him and read His Word? Seek His guidance and get back to Bible study? No! Are you kidding me? What do we do? We read the newspaper, we turn on the TV, we grab a book, any book, just as long as it's not that **boring Bible** and we start sucking down **and then** we wonder why our walk with Jesus is like a desert! Who's pouring on the sand. Folks, if you're sick and tired of walking around in a desert-like experience in your walk with God, I've got good news for you! Just get back to Bible study! Get back the oasis God, the Word of God, and get refreshed again, amen? That's **what Bible study is!** Nothing more. Nothing less. It's a total refreshing experience that's guaranteed to get rid of you sand problem! And once we see this, we're finally on our way of getting rid of this goofball Churchianity stuff, amen?

But that's not all. The **third basic question** we need to ask ourselves if we're going to dispel this goofball Churchianity stuff is "**How Do We Study the Bible?**" Well folks again, believe it or not, it's not that hard to understand, **if** you're not suffering from Churchianity. If you look at it

through the eyes of a relationship, it makes total perfect sense. And this is what I believe the **Pharisees** totally missed!

John 5:39-40 “You study the Scriptures diligently because you think that in them you have eternal life. These are the very Scriptures that testify about Me, yet you refuse to come to Me to have life.”

Now folks, according to our text, Jesus set the Pharisees straight that it wasn't in **knowing the Scriptures** that one gets to go to heaven, but it's what? It's in knowing Jesus Christ, right? As your Personal Lord and Savior. And hopefully, there's no one here making the same mistake. Thinking it's by doing good things or trying to be a good person to make it to heaven. No! That's not how it works! It's only through Jesus and His sacrifice on the cross! And we can talk about that later if you need to, **but here's my point**. Even though we may not make that **first mistake** that the Pharisees made there, thinking that it was by knowing the Bible is how you get to heaven, I still think we make a **secondary** mistake with what Jesus was trying to say there, and that is this. The Scriptures testify or speak about Who? What'd He say there? They speak about **Him!** They speak about Jesus, right? And this is precisely what I think we miss! **The Bible is a book about Jesus**, both Old and New Testaments! From the Genesis 3:15 promise where God promised to undo the devil's work through Jesus, the Seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent, to the symbolism of the tabernacle and

Temple, the priestly rituals and dietary laws, to the Davidic promises made to King David is all speaking about Jesus!

And so here's my point. When we're studying the Bible then, all 66 books, Old and New Testament, 39 in one 27 in the other, who are we're studying about? Jesus! We're getting to know Jesus better. We're getting to know Him better, before we ever even get to heaven! Isn't that incredible? **That's how we should be studying the Bible.** We're studying about a **Person**, capital "P" Jesus Christ, because we love Him and want to know Him as best as possible **before** we get to meet face to face! That's how we should study the Bible! And folks, once again, if you look at this through the eyes of a relationship, it makes total perfect sense.

And that's why the **first way** we **do not** study the Bible, since we have a relationship with Jesus, is with **An Attitude of Carelessness**. And to help illustrate the foolishness of doing this in our personal relationship with God, let's take a look at it through the eyes of another personal relationship, via the help of my wife Brandie! And what we're going to do is, I'm going to be given 66 love letters from wife Brandie. And Brandie has been away on a long business trip for a very long time and granted that's quite the strain on the new marriage, but that's why she left the 66 love letters in her place so I could read. So I could get to know her better until we meet face to face

again. And so Brandie is about to return from her trip and she's going to confront me with my behavior concerning her 66 love letters, and I'm going to have this attitude of "carelessness" and you tell me how it goes.

Brandie: "Honey, I'm home! Oh, it's so good to see you Billy and I'm so sorry I had to be away for such a long time, but at least I was able to leave you all those love letters to help strengthen our relationship until I made it back."

Billy: "Oh, yeah....those love letters...yeah."

Brandie: "Well, you did read them, didn't you?"

Billy: "Uh, well, uh, you see, I wanted to read them but I just didn't have the time. But, I did make a spot for them, right here on the coffee table where everybody could see them, to show them how much I love you. Huh, isn't that impressive?"

Brandie: "Impressive? What would have impressed me is if you would have read them, not stared at them or displayed them for others to stare at as well! And as far as time? Really? I've been gone for six months and you didn't have the time? Well, it looks like you had time for all kinds of other things! I see you have a newspaper there also on the table, and a copy of Sports Illustrated, which by the way your in big trouble for that one Mister, and when I came in the room you were watching TV! And you still say you don't have time to read my love letters! Thanks a lot Billy. I thought you cared about me!"

Now folks, that was pretty goofy, wasn't it? I mean, what a husband, huh? I didn't have the time to read my wife's love letters but I can **read the newspaper** or **watch TV** or read some other book? And then I just stack all the letters in a big ol' pile for people to stare at? Nice loving husband, huh?

So folks, **here's the point**. What do we think we're doing when we do that to God? We don't have the time to read the Bible but we have time for the newspaper or TV or any other book as long as it's not the Bible? And then we put a big ol' giant copy of the Bible, you know the **family Bible** on the coffee table or mantle for people to stare at? What good is that? Nice Christian, huh?

But that's not all. The **second way we do not** study the Bible is with **An Attitude of Aimlessness**. For instance, what if I were to react like this when confronted by my wife about her love letters.

Brandie: "Honey, I'm home! Oh, it's so good to see you Billy and I'm so sorry I had to be away for such a long time, but at least I was able to leave you all those love letters to help strengthen our relationship until I made it back."

Billy: "Oh, yeah....those love letters...yeah."

Brandie: "Well, you did read them, didn't you?"

Billy: "Uh, well, uh, you see, I wanted to read them but I just didn't know how to read them. I mean, I started one time but I just couldn't understand what you were saying. I mean, I am a guy after all. And besides, there's 66 of them. Gee willikers man! I don't even know where to start! So I just quit. Maybe I need to take a class or something. Yeah, that's it! I think I need to take a letter reading class! That's what I'll do!"

Brandie: "Oh really? You need to take a class to read a letter from me? Now granted, maybe girl talk isn't the easiest thing to understand right off the bat, but don't you think if you would just apply yourself it would start to make sense in no time at all? And as far as not knowing where to start, how about any of them! Just pick one! They're all love letters from me! What's

the difference! Just read one? Thanks a lot Billy. Nice relationship we've got going on here!"

Now folks, how many of you would say I'm putting a major strain on my marriage there? Uh uh! Big Time! Can you believe that? Saying my wife's love letters we're too difficult to understand right off the bat so I just quit and never read them again? And then talk about an insult? Saying I needed to take a class just to read a letter? How about just pick one and just get started! Wow! Nice husband, huh?

So folks, **here's the point**. What do we think we're doing when we do that to God? Saying we can't understand the Bible or we don't know where to start? How about just pick a book and get started! And just like any else we read in life, the more we read the more we understand. Hello! Just pick one and get going, right? Nice Christian, huh?

But that's still not all. The **third way** we **do not** study the Bible is with **An Attitude of Impressiveness**. For instance, what if I were to react like this when my wife confronted me about her love letters.

Brandie: "Honey, I'm home! Oh, it's so good to see you Billy and I'm so sorry I had to be away for such a long time, but at least I was able to leave you all those love letters to help strengthen our relationship until I made it back."

Billy: "Oh, yeah....those love letters...yeah."

Brandie: "Well, you did read them, didn't you?"

Billy: “Well, of course I did! In fact, just this morning I was able to cram in several pages of one of them before I had to head off to work. And get this, last night I was able to read 15 letters and that beat my previous record of 14! Isn’t that awesome? I’m making such great progress!

Brandie: Oh, that’s wonderful Billy! Well, at least you’re reading them now. So, what did you learn about me? How did it deepen our relationship?

Billy: Uh, well, actually I don’t remember what I read...but it’s the thought that counts, right? Besides, I was able to beat my record!!! Get it? I...beat...my...record!!! Whoo hoo!!! Who’s the man! Who’s the man! That’s right! Who’s the man!

Brandie: But Billy, don’t you see, I wrote those letters to help improve our relationship, to deepen our marriage. What good is it if you can’t remember what you just read? How is that helping us? No Billy! You’re not the man! You’re not the man! You’re not the man! Thanks a lot Billy! Looks like I just wasted my time writing you all those love letters!”

Now folks, how many of you would say that I am in **serious trouble** with my wife? Uh uh! Getting three “You not the man’s!” in a row gives it away! That’s a record you don’t want to break! But man, can you believe that? I mean, praise God at least I was reading the letters this time, but wow! You talk about missing the point! You don’t read them as fast as you can to cram it in just to get on with life. And you certainly don’t read them as much as you can just to break a record! No! The whole purpose is to grow in your knowledge of the other person to deepen and strengthen your relationship! What a lulu! She’s right! Nice husband!

So folks, **here’s the point**. What do we think we’re doing when we do that to God? We finally do get around to reading the Bible but then we cram

it in as fast as we can just to get it over with so we can get on with life. Or we read as much as we can as fast as we can like we're in some sort of marathon trying to impress others, but we can't even remember what we just read! What in the world are we doing? Nice Christian huh?

People, I'm telling you, if we're ever going to get rid of this goofball wretched disease called Churchianity, it is high time that we in the Church get back to Bible study, true Bible study, and start studying it for what it is! It's 66 Love letters from God that we have the privilege of deepen our relationship with him, **before** we get to heaven. And people, I'm telling you, once we get back to that, we're not just in a position to deepen our walk with God, but He'll start to use us to deepen the walks of others. Oh, how our world could be so different, if only we'd take the time to dive into God's Word, and get busy sharing His love, His 66 love letters to a lost and dying world. So that people could know, that in Jesus Christ, you are beautiful just the way you are! And guys, you the man!

Oh people, if you're here today and you're suffering from this horrible wretched disease called Churchianity and Bible study for you has become something dry, stale, stupid, and boring, then I've got good news for you. It doesn't have to be this way! You see, sometimes before you can move forward in your walk with Jesus Christ, you just need to get **Back to the**

Basics, the Basics of True Bible Study. And get back to reading the Bible for what it is, 66 letters from Almighty God to His children, He's head over heels in love with, amen? That's what gets rid of the disease. Let's pray.

To find the way to God, to understand the *truth* of God's Word, and to received the gift of eternal *life*, begin by repentance and faith through a prayer like this:

“Dear God, I understand that I have broken Your Law and sinned against You. Please forgive my sins. Thank You that Jesus suffered on the cross in my place. I now place my trust in Him as My Savior and Lord. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.”
