

Crazy Church
Calvary Revival Church-Norfolk
CLI Seminar

Embracing Life: The Treasures of “the Good Book”
Dr. Antipas L. Harris, S.T.M., M.Div.

Introduction

Objectives: When we leave this session, we will...

- Be encouraged to study the Bible more.
- Discover that biblical treasures are not hidden from ordinary Christians; they are hidden for us.
- Discover tools to access treasures of the Good Book for everyday living.

Goals: This seminar aims to...

- Motivate believers to study the Bible through explaining why we should study it.
- Explain guidelines: practical tips on how to study the Bible.
- Offer accessible aids for Bible study

What is in Our Bible

Hebrew Bible/Tanakah or Old Testament has 39 books

- The Law (Heb. Torah) 5 books
- The Prophets (Heb. Nevi'im) 17 books
- The Writings (poetry) (Heb. Kethuvi'im) 17 books

New Testament of 27 books

- The Gospels & Acts 5 books
- Letters 21 books
- Prophecy 1 book

I. Why would one refer to the Bible as “The Good Book?”

- Though it has history in it, it is not a mere history book.
- Though it is literary, it is not mere literature.
- Though people argue over what it says, it remains sound and true.
- The Bible is a theological book. (Gr. Theos logos = study of God)
- It contains “the Good News” that God loves you and me.

- “The Good Book” reveals a compass for everyday living
- “The Good Book” locates the seasons of our lives

II. Why should we study the Bible?

- To ignite hope
 - Romans 15:4: “For whatever was written in earlier times (Hebrew Bible) was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.” (New American Standard Bible)
- To learn about God
- To know where we go wrong
- To correct our wrong doing
- For training to help us grow in the righteousness of God
 - Ref. 2 Timothy 3:16: “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness.” (New American Standard Bible)

III. How we might consider Studying the Bible?

- Read the text
- Re-read the text
- Read the text aloud
- What emerges from the text?
 - Gr. Exegesis (getting the information out of the text—interpreting the text)
 - Gr. Eisegesis (reading information into the text—misinterpreting the text)
- What else is alongside the TEXT?
 - “CONTEXT”
 - Textual context
 - Historical context
- Facts About The Bible
 - This collection was written over a span of approximately 1,600 years.
 - How many books are there in the Bible?
 - 39 books in the Old Testament
 - 27 books in the New Testament

III. How to Study the Bible (cont'd.)

Questions to ponder for Bible Study:

- When was this particular book written?
- Does the book tell us who wrote it?
- Where was this particular book written?
- Why was this book written when it was written?
- What is God communicating to me through this passage?

IV. Keys for enriching our study

- Pray before you read the Good Book.
- Pray while you read the Good Book.
- Do not start with study aids. Read what is there first.
- Let the Good Book speak to you.
- Try to lay aside everything you have heard about the Good Book and listen for what is there.
- God will speak through the pages of the Good Book. Listen for God as you read.
- Try reading audibly and reading silently.
- Try listening to someone else read to you.
- Try to lay aside what you have heard and listen to what the text is saying, even if you don't understand it fully.
- Memorize scripture in small increments and increase the length of passages over time.
- Rehearse the passages to yourself throughout the day.
- God will speak through the pages of the Good Book.

V. Tools to aid in our study

- Trust the text to speak first
- Bible study aids that might help us enter into the world of the contexts:
 - Bible Commentaries
 - Bible Dictionaries
 - Biblical Language lexicons
 - Affordable Bible software
- Caution: Be prayerful and cautious when using the world-wide web as study tool.

VI. Study Aids that may be helpful in personal and group Bible studies

- How to Study Your Bible: The Lasting Rewards of the Inductive Method - Kay Arthur (available in the Discover Life Bookstore)
- How to Study the Bible for All its Worth, Gordon Fee
- Precepts for Living Personal Study Guide (Paperback), Vincent Bacote
- Precepts for Living: Urban Ministries International Annual Commentary, Mission Statement (Paperback), Vincent Bacote