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*Humility is a realistic assessment of oneself;
pride is an unrealistic assessment.*

Chester A. McCalley

Interpreting Accurately _____

The Bible, the Eyes, and the Pen

These three elements are the fundamental factors in fruitful Bible study. The Bible is not intended to be owned, respected, and occasionally referred to. It is to be read, reread, carefully scrutinized, and memorized. It is the final and ultimate authority in matters of belief and practice. Let's consider these three elements.

The Bible

Lack of Bible study is appalling. There are many causes. In many homes family Bible reading is a thing of the past. Children, therefore, do not see the Bible as a spring of life and worthy of a lifetime of study. One would do well to list the activities of the week and ask, What time is left for reading the word of God? In your busy life, has Bible study been left out?

The Eyes

While the physical eyes are essential in the reading of the text, much more is involved. Physical sight and spiritual

Suggested Studies _____

Study in Romans

We'll be finishing up this month the book of Romans as our featured audio lessons from Chester. The last 10 classes, N-Rom 110-119, cover the last four chapters in Romans. We hope you've enjoyed this study of the book that Chester called the "seedbed" of Christianity.

To place your order for these classes fill out the enclosed order form and be sure to indicate if you'd prefer your classes on cassette tape, CD or Mp3. Romans is also available online for streaming audio or download at www.wordoftruthkc.org. □

sight, though companions, are not the same. Physical eyes provide sight, but the aid of the Holy Spirit is needed for insight. The difference between "seeing" and "seeing" is illustrated by John 20:1-10. Mary Magdalene, Peter, and John all arrive at the tomb of Jesus; and three different Greek words express the idea of what each one saw. John outruns Peter, stands outside the tomb, looks in and "saw (βλεπω = blepo) the linen wrappings lying there (20:5)." This refers to a viewing of the facts from without and affirms what Mary had already told him. Peter, on the other hand, went into the tomb and "beheld (θεωρεω = theoreo) the linen wrappings (20:6)." Peter's seeing was different than John's. It was direct, intensely observant, and perceptive. Peter saw the impossible: the separation of a body from its wrappings with the latter undisturbed. John then entered and "saw (ειδεν = eiden) and believed (20:8)." John's sight was accompanied by faith. True insight into the word of God is affected by our attitude toward it (faith) and our relationship to the Holy Spirit, its author.

The Pen

The pen and pad really are the student's other set of eyes. I was once told by a teacher that faded ink was always superior to a good memory. Writing one's observations not only aids memory but also forces one to transfer thoughts into words. □

Parable of the Father's Love

All parables find their source in something Jesus has just said or done. In this instance, He had been teaching about receiving outcasts (Luke 14:21). The Pharisees always took careful note of those that Jesus welcomed to Himself. Those that Jesus welcomed were those the Pharisees shunned (Luke 15:1-2). Pharisaic reasoning ran like this: God loves the righteous and hates sinners; Jesus offered fellowship to sinners who came to Him; Jesus, therefore, could not be God. Luke 15 is a parable that shows that Jesus' attitude is the same as God the Father—he welcomes sinners.

The parable of Luke 15, though containing three stories, is one parable. Jesus tells the story of the shepherd and sheep (15:3-7), the story of the woman and the coins (15:8-10); and the story of the father and two sons (15:11-32). And yet, verse 2 speaks of the entire chapter as "this (singular pronoun) parable (singular noun)." Each of the three stories contains a common thread: searching and waiting. Each of them also share a common success: the sheep is found, the coin is found, and the son returns.

There is also a diversity found in the three stories. The first story is about 1 shepherd and 100 sheep; the second is about 1 woman

and 10 coins; the third is about 1 father and 2 sons. Each story is connected together grammatically. The second is connected to the first by the word "and" (15:8), and the third is connected to the second by the words "and He said..." (15:11).

Most parables begin in an impersonal way such as "A certain man..." (14:16). However, the parable of Luke 15 begins with a personal address ("What man among you...") and requires a personal answer.

The parable uses sound pedagogy: it moves from the familiar to the unknown. Jesus knew His hearers understood the value of a lost sheep. He knew they would leave the 99 to find one. Jesus knew the search was to be diligent, not casual; and He was aware of the great rejoicing that would occur when the lost sheep was found (Luke 15:2-6). Jesus used these familiar things to teach spiritual truth about the rejoicing in heaven over a repentant sinner (15:7). □