

Sunday, November 28, 2021--Give Attendance to Reading

Introduction

- We are breaking this morning from our study of Colossians so that I can address some things that have been on my mind for a long time.
- What I am going to share is based upon my own thoughts, observations, and study. No one is obligated to agree with me.
 - Personal conversations & observations
 - Questions that have been asked of me.
 - Transformed Life discussions from the past couple of years.
- I have no one person or persons in mind. My comments are general and not directed at anyone person or group of persons in GLBC or in our general listening audience.

Ministry In the Age of Internet

- The internet is a double-edged sword. While it is a great tool for ministry and outreach it is also a waste land of distraction, smut, filth, and unsound teaching.
- Parents need to be hyper vigilant in terms of guarding the hearts and minds of their children.
- Social media allows people to interact and know what is going on across the political and theological landscape at the drop of the hat.
- Unsound teaching is literally spread around the globe in one 24-hour cycle. Unsound teaching coming out of Connecticut can be live streamed in Calcutta and Copenhagen in real time.
- YouTube algorithms recommend viewers of our channel watch other ministries in the so-called grace space.
 - In the last 28 days 87 percent our audience on YouTube was male.
- People jump from channel to channel with their guards down literally thinking they are within the safe harbor of another grace ministry.
 - YouTube directs people watching our ministry to also watch ministries teaching Sonship Edification, no judgment seat of Christ, Soul Sleep, and Conditional Immortality.

- Many in the body of Christ are not able to perceive the differences in what is being taught. Contrary teachings are being liked and shared by the same people in social media. Many folks are not operating with discernment.
- II Timothy 3:1-7—is literally happening before our eyes on a daily basis.
- People are consuming message on YouTube at a dizzying pace. I fear that for many watching/listening to messages on YouTube has replaced their own personal reading and study of the scriptures.

Reading and Studying

- On the other side of the coin, many believers can tell you everything our political leaders and media pundits have said on a given subject but when asked how their personal time reading God’s word is going, they report that they are struggling to find the time.
- Many believers report feelings of guilt over this. Why is this happening?
 - Romans 12:1-2
 - Ephesians 2:1-3
- If we know that the course of this world is constantly working on us why are many struggling to read God’s word? I have come to believe that part of the problem might reside in a misconception people have between reading and studying.
- II Timothy 2:15—is written to the pastor of a local church. Many see what I do in my message on a given Sunday and they think that they need to be doing what they see me doing or they are not doing something right. When they can’t duplicate it, they give up and stop reading altogether.
 - I have firsthand accounts from folks in our assembly that this is true.
- Many read this verse and envision someone buried in their office with a pile of books studying. They think that “study” in II Tim. 2:15 means to hit the books. They read/hear the word “study” and they think they need to hit the books. For many this conjures nightmares of their high school experience, and they are done before they begin.
- The word study occurs 3 times in your Bible.
- The word rendered “study” in II Tim. 2:15 carries the following meanings: 1) to hasten, make haste, 2) to exert one's self, endeavour, give diligence. Consider its occurrence in the following verses:
 - Ephesians 4:3—“endeavouring”

- II Timothy 4:9, 21—“do thy diligence”
- Titus 3:12—“be diligent”
- As it turns out there are meanings of the English word “study” that are in line with the rendering of the word in these other passages. Consider the following from the *Oxford English Dictionary*:
 - I. To strive or aim.
 - †1. intransitive. With to, for, after, †umbe, etc.: to strive towards, direct one's efforts to, set one's mind on, devote oneself to. Obsolete.
 - 2.
 - a. intransitive. To aim, endeavour, or undertake deliberately to do something. Now rare.
- II Timothy 2:15—Timothy as the pastor of a local church needs to be endeavoring, striving, deliberately undertaking, and doing all diligence to show himself approved unto God. The idea here does not exclude the concept of hitting the books, but it is not limited to it either.
- I Thessalonians 4:11—there is a different word rendered “study” in this verse which means “to be ambitious to strive earnestly, make it one's aim.”
 - This correspondence exactly with definition two from the OED (See above).
- Ecclesiastes 12:12—here is our notion of hitting the books.
- Don't let misconceptions about “studying” keep you from reading God's word.
- I Timothy 4:13—we are to “give attendance to reading.” The English word “[attendance](#)” carries the following relevant meaning according to Noah Webster's *American Dictionary of the English Language*, “attention; regard; careful application of mind.”
 - Ephesians 3:4
 - Colossians 4:16
 - I Thessalonians 5:27
- Isaiah 34:16
 - Read—70x in 66 verses

- Reading—6x in 6 verses
- Readeth—4x in 4verses
- Readest—2x in 2 verses
- Job 23:12—we need to get back to reading our Bibles. I have realized that I need to be doing my own personal Bible reading for myself.

Readers Bible

- As I was pondering all of this, I came across some research about Bible typography and formatting and the assumptions people make when they read their Bible in different formats. Study Bibles contain many ancillary distractions. So, I bought a King James Readers Bible to experiment with reading it.
 - No chapter numbers
 - No verse numbers
 - No center column, marginal, or footnotes
 - No distractions of any kind. Just the Biblical text set forth in paragraph form like a normal book.
- My experience in reading from this Bible was the following.
 - Less distractions
 - More focused reading
 - More like the first century reading experience would have been
 - Notice things in the text that I had never noticed before
 - Read longer and further each time I read
- Investigated other options
 - KJV Reader's Bible New Testament--\$18.99
 - Kindle--\$2.99
 - King James Readers Bible by Holman--\$28.00

- Paragraph Bible by Local Church Bible Publishers--\$64.00

2022 Bible Reading Challenge

- Buy one of the above King James Readers Bibles (Optional)
- Read through Paul's epistles every month as a church family.
 - 3 Chapters a day.
- Talk to each other about your experiences.
- See what God will do in our lives & assembly.