

Jesus, His Childhood

The Importance of Knowing Scripture

Lesson 2

Introduction

Jesus grew up in a home where his parents and relatives were a godly influence upon Him. They lived out the *Shema*; "*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.*"

Deuteronomy 6:4 - 6

Jesus' Childhood Teaching

Jewish culture began teaching children at age three. The earliest teaching was done by the mother, through songs, prayers and stories. The formal teaching of the Torah (Genesis - Deuteronomy) began at age six by the father and at synagogue school. The sons were to learn and memorize the Torah while the daughters learned God's ways of Torah but focused on the Psalms and Proverbs. God was clear in both instruction and why it was important to know His Word through study, memorization and obedience.

1. How often were parents to teach their children God's Laws? (Deuteronomy 11:19)
2. What was God's reason for teaching children when they are young? (Proverbs 22:6)
3. How was God's Word to be applied when making decisions? (Deuteronomy 17:11)
4. What was one of the warnings for not following God's Word? (Deuteronomy 20:18)
5. Knowing God's Word is the first step; also required is obedience to God's truth. How was and is that possible? (Psalms 143:10)
6. Mary and Joseph followed God's Laws when it came to their son Jesus. What is recorded about Jesus' childhood and wisdom that came from knowing God's Word? (Luke 2:39,40)

7. The story of Jesus' early childhood as recorded in Luke 2, reminds the reader that Mary and Joseph did know and obey God's Law. They were faithful to teach Jesus the truth of His Word. In the New Testament, a young man named Timothy was raised in a household where his father, a Greek, was unable to teach him God's Word. How did Timothy come to know God's Word? (2 Timothy 1:5)

8. Why is the study of God's Word as important to adults as to children? (Joshua 1:8, 9)

Reflect

9. When you study and obey God's Word it will become a delight to your soul. According to the following verses, what will be the effect on your life?
 - Psalm 1:1-3

 - Psalm 119:9-11

 - Psalm 119:105

Putting Feet to Knowing Scripture

- To be a follower of Jesus requires knowing and obeying God's Word. Because this is a personal relationship with God, daily reading, studying, praying and applying of God's truths will keep you growing in faith.
- If you are not already in a study learning on a daily basis, then ask the Lord to direct you to one that teaches His Word, preferably in culture and in context.
- Daily ask His Spirit to give you strength, for that day, to live a life of obedience.
- Included with this lesson are instructions on how to study God's Word on your own.

How do I Study God's Word (The Bible)?

There are many methods and you will find materials at your church, online or at your local Bible bookstore. In the Word, Bible Study Fellowship, Community Bible Study or Kay Arthur's Precepts are all comprehensive studies. Some excellent home study materials are published by Campus Crusade for Christ, Inter Varsity Press, Navigators and many more. Since my passion is teaching "In the Word", (which you can find on-line at www.InTheWordStudies.com) I will give some suggestions to get you started.

Going In-depth

Begin each session with prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to clarify and give understanding of what you are about to read and how to apply it in your life today.

Context

1. First reading: Begin by reading the entire book (or passage) in one sitting, looking for overall context. It is easy to pull out one or two verses and "make them fit" a certain situation, but it is important to understand the original, intended context. That is what you are searching for first.
2. Second reading: This time, read paragraph by paragraph and write in a notebook what you think each paragraph is saying, always keeping in mind the context. Ask yourself the five W's and H: who, what, when, where, why and how.

If you conclude your study here, go to #6 for application.

Deeper Study

3. Setting: Once you have a clear idea of what the book is about, take a closer look at the historical setting. If you have a Study Bible, there will be an introduction at the beginning of each book that gives background on the author, recipient, location, purpose, place and date of writing and characteristics. Read this to get a feel for the time, place and people.
4. Research: For those who wish to go deeper, begin with a word by word look at the book, cross reference and look up in a Bible dictionary anything you do not understand or want more information about; (i.e., setting of the book – read about the ancient culture to understand what that city or place was like, looking for customs, importance, terrain and climate; main character – using a concordance, find all Biblical reference to that individual to learn all you can; word search – do a study on any words that are key such as "peace," "grace," "sanctification," etc. by using the Bible dictionary and concordance.)
5. Final reading: Re-read the passage and ask, "what does it say to me now?" You'll be amazed at how much more you will understand.

6. Application: Wherever you decide to end your study, conclude with “so, what” does it say to me? Every book in the Bible is a love letter from God to you. Through His Word, God reveals Himself and with the help of the Holy Spirit, helps to guide you in your daily life.

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you determine:

- What it is saying to me?
- What action does God require from me?

Basic Requirements for Bible Study

The most basic requirement is a good readable *translation* of the Bible. A translation is important because it has been transcribed from the most original documents available versus a paraphrase which typically is not.

I do not recommend Application Bibles *for this type of study* but I do recommend a Study Bible which includes reference material such as notes and background for each book, maps, a concordance and cross references.

Some good translations include:

- ESV English Standard Version
- NASB New American Standard Bible
- NIV New International Version
- NKJV New King James Version
- NLT New Living Translation
- RSV Revised Standard Version

Bible Commentary and Dictionary

- *The Essential Bible Companion* by John H. Walton, Mark L. Strauss and Ted Cooper Jr. published by Zondervan gives an overview of each book of the Bible with maps, themes, timelines, key people and terms explained in a way to help in correct understanding.
- *Unger's Bible Dictionary* by Moody Press
- *Zondervan's Pictorial Bible Dictionary* edited by Merrill C. Tenney, by Zondervan

Personal Notebook

Any type will do as long as you can keep it together.

Other Resources

- *How to Read the Bible in Changing Times* by Dr. Mark L. Strauss
- *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* by Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart