

Valley Bible Church Practical Studies

HOW TO USE THESE STUDIES

PERSONAL STUDY OF GOD'S WORD

These studies of Scripture provide a helpful tool for personal devotions. The questions which accompany each passage are designed to help the reader consider not only the content but also the application of the Word. This benefits the believer in becoming not just a hearer but also an effectual doer of the Word, a practice which is blessed by God (James 1.25). This dimension of the Christian walk results in a relationship with the Lord which is alive and growing.

PUT OFF SIN / PUT ON RIGHTEOUSNESS

The Word is God's chosen tool to sanctify us as believers (John 17.17). It is His created instrument to set us apart from the world and to Him. Sanctification is the occupation of the follower of Christ from the moment of salvation until the day we see Him face to face. Victory over sin is God's plan for His children (1 John 5.3-5). These studies are designed to assist Christians in using the Bible to change in a Godward direction, to put off sin and put on righteousness in its place. They allow the reader to wrestle with the truth, to realize what change is required as well as the great hope that by God's grace it can occur.

COUNSELING

These studies were developed by a biblical counselor for use in helping believers change life patterns which oppose God. Since the Word is God's gift to His own to enable us to be equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3.16-17), it must be the focal point of counseling those who are hurting, weak, or in sin. This format supplies questions for the counselor to cover with the counselee. Sometimes the answers are a springboard to deeper discussion of how the Word and the counselee's life intersect. Always the Holy Spirit is involved in using the Word to speak truth to the heart of the one who is being served.

TEACHING

So often the struggle in preparing to teach the Word is trying to present the truth in a practical way. Communicating at the heart level, to best facilitate growth in the lives of those to whom we minister, can be difficult. These studies can be helpful for Bible study or Sunday School teachers as a resource for questions which will enable application. The benefit is that your group may be strengthened in putting the Word of God into practice in their lives. Their hunger for becoming more like Christ may be intensified and fed.

DISCIPLESHIP

A great blessing in ministry is the time when the Lord brings a new or immature believer into your care for discipleship. These studies may aid the discipler in teaching relevant truths, helping the disciple learn to study the Word, creating a right biblical view of change, and also in facilitating discussion of life issues under the light of Scripture. The purpose of these studies is to strengthen believers in using the Word to become more like Christ; this is the significant need of the young Christian.

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FAMILY

When used in the home, these studies may help the Word of God come alive. It is so important for our children to regard the Scriptures not as dry facts but as the living, life-changing tool of change in our lives. The act of covering passages together in this format also supplies parents with the opportunity to show an example of how a believer responds to the Word in relation to sin in his or her own life. As the parents discuss application of the Truth in their own lives and have subsequent victory over sin, children are encouraged. They at once see faith in action, the reality of the power of God's Word, and may view their parents not as perfect but as sinners with answers.

SCHOOL

In Christian schools, whether they feature large classrooms or whether they are home schools, the focal point is the Bible. The Word of God is taught. The Word of God is the final authority for thought and action. In such settings, how essential it is for the children to learn that this wonderful document is not words on a page, but living and active: able to judge the intentions of the heart and also able to strengthen them to keep their way pure. They must experience the Word as the life-changing companion God intends it to be for all believers. These studies are designed to help you, the teachers, in these pursuits.