

'THE B.I.B.L.E.'
("Yes! That's The BOOK For Me & Thee!")
Studies in Psalm 119

'The Presentation'

When your meal is served in a nice restaurant, the entree comes both expertly prepared and artistically presented. If it arrived at your table, nutritiously cooked by a world-renowned chef, but it looked dull or sloppy on the plate, you'd be disappointed. If your order came beautifully put on the plate, but it tasted horrible, you'd want your money back, you'd never come back, and you would warn others to stay away from that place! Both the preparation and the presentation are so important for a great dining experience that will be pleasing to both the palate and the eye enough to bring people back for more, with their friends. The same thing must be true about the spiritual meal of biblical truth Christians come to indulge and enjoy whenever they come to church or Bible study. The teacher of God's word is obliged to work hard at study and preparation, but he or she is also obliged to present it to those who listen in a way that's not only correct, but also creative.

Scripture says of Jesus, ***"All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them..."*** (Matthew 13:34). The Master teacher/preacher, Jesus, set the standard for all Bible teachers of His Word to others – ***'Be correct! AND Be creative!'*** Presentation will either enhance the great truths and stories of Scripture, or the lack thereof will spoil an otherwise really good Bible study or message. For a teacher to avoid being boring or dull in presenting God's truth, he or she must prayerfully, carefully, and creatively connect illustrations, personal experiences, stories, or jokes with spiritual truth in a way that hearers will more clearly see how to apply what has been taught with their personal daily lives.

Solomon, under the Holy Spirit's influence, wrote: ***"...the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yes, he pondered and sought out and set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find acceptable words; and what was written was upright – words of truth. The words of the wise are like goads and the words of the scholars are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd..."*** (Ecclesiastes 12:9-11). Note the elements of really good Bible teaching –

- 1) 'ponder, seek, set in order proverbs (wisely, prayerfully, always be looking for good illustrations of what you will be teaching);
- 2) 'acceptable words, upright writings, truths' (careful study of the subject or passage, commentary research and arrangement of the way you will teach the text);
- 3) letting the Lord 'goad' or direct you as to the words to use;
- 4) use of illustrations so they will be pegs or 'well driven nails' to hang the doctrinal truths upon, so they won't drop from the hearers' understanding.

Such **'preparation'** of the study enables God to teach the teacher first with an understanding that will also be good for the hearers. Placement of illustrations at the start of the message, a time or two during the message and one at the close create a good **'presentation'**, that will help the message hold together and also assists in helping the hearers be touched by the Spirit inwardly, so practical application can happen outwardly (***Philippians 2:12-13***).

It is also important to bear in mind the group to which you will be teaching when selecting a few illustrations for the message: **1) their age, 2) their social situation, and 3) their spiritual maturity.** People need illustrations and object lessons that relate to them personally. If the group has various age groups you must prepare the spiritual meal with milk of the word for young believers, but also serve up some meat of the word for those more mature in the faith – like a serving a meal, serve up something good for everyone at the table. The hardest part is usually making these brief ***presentation*** illustrations transition smoothly, naturally, and meaningfully to the Scriptural text and doctrinal truths that will be the main point of the study. Finally, it's very important to allow time for the gospel message to be included for anybody present who may not already be saved. Don't ever make the assumption that people are saved – always leave at least a few minutes to explain and offer the gospel of Christ to lost souls God may be convicting to repent and be saved.

PtL (More 'helpful hints' next time – 'Smooth Transitions')

‘Engraving God’s Word on Your Heart!’

(Falling in Love with God’s Word)

(Hebrew letter ‘mem’ / first letter of the word for ‘membrane’ or parchment for writing upon)

Psalm 119:97-104

Possible time in David’s life: 2 Samuel 2:8-11, 3:1

David anointed king of Judah.

It was expected that Israel’s kings actually write out the Law of God on parchment (*membrane*) during their tenure (**Deuteronomy 17:14-20**). The goal being that as the king did this day by day, God would write on the parchment of his heart His will and way. This part of **Psalm 119** sounds like what you’d expect from someone doing such a spiritual task. Although there was a 7-year civil war with the northern half of Israel (*deceased Saul’s old domain*) at the time, King David solidifies Judah in the south, as he establishes himself in God’s Scripture, as the next step becoming ‘*a man after God’s own heart*’.

God’s Law – You’ve Got to Love It!

“Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day.

You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies;

For they are ever with me.”

119:97-98

- All Christians would SAY they love God’s Word, but how does **meditation** of it prove you love it?
- Discuss Christian meditation and how it compares with and is superior to other kinds of meditation.
- Why does it take meditation of God’s Word in addition to study of it, to be wiser and victorious?

God’s Lifestyle – You’ve Got to Learn It!

“I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Your testimonies are my meditation.

I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Your precepts.

I have restrained my feet from every way, that I may keep Your word.

I have not departed from Your judgments, for You Yourself have taught me.”

119:99-102

- How important are knowing and understanding the biblical ‘**testimonies**’ (*OT histories & NT gospels*), plus obedience to the basic biblical **precepts** (*spiritual and moral standards of the 10 Commandments*) to living a **separated godly life** (*3rd line above*) and being steadfast in your faith (*4th line above*)?
- What difference do you suppose this made in the way David governed as king?
- What difference will it make in your various roles at home, on the job and in church, etc?

God’s Legacy – You’ve Got to Laud It!

How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!

Through Your precepts I get understanding; therefore, I hate every false way.”

119:103-104

A great legacy to leave is that you loved the right things, but also loathed wrong things.

- Discuss the way Bible study over time becomes **sweet** to your heart.
- Conversely, how does Bible study over time, cause your heart to see sin and wickedness as **sour**?
- Do you hate sin more and more as you grow in grace?
- What’s the correlation between Bible study and hating evil?
- What are the pros and cons of **hating every false way**?