

TOWARDS A CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF READING

SYLLABUS

Purpose: To see a Christian theology of reading fleshed out; in particular, to see why Christians read and why Christians practice discernment with their readings while also expounding of how to be discerning, and how to read for the purpose of Christian growth and glorifying (thereby, enjoying) the Lord.

TABLE OF CONTENT (TENATIVE SCHEDULE)

1. Why Christians Read

Why Christians read the Bible

Why Christians read other books

Case Study: Christians read

2. Why Christians should practice discernment in reading

Selection

Testing it according to the Word of God

3. How to read:

The Bible

Non-Canonical Books

4. What to Read

I. Why Christians Read:

a. Explanation of section: Here we go over the purpose and benefits for Christians reading both the Bible and other books. We will also consider examples affirming the principle that strong Christians read.

b. Why you should read the Bible

i. **Psalm 1's** summary: It is a blessing

1. The blessing of not associating with sinners: "*How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!*" (v.1)

2. **Question:** How do we avoid the corruption of sinners, and sinful culture all around us? (v.2)

*"But his delight is in the law of the LORD,
And in His law he meditates day and night."*

The blessed man's relations to the Word of God:

a. "delight"

b. "he meditates day and night."

3. Consequential blessings described (v.3)

*"³He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water,
Which yields its fruit in its season
And its leaf does not wither;
And ⁱⁿ whatever he does, he prospers."*

ii. **2 Timothy 3:16:** It's usefulness

“All Scripture is ^uinspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for ^utraining in righteousness; ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”

1. How it is profitable:
 - a. “for teaching”
 - b. “for reproof”
 - c. “for correction,”
 - d. “for ^utraining in righteousness”
2. Purpose (“so that ”):
 - a. “man of God may be adequate”
 - b. “equipped for every good work.”

iii. Psalm 119

1. Help prevent and remove sins (v.3, 8-11, 16, 29, 36, 102-103)
2. Help with obedience (v.4-5, 8, 30, 33-34, 44-45, 51, 56-57, 59-61, 68, 106, 112, 117, 129, 168, 173)
3. Help with not being ashamed (v.6, 21-23, 31, 39, 51, 80)
4. Help us to worship Him
 - a. Help us remember Him (v.55)
 - b. Help us seek Him (v.58)
 - c. Help us to have reverence for God (v.38, 120)
 - d. Help us to be thankful (v.7, 62)
 - e. Help us to rejoice (v.14, 111, 162)
 - f. Help us praise (v.164, 171, 175)
 - g. Help us to meditate (v.15, 27,)
 - h. Help us sing (v.54, 172)
5. Help us share about God with others (v.12-13, 43, 46,)
6. Help us seek more of God’s Word when we have been exposed to it (v.16-20, 35, 47-48, 73, 78, 83, 97, 103, 108-109, 125, 131, 135, 140-141, 144, 167, 169)
7. Help counsel us for life (v.24, 42, 105, 130)
8. Help revive us (v.25, 37b, 40, 50b, 88, 93, 149, 154b, 156, 159)
9. Help us hear from God (v.26, 173)
10. Help comfort us (v.28, 32, 50a, 52, 76-77, 82, 114)
11. Help us avoid the vain things in life (v.37a, 53, 72, 127)
12. Help us lead us to salvation (v.41, 81, 94, 123, 154a, 155, 166, 170, 174, 176)
13. Help give us hope (v.49, 116)
14. Help us hate sins (v.104, 113, 115, 118-119, 126, 128, 136, 139, 158)
15. Help us want to have fellowship with believers (v.63, 74, 79)
16. Help us see God’s loving kindness and faithfulness (v.64-65, 68, 90-91, 124, 132, 138)
17. Help us with discernment (v.66)

18. Help us undergo trials and persecution (v.69-71, 75, 84-87, 92, 95, 107, 110, 121-122, 133-134, 143, 145-148, 153, 157, 161)
19. Help us see God's law is absolute (v.89, 96, 137, 142, 150-152, 160)
20. Help us become wise (v.98-100)
21. Help give us peace (v.165)

iv. Application:

1. How do I cultivate the desire to read the Bible?
 - a. Keep this outline as a reference and review it.
 - b. Have fellowship with others by asking others why do they read the Bible and what did they
 - c. Go through **Psalm 119** on your own and categorize the blessings and reasons to read the Bible.
 - d. Have someone to be accountable for your reading.
 - e. Find what you most need now in your life and read passages on that topic.
 - f. Read the Bible to enjoy God's Word and savor Him.
2. How do I maintain and not lose my desire to read the Bible?
 - a. All the previous applications should be implemented.
 - b. Consistently and diligently apply it!
 - c. Whatever routine you have in reading the Bible, maintain it.
 - d. Keep on challenging yourselves with deeper understanding of the Word of God.