WHY SHOULD MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH ATTEND BIBLE CLASSES?

Sermon by Donald Townsley

INTRODUCTION

1. The scriptures authorize the local church to edify itself through teaching the Word of God -- Matt. 28: 18 - 20; I Tim. 3:15; Acts 20: 28, 32; Acts 20:20

2. One of the ways this can be done is with Bible Classes -- the general command to teach authorizes Bible classes -- Matt. 28: 19 - 20

3. The CHURCH has THREE CLASSES of individuals to teach:
   
   (1) The Church must teach ITS MEMBERS; edify and build them up in the truth of God -- Matt. 28:20; Acts 20:28; Eph. 4: 11 - 12
   
   (2) It must also teach the WORLD -- the alien sinner -- Matt. 28:19; Mk. 16: 15 - 16
   
   (3) CHILDREN must be taught.

I. THE PURPOSE OF BIBLE CLASSES

1. The central purpose of the Bible class is to teach the Word of God -- Acts 20:20; 20:27; I Tim. 1:3; I Pet. 4:11

2. The EMPHASIS must be put upon teaching the Word of God -- I Pet.2:2; II Pet. 1:5; Acts 5:42; II Tim. 4:2

3. The teachers in Bible classes must encourage a LOVE for Bible study -- Psa. 119: 127; 119:140; 119: 163; Psa. 119: 103

4. Some Christians study the Word through a sense of duty, not because they get any joy out of studying the Word -- Psa. 119:24; 119:14; 119:47

5. No teacher can inspire others to love the Word unless that teacher has learned to LOVE it -- II Thess. 2: 10

II. BIBLE CLASSES CAN CLASSIFY STUDENTS SO A BETTER JOB OF TEACHING CAN BE DONE.

1. There is "MILK" and "MEAT" IN the Word -- Heb. 5: 12 - 14; I Pet. 2:2; I Cor. 3:2
   
   (1) Some need milk to grow.
   
   (2 ) Some need meat.

2. There are different CLASSES of individuals to be taught -- Tit. 2: 1 - 6
   
   (1) Aged men and women
   
   (2) Young women and young men
   
   (3) Children
   
   1. AGE forms a good basis for classification of students -- this puts children together with the same mental development.

   3. We can do a better job of teaching by classifying the students.

III. WHY YOU SHOULD ATTEND THE BIBLE CLASSES

1. We need to attend Bible classes because it is a REWARDING privilege.
   
   (1) JOHN WYCLIFFE, 40 years after his death, bones were dug up and burned because he translated the whole Bible into the English language.
(2) JOHN HUS was killed for exalting the SCRIPTURES above tradition in the 11th Century.

1. There was a death penalty for reading an English translation.

(3) TODAY it is extremely difficult in some countries to meet and study the Bible.

(4) Here are some things one gains from Bible study in Bible classes:

1. Valuable information for the Soul -- Matt. 28:19 - 20; Psa. 119:98
2. One is provoked to do better -- Heb. 10:24
3. One is built up in the faith -- Acts 20:32; Jude 20; Rom. 10:17
4. Needed information on how to live and serve God better -- Matt. 28:20; Tit. 2: 11 - 12; II Pet. 1:3
6. Confirmation in the faith -- Rom. 10:17; Acts 14: 21 - 22

2. We need to attend Bible classes because they have been so effective in leading the lost to Christ.

(1) Many people have learned the truth in Bible classes.
(2) Some have said 85%.

3. We need to attend Bible classes because it is not an OPTIONAL MATTER.

(1) The flock (the church) is to be FED -- Acts 20:28
(2) This is one of the ways of feeding the flock.
(3) Elders have set this time to feed the flock and we should be there -- Acts 20:28

4. We need to attend Bible classes because of the EXAMPLE we are setting -- I Tim. 4:12; Matt. 5: 13 - 16

(1) The example of non-attending parents are setting before their children??
(2) The example to new converts -- I Pet. 2:2; II Pet. 3:18
(3) The example to the world.

5. We need to attend Bible Classes because of the stabilizing influence they have on the home.

6. We need to study the Bible because of the power that it has -- Rom. 1:16; Heb. 4:12

(1) To convict men of sin -- Acts 2:37; Tit. 1:9
(2) To produce faith -- Rom. 10:17; Heb. 11:6; John 20: 30 - 31
(3) To save -- James 1:21; I Pet. 1: 22
(4) To convert -- Psa. 19:7
(5) To cleanse -- John 15:7
(6) To sanctify -- John 17:17
(7) To make free -- John 8: 32
(8) To give understanding -- Psa. 119: 130; Eph. 3:3 - 5

7. We need to study the Bible because we will be judged by it -- John 12:48

8. We need to attend Bible Classes because of our influence and the contribution we can make.
CONCLUSION

1. Let us improve our Bible classes by each one doing his or her part.

2. Let us work on our attendance at the Bible study periods.

3. WHAT WE GAIN FROM BIBLE CLASSES:
   (1) We gain KNOWLEDGE -- II Pet. 1:5; Hos. 4:6; Matt. 28: 19 - 20
   (2) We have association with the best people -- I Cor. 15:33
   (3) We are EXHORTED TO DO BETTER -- Heb. 3: 12 - 13
   (4) We are PROVOKED "unto love and to good works" -- Heb. 10:24
   (5) We are EDIFIED or built up in the faith -- Acts 20: 32
   (6) We are WARNED OF FALSE DOCTRINE -- Col. 1: 28; I Tim. 4:6; Acts 20:31
   (7) We are CONFIRMED in the faith -- Acts 14:22

4. Are you here and out of Christ?

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