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CHAPTER ONE



HOW TO DEEPEN YOUR LOVE FOR THE BIBLE

A QUICKENING THAT WILL LAST must come through the Word of God. A man stood up in one of our meetings and said he hoped for enough out of the series of meetings to last him all his life. I told him he might as well try to eat enough breakfast at one time to last him a lifetime. That is a mistake that people are making; they are running to religious meetings, and they think the meetings are going to do the work. But if these don't bring you into closer contact with the Word of God, the whole impression will be gone in three months. The more you love the Scriptures, the firmer will be your faith. There is little backsliding when people love the Bible.

If you come into closer contact with the Word, you will

gain something that will last, because the Word of God is going to endure. In Psalm 119 David prayed nine times that God would quicken him—according to His Word, His law, His judgment, His precepts, and so forth.

If I could say something that would induce Christians to have a deeper love for the Word of God, I should feel this to be the most important service that could be rendered to them. Do you ask: How can I come to love the Bible? Well, if you will only arouse yourself to the study of it, and ask God's assistance, He will assuredly help you.

GOD'S WORD AND OUR WORK

The Word and work make healthy Christians. If it be all Word and no work, people will suffer from what I may call religious gout. On the other hand, if it be all work and no Word, it will not be long before they will fall into all kinds of sin and error, so that they will do more harm than good. But if we first study the Word and then go to work, we shall be healthy, useful Christians. I never saw a fruit-bearing Christian who was not a student of the Bible. If a man neglects his Bible, he may pray and ask God to use him in His work; but God cannot make use of him, for there is not much for the Holy Spirit to work upon. We must have the Word itself, which is sharper than any two-edged sword (see Hebrews 4:12).

We have a great many prayer meetings, but there

is something just as important as prayer, and that is that we read our Bibles, that we have Bible study and Bible lectures and Bible classes, so that we may get hold of the Word of God. When I pray, I talk to God, but when I read the Bible, God is talking to me; and it is really more important that God should speak to me than that I should speak to Him.

I believe we should know better how to pray if we knew our Bibles better. What is an army good for if they don't know how to use their weapons? What is a young man starting out in the Christian work good for if he does not know how to use his Bible? A man isn't worth much in battle if he has any doubt about his weapon, and I have never found a man who has doubts about the Bible who has amounted to much in Christian work. I have seen work after work wrecked because men lost confidence in the spirit of this old Book.



WE ARE NOT FOUNTAINS OURSELVES;
BUT THE WORD OF GOD IS THE TRUE
FOUNTAIN.



If young converts want to be used of God, they must feed on His Word. Their experience may be very good and profitable at the outset, and they may help others by telling it; but if they keep on doing nothing

else but telling their experience, it will soon become stale and unprofitable, and people will weary of hearing the same thing over and over again. But when they have told how they have been converted, the next thing is to feed on the Word. We are not fountains ourselves, but the Word of God is the true fountain.

And if we feed on the Word, it will be so easy then to speak to others; and not only that, but we shall be growing in grace all the while, and others will take notice of our walk and conversation. So few grow because so few study. I would advise all young converts to keep as much as they can in the company of more experienced Christians. I like to keep in the society of those who know more than I do; and I never lose a chance of getting all the good I can out of them. Study the Bible carefully and prayerfully; ask of others what this passage means and what that passage means, and when you have become practically acquainted with the great truths the Scriptures contain, you will have less to fear from the world, the flesh, and the devil. You will not be disappointed in your Christian life.



IF YOU GET TIRED OF THE WORD OF
GOD, AND IT BECOMES WEARISOME TO
YOU, YOU ARE OUT OF COMMUNION
WITH HIM.



People are constantly saying: We want something new: some new doctrine, some new idea. Depend upon it, my friends, if you get tired of the Word of God, and it becomes wearisome to you, you are out of communion with Him.

When I was in Baltimore, my window looked out on an Episcopal church. The stained-glass windows were dull and uninviting by day, but when the lights shone through at night, how beautiful they were! So when the Holy Spirit touches the eyes of your understanding and you see Christ shining through the pages of the Bible, it becomes a new Book to you.

A REVELATION OF GOD'S LOVE

A young lady once took up a novel to read, but found it dull and uninteresting. Some months afterward, she was introduced to the author and in the course of time became his wife. She then found that there was something in the book, and her opinion of it changed. The change was not in the book, but in herself. She had come to know and love the writer. Some Christians read the Bible as a duty, if they read it at all, but as soon as a man or woman sees Christ as the chiefest among ten thousand, the Bible becomes the revelation of the Father's love and becomes a never-ending charm. A gentleman asked another, "Do you often read the Bible?" "No," was the answer, "I frankly admit I do not love God." "No more did I," the first replied, "but God loved me."

A great many people seem to think that the Bible is out-of-date, that it is an old book, and they think it has passed its day. They say it was very good for the Dark Ages, and that there is some very good history in it, but it was not intended for the present time; we are living in a very enlightened age and men can get on very well without the Old Book; we have outgrown it.

You might just as well say that the sun, which has shone so long, is now so old that it is out-of-date, and that whenever a man builds a house he need not put any windows in it, because we have a newer light and a better light; we have gaslight and electric light. These are newer; and I would advise people, if they think the Bible is too old and worn out, when they build houses, not to put windows in them, but just to light them with electric light; that is something new and that is what they are anxious for.

A PROMISE AND PROVISION FOR EVERY SITUATION

Bear in mind there is no situation in life for which you cannot find some word of consolation in Scripture. If you are in affliction, if you are in adversity and trial, there is a promise for you. In joy and sorrow, in health and in sickness, in poverty and in riches, in every condition of life, God has a promise stored up in His Word for you. In one way or another every case is met, and the truth is commended to every man's conscience. Someone has said,

- ❖ *"If you are impatient, sit down quietly and commune with Job."*
- ❖ *"If you are strongheaded, read of Moses and Peter."*
- ❖ *"If you are weak-kneed, look at Elijah."*
- ❖ *"If there is no song in your heart, listen to David."*
- ❖ *"If you are a politician, read Daniel."*
- ❖ *"If you are getting sordid, read Isaiah."*
- ❖ *"If you are chilly, read of the beloved disciple."*
- ❖ *"If your faith is low, read Paul."*
- ❖ *"If you are getting lazy, read James."*
- ❖ *"If you are losing sight of the future, read in Revelation of the Promised Land."*

It is said that Richard Baxter, author of *The Saints' Everlasting Rest*, felt the force of miracles chiefly in his youth; in maturer years he was more impressed by fulfilled prophecy; and toward the end of his life he felt the deepest satisfaction in his own ripe experience of the power of the Gospel.

A SOURCE OF GREAT PEACE

In Psalm 119:165, we find these words: "Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble." The study of God's Word will secure peace. Take those Christians who are rooted and grounded in the Word of God, and you will find they have great peace; but those who don't study their Bible, and don't know their Bible, are easily offended

when some little trouble comes, or some little persecution, and their peace is all disturbed. Just a little breath of opposition and they stumble; their peace is all gone.

Sometimes I am amazed to see how little it takes to drive all peace and comfort from some people. A slandering tongue will readily blast it. But if we have the peace of God, the world cannot take that from us. It cannot give it; it cannot destroy it. We must get it from above the world. It is the peace that Christ gives. Christ said, "Blessed is he who is not offended because of Me." Now, you will notice that wherever there is a Bible-taught Christian, one who has his Bible well marked, and who daily feeds upon the Word with prayerful meditation, he will not be easily offended.

Such are the people who are growing and working all the while. But it is the people who never open their Bibles, who never study the Scriptures, who become offended, and are wondering why they are having such a hard time. They are the persons who tell you that Christianity is not what it has been recommended to them, that they have found it is not all that we claim it to be. The real trouble is, they have not done as the Lord has told them to do. They have neglected the Word of God. If they had been studying the Word of God, they would not be in that condition. They would not have wandered these years away from God, living on the husks of the world. They have neglected to care for the new life, they haven't fed it; and the poor soul, being starved, sinks into weakness and decay, and

is easily stumbled or offended. If a man is born of God, he cannot thrive without God.



WE TAKE GOOD CARE OF THIS BODY
THAT WE INHABIT FOR A DAY . . . BUT
THE INNER MAN, WHICH IS TO LIVE ON
FOREVER, IS LEAN AND STARVED.



I met a man who confessed his soul had fed on nothing for forty years. "Well," said I, "that is pretty hard for the soul—giving it nothing to feed on!" That man is a type of thousands and tens of thousands today; their poor souls are starving. We take good care of this body that we inhabit for a day, and we clothe it, and deck it, and by and by it is going into the grave to decay; but the inner man, which is to live on forever, is lean and starved. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."

THE GUIDEBOOK TO THE CHRISTIAN'S JOURNEY

If a man is traveling and does not know where he is going to, or how he is going to get there, you know he has a good deal of trouble, and does not enjoy the trip as much as if he has a guidebook at hand. It is not safe traveling, and he does not know how to make through

connections. Now, the Bible is a guidebook in the journey of life, and the only one that points the way to heaven. "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

Let us take heed then not to refuse the light and the help it gives.