

Research Notes:

SUGGESTIONS FOR BIBLE STUDY TOPICS

(for individuals, families and groups)

Version 3.1



"As a general rule the most successful man in life is the man who has the best information."

- Benjamin Disraeli (1804 - 1881)

Introductory Remarks

Below is a list of some subjects one could study. I wrote up the original list 12-18 years ago in response to the watering-down of God's Word.

I am of the view that we need to have a close relationship with God based on His Word which defines His will. We need to understand His mind and way of thinking as revealed throughout Scripture in a plethora of subjects. We need to be thoroughly involved with God's Word, talk about it and be interested in it. Just living by its principles is not enough – it must also be discussed – that way it becomes inculcated within us - and by exercising our minds thereby, we are also able to answer questions and defend our beliefs.

We cannot rest on our laurels, thinking that if we abide by the Sabbath and Holy Days then that is all there is to it. For one may indeed observe the Sabbath and Holy Days but accept political correctness for example. One can reject much of God's revealed truth while observing the Sabbath. In other words, Sabbath-observance is just not enough.

Now notice: Godly knowledge builds up; worldly knowledge puffs up. As God's inspired, holy Word states:

“How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? ... For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD” (Prov 1:22, 29)

“They who lack talent expect things to happen without effort. They ascribe failure to a lack of inspiration or ability, or to misfortune, rather than to insufficient application. At the core of every true talent there is an awareness of the difficulties inherent in any achievement, and the confidence that by persistence and patience something worthwhile will be realized. Thus talent is a species of vigor.” - Eric Hoffer

“Books are the open avenues down which, like kings coming to be crowned, great ideas and inspirations move to the abbey of man's soul. There are some people still left who understand perfectly what Fenelon meant when he said, "If the crowns of all the kingdoms of the empire were laid down at my feet in exchange for my books and my love of reading, I would spurn them all.”” - Ernest Dressel North

Constantly being down on people while elevating the self leads to discouragement:

“We live by encouragement and die without it - slowly, sadly, angrily.” - Celeste Holm

“The great composer...does not set to work because he is inspired, but becomes inspired because he is working. Beethoven, Wagner, Bach, and Mozart settled down day after day to the job in hand with as much regularity as an accountant settles down each day to his figures. They didn’t waste time waiting for inspiration.” - Ernest Newman

“The miracle is this - the more we share, the more we have.” - Leonard Nimoy

Notice also what Herbert W Armstrong wrote in *The Autobiography* (volume 1, chapter 2, “Learning Important Lessons”) about education and learning:

“It was late December, 1910. Now the big question came: should I stay in school, and take courses in advertising and journalism in college or university?

“Well, Herbert,” he counselled, “that depends on you and how much ambition and drive you have. It happens that no college or university in the country has yet offered a course in this profession that is worth a plug nickel.

“Now I know,” he continued, “that nearly everybody has the delusion that an education is something you get at school -- and higher education at the university. It's like going to a hardware store or department store to purchase a lawn mower. People seem to have the idea that an education is something they have all wrapped up at the university, ready to hand it over to you when you buy it by paying the tuition. But it has always seemed to me that traipsing across the door-sill of a college classroom, or sitting in an arm-chair, is not putting an education into your mind. **Education comes from study -- from books -- from lectures -- from contacts -- from travel -- from thinking about what you see and hear and read -- and from experience.**

“The reason we have to maintain schools and universities is simply that most people are too lazy -- most lack the ambition and persistence, the drive -- to procure an education outside of schools and colleges. Most people must have someone do their thinking and planning for them, assign lessons and homework, and force students to study and learn by a system of rewards and punishments in the form of grades, and finally, a sheepskin with a degree.”

Finally, the list below is only a small, representative list of what should be covered.



List of Suggested Studies

Angel of the Lord, YHVH, Melchizedek	
Angels, Demons, Lucifer	Their state and fate
Beatitudes	
Bible Economics (Usury, Year of Release and Jubilee Year)	Even if we cannot keep these laws, we must still teach them for we will be implementing them in the Millennium. They also tell us about God's mind and thinking – His way of life
Christian attitude to Government	Eg voting, jury service, military service
Church Eras and history of True Church	
Coming European Beast Power	
Crime and punishment	Different punishments for different crimes (eg capital punishment)
Fasting and meditation	
Fruit of the Spirit	
Gambling, lotteries	
Gifts of the Spirit	What is your gift? Can you identify it?
Health	Clean and unclean meats; Biblical healthy eating and living
How to keep the Sabbath	
How to study the Bible	
How to understand Prophecy (eg duality)	
Identity of each of the 12 tribes (Gen 49)	
Identity of the RCC with the Babylonian Mystery Religion	The whore of Babylon is not eastern religions
Land Sabbaths	
Law & Grace	
Laying on of hands	
Letter and spirit of the Law	
Lev 19:19	
Male-female roles and relationships	
Mixed Fabrics	
Nature and character of God	
Nimrod	Who is he and what did he do wrong?
O.T. Types	eg sacrifices, colours, Tabernacle, Temple etc. Books such as 'Study of the Types', 'Dictionary of Biblical Imagery' are very useful.
Old Testament Laws	Many laws are seldom touched upon. Let us explore them and see how they are appropriate in today's world

Origins of the Nations (Gen 10)	Descendants of Ham, Japheth, Shem. Race relations
Pagan origins of various practices	Occult, wizards, cremation, eastern medicines, acting profession, lotteries, gambling, yoga
Plan of God in 7 stages	
Prayer	How to pray, when to pray, types of prayer etc
Sabbath is from sunset to sunset	
Sacred Calendar	How it is governed by New Moons, 19 year cycles etc. Also their typological meaning
Significance of names, numbers and colours, the post-exilic types cycles (7, 12, 19, 50 etc)	
Structure and hierarchy of Church Government	
Structure of the Bible	
Temple of Ezekiel in tomorrow's world	
The 1260, 1290, 1335 & 2300 days	
The Church of God in Old Testament Prophecy	
The impact of political correctness upon the Church today	Feminism, homosexuality, abortion, euthanasia, stem cell research etc
Third Tithe	For the poor, not from the poor
Time of crucifixion and resurrection - before sunset	
Vows & Oaths	
Way of Escape/Place of Safety	
What will you be like in the resurrection?	
When was Christ born?	

APPENDIX ONE

"Talk About the Bible when you visit one another!"

By Herman L. Hoeh

Dr Hoeh wrote the following in the January 1962 *Good News* magazine:

Hundreds of you brethren still have no local church. Yet you can and do visit one another.

We have never said you must not talk about the Bible unless a minister is present [alas, some ministers to this day say this and have added rules and regulations on a host of issues that HWA never approved, but invoked his name]. We have said you should not assemble as a local group for Bible study and teach each other without a minister.

If the Bible isn't something you should ever talk about, why talk at all? Why visit brethren, if you cannot talk about the very Book that tells you how to be brethren?

Why, the very reason you should want to be with brethren, instead of the world, is that you can discuss the Bible and spiritual topics. **If you cannot talk about the Bible with each other, then you are no different from the world!** The one thing that makes the people around you worldly is that they have nothing else to talk about except material things and other people! The one thing that ought to make your conversation different from the world is that you can talk about God and His Word!

If your brethren are feeling downcast ... inspire them by your experiences -- what God has done for and through you -- and turn to the Bible and read Bible examples of what God did and has promised still to do for us today.

The Sabbath ... is a day for us to study and pray, read and meditate on the Bible in private communion with God, or together wherever there is a local church of God. Yet some brethren carelessly have acquired the habit of visiting on the Sabbath without talking about the Bible. Shame on you!

God expressly forbids us to speak our own words -- worldly, material conversation -- on His Holy Sabbath. Isaiah was inspired to write: '...call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; ...honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, NOR SPEAKING THINE OWN WORDS' (Isa.58:13). The Sabbath is the only day we especially ought to speak of, and talk about, God's words -- the Bible.

At times some have even made the Sabbath a burden and not a delight by spending most of their time at the homes of brethren instead of praying and reading and studying their Bible in their own home. **The Sabbath is not a day for social fellowship -- it is a day for personal spiritual fellowship -- it is a day for personal spiritual fellowship with God in Heaven, and with Christ.** Our spiritual fellowship with one another is always through Christ. Most of our time needs to be spent with Him, in prayer, in reading and studying His Word. Then, if time permits, it is encouraging to visit on the Sabbath for a little while those brethren who are elderly, or afflicted, or who have no other spiritual contact because of unconverted relatives and family. Read the Bible to them or the [Church's] magazines if they are unable to read.

Finally, brethren, remember this: you can and should open your Bible and read verses about a subject that might come up in your conversation. How else are you going to know exactly what God says about any problem?

If you are not sure about it, you have the *Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course*, *The Good News* and *The Plain Truth* and the booklets to check up in.

APPENDIX TWO

Teacher, Teacher

By Robert Berendt

<http://vcmagazine.org/vcm/article.asp?volume=8&issue=8&article=teacher>

Ultimately, we are all teachers. How can we become good teachers who inspire our “students” to great things?

EACHING PLAYS A PART in every aspect of our lives, from learning to tie our shoes to finding the purpose of our lives. Our Creator tells us He has developed a plan for mankind includes us learning about Him and His ways. To help, He has placed a wonderful gift in His Church—teachers (Ephesians 4:11).

The Bible speaks of false teachers as well as teachers of good things. False teachers have caused much pain and suffering for mankind and good teachers have done the opposite. In a way, we are all teachers. The only question is: Are we beloved and cherished teachers of good—or teachers of falsehoods?

Teachers—good and bad

Jesus Christ placed a heavy responsibility upon His disciples to teach the people of God good things (John 21:15-17). That responsibility continues today.

Parents with a child in school rejoice when their child has a “good teacher.” A bad teacher can turn a student off for life. I taught chemistry and mathematics. When I found a student who said, “I can’t do math,” I tried to find out what experiences he or she had with teachers.

A good teacher will be able to reflect a love for learning to his students and will set a positive example, creating a desire to learn in students. A poor teacher can remove all the excitement, joy and potential a student may have.

In Matthew 5:19 Jesus states whoever *does* and *teaches* the commandments will be great in the Kingdom. Those are two qualifications of a good teacher—to believe and live by what he teaches. A good teacher must be a good example to the student. He, too, must be a student, and he must have a zeal and hunger for the things he teaches. He must recognize the value of what he is passing on to the students.

It has been said “a picture is worth a thousand words,” and “I would rather see a sermon than hear one.” These kinds of expressions reflect the need for a teacher to be true to his profession and to be honest and trustworthy in all things. Such a teacher is of great value. Paul warned Timothy about people “desiring to be teachers of the law” who do not understand what they say (1 Timothy 1:7). Those are poor teachers.

In Mark 10:17 Jesus was called “good Teacher.” **Those who genuinely wanted to learn were met with a warm and quick response.** Luke 11:1 relates the request of the disciples that Jesus should teach them to pray. These were fervent Jewish men. One would think they ought to know how to pray. **But Jesus gladly taught them with no criticism.**

He was a good teacher because He loved to teach and **fully believed in the things He taught.** He knew life would be much, much better for those who listened to Him, and He was dedicated to making their lives better. The tale of Martha and Mary reveals both a teacher who is loved and a student who thrills at the teaching that is given (Luke 10:38-42).

Heavy responsibility

A teacher can have a strong influence on young minds and on all who listen. When it comes to spiritual teachings, there is a heavy responsibility we all ought to recognize. James said, “Let not many

of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment” (James 3:1). He was referring to those who purported to teach the Word of God.

In a sense all of God’s followers are teachers, if not by word, then by deeds. People expect when a person calls himself Christian, he or she will uphold a certain standard. Some who “ought to be teachers” need to learn the basics once again because they have become dull of hearing (Hebrews 5:12).

A good teacher is one who is also constantly learning. He is a good student as well as a teacher. It is by the consistent choice of living by our principles and upholding that which is noble and of value that we learn to discern both good and evil—and choose the good. We can trust in such a person.

Parents are teachers too

In an article I read recently, Charles Spurgeon told Christian parents: “Oh, fathers and mothers, the ruin of your children, or their salvation, will, under God, very much depend on you.”

It is true, our first and most important teachers are our parents. The responsibility for teaching God’s Word by our deeds as well as by our speech certainly is required of all parents by God. He has entrusted the baby’s mind to its parents, and designed us so that parents have a deep and fervent love for their children.

It is a little too strong to state that the child’s salvation depends on the parents, but it is correct to acknowledge the *work of the parents has much to do with the mind-set and habits that their children form*. Parents are the ones who ought to teach children to be obedient, patient, inquisitive and respectful.

Parents do differ in ability to teach, and thus each child will have a unique outlook on life. God does understand this and He takes upon Himself the ultimate and full responsibility for the salvation of each person. Even a child from a dysfunctional family will be loved and cared for by God. When the Bible says He wants “all” men to be saved, He means *all* (1 Timothy 2:4). He is the most perfect Parent of all—that is why we address Him as Father.

For more about the parents’ role in teaching their children, request our free booklet *Marriage and Family: The Missing Dimension*.

Qualities of a good teacher

A good teacher will have some qualities setting him or her apart from those who cannot teach effectively. Such things as a good command of the language and ability to communicate effectively are paramount. We also expect the teacher to have a wealth of knowledge and to be able to impart that to us. We look for patience and sincerity in a teacher.

A teacher who loves to teach and **loves to see progress and growth of knowledge in a student is readily appreciated**. A good teacher is one who will be respected and trusted because he teaches respect and trust.

We can ruin much good through one foolish mistake or slip. Therefore, a teacher recognizes he teaches by his life as well as by his words. **He will be seeking ways to better reach his students and always have their best interests at heart. This kind of a teacher will rejoice in the success of his pupils.**

David expressed his need in Psalm 25:4-5 when he wrote, “Teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me...” God is the greatest teacher, and we can totally rely on Him. He teaches through His Holy Spirit, which inspired His Word in Holy Scripture, and through human teachers. Ephesians 4:11 states God “gave” some to be teachers—it’s a gift from Him.

We are all teachers in some form or another—let us become good ones!

APPENDIX THREE

The Knowledge of God and Jesus Christ

While technology expands exponentially, the kind of knowledge we urgently need to survive ebbs and wanes.

by John Ross Schroeder

http://www.wnponline.org/wnp/wnp0609/dontknow_knowledge.htm

Many passages in the Bible make it clear that knowledge of and about God the Father and Jesus Christ is intensely important. For example, the apostle Peter emphasizes this particular theme in his second New Testament letter.

The introduction to Simon Peter's second general epistle states: "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ our Lord" (2 Peter 1:2). The next passage talks about "the knowledge of Him who called us" (verse 3). Other Scriptures show us that it is the Father who does the calling of the firstfruits into the Church (John 6:44, 65), "as many as the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:39).

Adding true knowledge should be a spiritual pursuit of every Christian (2 Peter 1:5). If we grow substantially in the qualities of faith, virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love, then we will be "neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (verse 8).

Not only does Peter urge Christians to add knowledge to their spiritual armor, he also reminds them of the importance of the true knowledge that they already have (verses 12-13).

The firstfruits who have escaped from worldly pollutions and defilements have done so "through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 2:20). In his conclusion, Peter gives us a warning about twisting the truth of God (2 Peter 3:16). "You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked" (verse 17).

Then in the closing verse Peter concludes with the positive admonition to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (verse 18). Reading and studying the four Gospel accounts would be a good start. *WNP*

