

A Must-Have Bible Study Tool

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As Christians, we all recognize the importance of Bible study. To help us in our study of God's Word, we acquire tools necessary for the task: commentaries, word study books, a computer program, or other types of reference materials. All of these can be very helpful in our effort to better understand the Scriptures. However, there is one "tool" that is essential to every Christian's study resources: We must all have a receptive heart.

You can build a wonderful library of useful resources, take classes on Greek and/or Hebrew, and have advanced computer programs. But, if you do not have a receptive heart to the things which you study, you will merely acquire information. To be truly effective in our study we must seek not only information. We must turn the information into application. Listen to how James described what we are talking about:

But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does (James 1:22–25).

James says, if we are not doing what we read in the Word, we are deceiving ourselves. We become like the individual who purchases a prescription to feel better, but refuses to take the medicine. The medicine will do him no good if it stays in the bottle, and it is not taken. So it is with the Word of God. For us to be effective as Christians, we must put the Scriptures to work. This is one of the principles in the familiar Parable of the Sower. Only the seed that was properly received in the heart bore fruit (Matt. 13:23).

Bible study can be very rewarding. However, it will be rewarding and profitable if we will make sure our heart is receptive to the truths we study (cf. Acts 17:11).