Purpose of Bible Study
1 Timothy 4:7-9

Intro – There’s a lot of junk floating around the church world. There’s a lot of people trying to figure out God, without learning about God. The only way you are going to learn who, and what God is all about is by studying the Word of God, & not just listening to everyone that comes your way.

Mat. 24,24 – For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Look at some results from a Bible knowledge test published by the Vancouver Sun.

Here are some of the answers given by people who said they knew the Bible.

1. Noah’s wife was Joan of Ark.
2. The seventh commandment is "Thou shalt not admit to adultery."
3. The epistles were wives of the apostles.
4. A Christian should have only one wife. This is called sameness.
5. Lots’ wife was a pillar of salt by day and a ball of fire by night.

As you might imagine, some of those mistakes could be quite consequential. There is a lot of difference between "Thou shalt not commit adultery" and "Thou shalt not admit to adultery."

*What is Bible study?*It is more than reading the Bible; but it includes that for sure. It is different from meditating upon Scripture although Bible study never reaches its ultimate purpose until the verses are applied to daily life through prayer, meditation, and obedience.

Meditation is devotional; study is evaluative.

Meditation will relish a word; study will explain & develops the Word.

There is much to be gained by becoming established in both Bible study and meditation. Bible study may involve discussion and interaction with others about Scripture. But when the proper preparation for the discussion is lacking there can really be little more than ignorance informing ignorance. Everybody is entitled to an opinion and most everybody has one. But an informed opinion is much more helpful than an uninformed one. Bible study is a more objective approach to Scripture in which through disciplined examination of Scripture we seek to discover exactly what is being communicated.

I. The Immediate Goal of Bible study is UNDERSTANDING.

*In Acts 8* Philip encountered an Ethiopian Eunuch reading from Isaiah 53.  Do you remember the question Philip asked the man when he heard him reading his Bible?

Acts 8:30 – And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

NKJV – So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?"

It’s good to read the Bible—and *that was an important beginning for this Ethiopian*. But he was not understanding what he was reading. The good news is –he at least knew he wasn’t understanding it and had enough humility to acknowledge that and be teachable.

Before Phillip could help the Eunuch understand the passage, he had to understand it himself. The goal of Bible study is understanding. That usually comes through the Body of Christ.

Reading is good—but reading with understanding is better. And sometimes it takes some effort to get at the meaning.

The Pharisees of Jesus time are a prime example of what can happen when the Bible is study with the wrong motives of heart—with a purely intellectual approach—and with not real intent to do what it tells us to do. But we should not allow that to blind us to the people of God who studied out of a pure heart.

Jesus studied the Scripture from his youth; even the Son of God studied.

Timothy studied the Scripture from his youth.

2 Tim. 2,15 – Study to show thyself approved unto God,

STUDY – to make effort,

Men, we had better be teaching our kids the Word of God—with understanding.

Look at what Jesus says about this issue of understanding in the Parable of the Sower.

Matt 13:19 – When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and *understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away*that which was sown in his heart.

This is he which received seed by the way side.

Matt 13:23 – But he that received seed into the good ground is *he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit*, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

Our lives should involve a diligent search for truth and wisdom.

II. The Ultimate Goal is OBEDIENCE

*(operating according to that understanding)*What understanding?

1 Sam. 15,22 – And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

What is OBEDIENCE?

Why is it better than SACRIFICE?

*Looking at 1 Tim. 4:*

Verse 1-5 – The Great Apostasy – "abandonment of a previous loyalty, as to one's religious faith."

V. 1 *that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to    seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;*

WHAT WILL THEY DO?

Speak lies

Having their conscience seared

Forbidding to marry

The rest would be non thankful

Verse 6-11 – A Good Servant of Jesus.

V. 7 *But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.*

What is Paul saying in the 1st part of this scripture?

Refuse profane and old wives' fables. – Avoid, refuse, & rejects wicked fiction or myth.

Could mean tradition to what we’ve heard on the news about the tomb of Jesus?

2nd part of verse 7 tells us how to live – exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

NKJV – exercise yourself toward godliness.

GODLINESS – the gospel scheme, is godliness which is holiness.

Verse 12-16 – Take Heed to your Ministry.

V. 16 *Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee*.

Break it down.

Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine – pay attention to yourself in the doctrine or learning

Continue in them – Tarry in Gods learning

Doing this you will save yourself – deliver & protect, heal, preserve, be made whole.

And those who hear you – the audience that hears the reported, & understands.

Paul was telling Timothy something he needed to hear.

CON:

When you study the Word of God, weather in a group of people or just by yourself. You come to the place of listening to others, but not fallen what others may say or mislead you to believe.

Remember; there are a lot of false teachings, don’t fall to something that will change your Theology without studying for your self.

There’s benefit in the Word of God. Don’t worry if you don’t understand it all, at all the time. There’s blessing in just reading it!