

Study the Bible

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Romans 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

There is a lot of noise nowadays about education. We hear empty words about improving our educational system. But, what we have learned in the past 20 or 30 years is that our public school system has degenerated in its ability to give kids a better education. The one room school house of the 30's and 40's better equipped children to face the world, earn a living, and be literate than our current school system does. The reason? Government has intruded too much into the public school community and attempted to run the lives of teachers and students. They dictate to teachers what they must do, and as a result, government has downgraded our children's educational opportunities. So, nowadays a lot of high school graduates can't spell correctly, can't write clear essays, can't read, and can't do common math problems. Nowadays, many teachers are either totally exasperated by the failure to improve education in the classroom, or they have adopted the philosophy that kids don't have to know the so-called 3 Rs anymore. The outcome of all this has been to dump young adults out into the adult world who not only cannot read well, but don't want to read at all. So, this great door to enlightenment and mental growth is closed to many young people who don't see any reason to read more than a McDonald's menu, or the instructions on how to operate a cell phone.

Our text verse should teach us one thing, if it teaches nothing else. That is, the critical necessity for God's people to be able to study the bible. This is our subject. May the Holy Spirit open our hearts to it.

Note: what the apostle said (in our text) about the O.T. scripture, we can say about all of the bible today.

I. Scripture Written For Our Learning

- ❖ The word "learning" itself implies a teacher and a student
 - Learning demands a competent and trusted teacher and a proper body of information to teach
 - The teacher is the Holy Spirit using divine teaching techniques and using the text book of God - the Word of God
 - Technique 1- Preparing the student: (**Acts 16:14**) "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul."
 - Technique 2 - Teaching by divine wisdom: (**1Cor. 2:13**) "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."
 - Learning demands a pliable student...one who can be, and is willing to be, molded by the

teacher during the teaching process

- The new birth fulfills the “can be molded” part; what about the “is willing” part?
- The first commitment for the submissive student: (**Matt. 11:29**) “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me....”
- The second commitment: **2Tim. 2:15** “Study to shew thyself approved unto God....”
- The third commitment: **Col. 3:16** “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom....”

II. Purpose of the Learning: “... that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have **hope**” (Note: the hope spoken of in scripture is about having a steadfast confidence that joy, glory, honor, in eternal life awaits us at the end of the journey)

- ❖ Hope is the end goal of what learning scripture is all about in this lesson Paul writes about here. Learning the scripture provides **patience and comfort**. So, how does it work?
- ❖ **PATIENCE:**
 - Learning scripture builds patience: This rule can be summed up like this: the more we learn about the ways of the Lord, the promises of the Lord, the power of the Lord, the ultimate victory of the Lord over everything, the more patience we gain by which to endure the hard things of the world.
 - Paul stated it thus: (**2Tim. 1:12**) “...for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.”
 - Paul noted this about Timothy: (**2Tim. 3:15**) And that from a child thou hast known the **holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation** through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (“wise unto salvation” = what are all the different ways that salvation affects your life; all the ways God influences all things toward blessing His people and keeping them from evil, etc.)
 - Patience allows for experience and establishes hope: (**Rom. 5:3-4**) “...tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope:
 - Patience enables us to continue to do right in a wrong world
 - (Scripture promises honor and glory to faithful believers; listen how they are described: (**Rom. 2:7**) “To them who **by patient continuance** in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:” (notice that patient continuance is a kind of proof that believers have hope)
 - Patience keeps us from going off the deep end as a result of the terrors and trials of the world: **Luke 21:19** In your patience possess ye your souls. Why is that? Because patience (again) gives us experience regarding the fact that God always comes through for us and this enlarges our hope (steadfast confidence).
- ❖ **COMFORT** - Learning scripture gives comfort to believers
 - Have you ever wondered why the **23rd Psalm** is a favorite with a majority of believers? (Look at it)
 - The process of comfort is explained by David: **Psalms 119:49-50** “Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope. 50 This *is* my comfort in my affliction: **for thy word hath quickened me.**”
 - Learning scripture inspires confidence in the Lord; this enlivens us to the things of God

and that comforts us.

- Learning about the mercy of God gives us comfort: (**Psalms 119:76**) “Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort, according to thy word unto thy servant.”
- Learning scripture gives comfort because it is a proof that Christ is revealing Himself to you: The Holy Spirit is called the Comforter. Notice what Jesus said He would be doing for us: (**John 16:15**) “...he shall take of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.”