

Teaching Your Kids About Bible Study
Selected Scriptures
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INTRODUCTION

1. In the last few weeks we have looked at several issues pertaining to parenting.
2. We have talked about your child's greatest need, what you should teach them about God, and what you should teach them about prayer.
3. Tonight, I want to talk about what you should teach them about Bible study.
4. Bible study is essential for any person, whether it be an adult, a youth or a child.
5. But teaching it to your children will take on various forms depending on their age.
6. It is clear that you cannot teach something to your young children that only an adult can understand.
7. So tonight we're going to look at some basic principles as it pertains to Bible study.
8. 23 years ago after I became a believer, I spent the first year entirely frustrated because I didn't know how to study my Bible.
9. I went to several of my pastors and they didn't have a clue in how to help me with my problem.

10. I walked away from those meetings many times in tears.
11. But in my frustration, it forced me to pursue the answer to my question.
12. I read books and listened to tapes on the subject and finally was able to come to some answers on how to study the Bible.
13. Tonight, I want to share with you what I have learned over the years and show you how you can apply these principles to your children.
14. First, ***you must teach your kids to read the Bible.***

I. You Must Teach Your Kids to Read the Bible

It is interesting to note that in the Old Testament alone, there are “39 books, 929 chapters, 23, 214 verses, 593, 493 words and in the New Testament 27 books, 260 chapters, 7959 verses, and 181, 253 words” (H. L. Willmington, Willmington’s Book of Bible Lists) and we don’t systematically read them.

With some many helps on reading the Bible there is no excuse!

Some say that they can’t read very well, or they don’t have time. I say then let the Bible be read to you. I use Max McClean’s reading of the Old and New Testament when I am driving or just want to have it read to me.

If there is ever a discipline you can pass on to your children, it’s that of reading the Bible.

Of course, you need to get them one they can read.

I mentioned *The Beginner’s Bible* for kids but as they get older you should get them their own Bible in a version they can understand, like the NASB, NKJV, or ESV.

I cannot stress anymore the importance of reading the Bible.

David said in Psalm 119:99 that he had “more insight than all [his] teachers, for [God’s] testimonies [were his] meditation.”

Exodus 24:7 says that after “Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD” (v.5), they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. “Then he took the book of the covenant and ***read it in the hearing of the people***; and they said, ‘All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!’”

(v.7).

Moses later told Israel in Deuteronomy 17:15-20, “You shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses, one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman. 16 "Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.' 17 "Neither shall he multiply wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself. 18 "Now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests. 19 "And it shall be with him, and he shall ***read it all the days of his life***, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statutes, 20 that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, to the right or the left; in order that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel.”

In Nehemiah 8:1-8, “in response to the people's request, Ezra brought the law of the Lord, which he had set his heart to study, practice, and teach to the people (cf. Ezra 7:10). At this time, the law was a scroll, as opposed to a text consisting of bound pages. Such a reading was required every 7 years at the Feast of Tabernacles (cf. Deut. 31:10?13), even though it had been neglected since the Babylonian captivity until this occasion” (John MacArthur, The MacArthur Study Bible, Neh.8:1).

Verses 1-8 says, “And all the people gathered as one man at the square which was in front of the Water Gate, and they asked Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses which the LORD had given to Israel. 2 Then Ezra the priest

brought the law before the assembly of men, women, and all who could listen with understanding, on the first day of the seventh month. 3 And he **read** from it before the square which was in front of the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of men and women, those who could understand; and all the people were attentive to the book of the law. 4 And Ezra the scribe stood at a wooden podium which they had made for the purpose. And beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiyah, and Maaseiah on his right hand; and Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam on his left hand. 5 And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. 6 Then Ezra blessed the LORD the great God. And all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!" while lifting up their hands; then they bowed low and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. 7 Also Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, explained the law to the people while the people remained in their place. 8 **And they read from the book, from the law of God, translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading.**"

The Bible is to be read—that's the purpose of it.

Paul told the Colossians in 4:16, "And when this letter is **read** among you, have it also **read** in the church of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part **read** my letter that is coming from Laodicea."

He told the Thessalonians in 5:27, "I adjure you by the Lord to have this letter **read to all the brethren.**"

He even told Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:13, "Until I come, give attention to the **public reading of Scripture**, to exhortation

and teaching.”

God promises to bless the reading and obeying of His Word.

Revelation 1:3 says, “Blessed is he who ***reads*** and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.”

So you need to establish a priority of daily reading the Word of God and also teaching your kids to read it too.

What happens when we read the Bible? We answer the question, “What does the Bible say?”

Charles Spurgeon said, “How often do we open the sacred book and read a chapter through, perhaps at family-prayer, or perhaps in our own private devotions, and having read from the first verse to the last, we shut up the book, thinking we have done something very right and very proper, and in a vague way somehow profitable to us. Very right and very proper indeed, and yet, right and proper as the thing is, we may really have gained nothing thereby. We may, in fact, have only drilled ourselves in the merely external part of religion, and may not have enjoyed anything spiritual, or anything that can be beneficial to our souls, if we have forgotten the divine Spirit through whom the Word has come to us” (Spurgeon, C. H. (1998). Vol. 58: Spurgeon's Sermons: Volume 58 (electronic ed.). Logos Library System; Spurgeon's Sermons. Albany, OR: Ages Software).

A. Prayerfully

Our reading should be done with the deepest reverence. No one can comprehend the teachings of the Bible in his own ability. He must have the assistance of the Holy Spirit.

1. David prayed in Psalm 119:18 - “Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Thy law.”
2. Paul prayed for the Ephesians in 1:17-19 that “the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. 18 I pray that ***the eyes of your heart may be enlightened***, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might.”

B. Undistractedly

After Jesus fed the five thousand, Matthew 14:22-23 says, “And immediately He made the disciples get into the boat, and go ahead of Him to the other side, while He sent the multitudes away. 23 And after He had sent the multitudes away, He went up to the mountain ***by Himself to pray***; and when it was evening, He was there alone.”

C. Daily

John MacArthur says, “Sophisticated and ingenious Bible study methods books are fine, but they should never come ahead of fundamental steps. And there is no more fundamental step than systematically reading God’s Word, line upon line, precept upon precept, absorbing its total truth and cohesiveness” (How to Get the Most From God’s Word, p.156).

There are a number of reading plans. I would encourage you to read through the Bible at least once a year.

D. Repetitiously

You ought to read the Old Testament at least once a year and the New Testament repetitiously.

What I mean by repetitiously is to take a book in the NT and read it over-and-over once a month. You can select one of your choice or read the one we're studying. Break larger books into smaller sections and read each section for 30 days (eg. Revelation has 22 chapters - divide it up into 8, 7, 7).

You can find the plan for this kind of reading on our website. It covers the entire NT.

E. Carefully

“Don't hurry as you read the passage. Take as much time as is necessary.”

Rudyard Kipling said, “I kept six honest serving men; they taught me all I knew; their names are what and why and when and how and where and who. I sent them over land and sea, I sent them east and west; but after they have worked for me I've given them all a rest” (quoted by Jerry Vines, Sermon Preparation).

II. You Must Teach Your Kids to Interpret the Bible

Once you have taught your child how to read the Bible, now you need to teach them how to interpret it.

Now your helping them to understand “What does the Bible mean by what it says?”

Now your teaching them the steps to taking them deeper in

their reading of the Bible.

Hans Finzel says, “The process of observation can be divided into three steps of study, following in logical sequence. First, we look at the *whole*; divide that up into *parts*; and finally scrutinize the *details*.”

“In interpretation you study the purpose of the passage, as well as the meaning of the details. Interpretation is the point at which you put yourself in the author’s place and try to recapture his thoughts, emotions, and attitudes. Your ultimate task is to discover *why* the author wrote what he wrote. A good definition for interpretation is ‘the science of discovering the original meaning intended by the author’ (Unlocking the Scriptures, pp.35, 65).

To do this you must:

A. Understand the problems

“The Bible has been around for many years, parts of it for as long as four thousand years. Now how are we going to understand what there were saying and the various circumstances in which they lived?” (John MacArthur, How to Study the Bible, p.70).

We have to bridge the gaps!

1. The language (Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek) -

Mat.28:19-20 (grammatical construction)

Helps: Vine’s Expository Dictionary, Hebrew & Greek lexicons

2. The history (mostly Jewish) - James 1:1 - “To the

twelve tribes scattered abroad.” (History - Acts 8:1-4)

Helps: Unger’s Bible Dictionary, Commentaries

3. The culture (Jewish / Gentile) - John 1:1, “Why is Jesus called the *Word*?”

Helps: The Manner’s and Customs of the Bible

4. The geography (The Middle East)

Helps: Bible Atlas’

B. Be Familiar with the Principles

1. Always remember that context rules

“Context” means “that which goes with the text”

“When you interpret anything – a word, a verse, a teaching – it must always be considered in the light of the surrounding verses and chapters, the book in which it is found, and the entire Word of God” (Kay Arthur, How to Study Your Bible, p.60).

Richard Belcher in his book, *Biblical Exegesis*, says, “Familiarize [yourself] with the total passage itself, seeking to determine in a rough manner the main theme of the passage and the main divisions and subdivisions within the passage” (p.2).

- a) Remember “isolation breeds misinterpretation”
- b) Scripture is to be understood in its immediate context (eg. 2 Pet.2:20-22)

2. Always seek the full counsel of God

- a) Be like the Berean Christians (Acts 17:11)
- b) Check out what you're studying or hearing being taught
- c) The daily reading and studying of Scripture will aid you in this

“Saturate yourself in the Word of God; it is your safeguard against wrong doctrine” (Kay Arthur, How to Study Your Bible, p.62).

- d) Don't forget to meditate on Scripture (Ps.1:2; 119:97-100, 148)

Thomas Manton said, “The end of study is information, and the end of meditation is practice, or a work upon the affections. Study is like a winter sun, that shines, but warms not: but meditation is like a blowing upon the fire, where we do not mind the blaze, but the heat. The end of study is to hoard up truth; but of meditation to lay it forth in conference or holy conversation.”

3. Remember that Scripture will never contradict Scripture

- a) Contradiction comes from poor study or interpretation

If you don't take the necessary time to discover the author's original intended meaning, the conclusion will be contradictions.”

- b) Scripture must be understood in the light of the whole of Scripture

This is what the Reformers called *Analogia Scriptura* – which means, the analogy of Scripture.

“One part of the Bible doesn’t teach something that another part contradicts” (John MacArthur, *How to Study the Bible*, p.74).

J. I. Packer said, “The Bible appears like a symphony orchestra, with the Holy Ghost as its Toscanini, each instrument has been brought willingly, spontaneously, creatively, to play his notes just as the great conductor desired, though none of them could ever hear the music as a whole...The point of each part only becomes fully clear when seen in relation to all the rest” (*God Has Spoken*).

- c) The best interpreter of Scripture is Scripture

The Old Testament explains the New. The New Testament explains the Old.

Richard Baxter said, “It is not the work of the Spirit to tell you the meaning of Scripture, and give you the knowledge of divinity, without your own study and labor, but to bless that study, and give you knowledge thereby...To reject study on the presence of the sufficiency of the Spirit, is to reject the Scripture itself.”

CONCLUSION

1. Are you teaching your kids how to read and understand the Bible?
2. This is our mandate as parents.
3. This is what it means to bring your kids up in the discipline and admonition of the Lord.
4. I pray that it is your highest priority.
5. Let's pray.