

LESSON

1 Benefits of Bible Study

Many years ago a ship captain anchored his boat in the harbor of a lovely South Pacific island. He had heard that the people, who were formerly cannibals, were now very friendly and interested in trade.

As the captain talked with the island chief, he noticed a large Bible in the chief's hands. The captain laughed a little and said to the chief, "Surely you don't believe in that old book. It's out of date and no good to anyone."

The chief glanced at the strong warriors who stood around him and then turned to the captain. "Captain," he replied slowly, "you may think this Book is of little benefit. What you don't know is that it is benefiting you. If it were not for this Book that has changed our lives, you would be in our cooking pot right now!"

When you study the Bible, it will affect your life and the lives of others. The captain of this story benefited because someone else had read the Bible and applied its principles. In this lesson, you will learn how to benefit from studying the Bible.

The Plan

- A. Why Study the Bible?
- B. What Are Some Benefits?

The Goals

1. Identify reasons studying the Bible is a privilege.
2. Show how the Bible helps a believer grow.
3. Explain the importance of studying God's Word regularly.
4. List eight benefits of sincere Bible study.

A. WHY STUDY THE BIBLE?

There are many reasons everyone should study the Bible. Let us look at three: 1) it is a privilege, 2) it is a way to grow spiritually, and 3) it is a method of learning God's plan for us.

A Privilege

Goal 1. Identify reasons studying the Bible is a privilege.

One day my friends Don and Barb received a special letter containing an invitation to meet Princess Anne of England. Just to have received the letter from someone so important was a privilege, but what the letter offered them was an even greater privilege—the opportunity to meet royalty!

You and I have also received an important letter, a personal message to us from someone much greater than any earthly king—from God himself. Even more important than receiving this letter and being able to read it, is the invitation it gives us. In the letter, which we call the Bible, God invites us to be His children and to live with Him forever. He tells us we can be His children by accepting His Son Jesus Christ as our personal Savior. Isn't it a wonderful privilege to learn about God and His promises through the study of the Bible?

Application

1 Draw a circle around the letter that best completes the statement. One of the greatest privileges a person can have is to receive a personal message from

- a) the president of his or her country.
- b) his or her best friend.
- c) God.

2 Which of the following statements tell us why Bible study is a privilege? Circle the letters of the correct answers.

- a) It is a personal letter from God to each of His children.
- b) God wants to tell you things about yourself and about himself.
- c) Your study guide author says it is; therefore, it is.

Check your answers with those at the end of this lesson.

A Way to Grow

Goal 2. Show how the Bible helps a believer grow.

To be physically healthy and normal, children must eat the right foods essential to that growth. As God's children, we must also grow spiritually. In 2 Peter 3:18, we read, "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." Our spiritual food is the Bible. As we study it, we get to know our Savior Jesus Christ better. This knowledge helps us become strong Christians "until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants" (Ephesians 4:13–14).

Application

- 3** Choose the two answers that best complete this sentence. Studying the Bible helps a believer grow because
- a)** he or she receives spiritual food.
 - b)** he or she learns more about Jesus Christ.
 - c)** the knowledge will make him or her important in the church.
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Memorize the following verses so you can repeat them as a promise to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Praise be to you, O Lord; teach me your decrees. I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word. (Psalm 119:12, 15–16)

A Method of Learning God's Plan for Us

Goal 3. Explain the importance of studying God's Word regularly.

A few years ago, a friend of mine was not feeling well. She was sick physically and feeling sad. Then she received a letter from the young man who was to become her husband. He encouraged her and told her he loved her and was coming to marry her. How quickly she recovered after receiving a letter from someone who cared deeply.

The Bible tells us of God's love for us. In it God gives us instructions on how to live, and promises that someday we will live with Him for eternity. If we are sad, sick, or ailing in any other way, we can go to God's personal message and read of His plans for us.

In studying the Bible, we not only learn of God's plans for our future but also of His promises for the present. We will study some of these promises in the next section.

Application

4 (Circle the letter before each correct completion of the sentence.) It is important to learn God’s plan for us because it

- a)** contains His promises for us.
- b)** offers hope and encouragement.
- c)** shows how worthless we are.
- d)** reveals God’s love for us.
- e)** gives direction to our lives.

5 In your notebook, write the verses you learned from Psalm 119. Say them as a prayer, and thank the Lord for His Word.

B. WHAT ARE SOME BENEFITS?

Goal 4. List eight benefits of sincere Bible study.

A benefit is something helpful to you. We will choose eight of the many benefits we receive from Bible study and use the letters of the word *BENEFITS* to help us remember them.

Bread for the soul

Enjoyment

Nearness of God

Encouragement

Foundation

Inspiration

Truth

Security

B—*Bread for the Soul*

The Bible is the food that keeps our souls alive. As we read it daily we receive health and strength for both soul and body. Jesus said, “Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4).

E—*Enjoyment*

Just as we experience joy in reading good news about those we love, we can feel joy in reading the good news of God's love for us. Even His instructions bring us joy because we know they are for our good. Psalm 119:111 says, "Your statutes are my heritage forever; they are the joy of my heart."

N—*Nearness of God*

We feel the nearness of God when we read His Word. He is there and speaks to us personally. This is one of the greatest benefits we could ever imagine.

E—*Encouragement*

God's Word is full of encouragement for us. He shows us examples of His loving care and promises to take care of us. In the book of Peter is a wonderful verse: "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7).

F—*Foundation*

A foundation is what something is built on. Jesus said His Word is a safe foundation for what we believe and how we live. Those who do not believe and study the Bible are like a house without a foundation.

I—*Inspiration*

Through His Word, God inspires faith for salvation, hope for our future, and love for others. Inspiration is an influence that leads us to good ideas or actions. Many poets, musicians, and artists have received their inspiration from the Bible. The Bible has given them ideas for creating various art forms.

T—*Truth*

The truth we find in the Bible answers our most important questions, giving us the meaning and purpose of life. It frees us from ignorance and error. "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32).

S—*Security*

Security not only means safety; it also means provision for the future. We find real security in God's Word as it guides us to

safety in Christ and to our eternal home in heaven. God's Word is our sword and shield against sin and Satan—our spiritual weapon—if we study and apply it regularly.

Application

6 In your notebook, write from memory the eight benefits of sincere Bible study we have listed. Can you add others that have come to your mind as you have read your Bible?

7 Write in front of the description on the left the number of the benefit it matches.

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|--|-----------------------|
| ... a) It is food that strengthens us. | 1) Security |
| ... b) God is always with us. | 2) Truth |
| ... c) God cares for us. | 3) Inspiration |
| ... d) The Bible's good news brings joy. | 4) Foundation |
| ... e) Our lives are built on God's Word. | 5) Encouragement |
| ... f) We are safe now and in the future. | 6) Nearness of God |
| ... g) We receive good ideas and act on them. | 7) Enjoyment |
| ... h) It brings us freedom from error and ignorance. | 8) Bread for the soul |



Check Your Answers

The answers to your study exercises are not given in the usual order, so you will not see the answer to your next question ahead of time. Look for the number you need, and try not to look ahead.

- 1 c)** God.
- 5** I hope you have memorized these verses and that they will be your prayer many times.
- 2 a)** It is a personal letter from God to each of His children.
b) God wants to tell you things about yourself and about himself.
- 6** Bread for the soul
 Enjoyment
 Nearness of God
 Encouragement
 Foundation
 Inspiration
 Truth
 Security
- (You could add other benefits that have been mentioned in this lesson such as love, hope, spiritual growth, and eternal life.)
- 3 a)** he or she receives spiritual food.
b) he or she learns more about Jesus Christ.
- 7 a)** 8) Bread for the soul
b) 6) Nearness of God
c) 5) Encouragement
d) 7) Enjoyment
e) 4) Foundation
f) 1) Security
g) 3) Inspiration
h) 2) Truth

- 4** **a)** contains His promises for us.
b) offers hope and encouragement.
d) reveals God's love for us.
e) gives direction to our lives.

