



TOPIC Anointed Word

SPEAKER Elder Edric Sng

THEME Pillars of a Healthy Church

DATE 16 & 17 Sep 2017

MESSAGE SUMMARY

THE BIBLE – GOD’S LOVE LETTER TO US

The Bible is the best gift God has given to us. It is our instruction manual that teaches us how to live in holiness. It is God’s encouragement and gentle admonishment, it is God’s love letter to us. How then do we read it to be able to understand God better and live in holiness? Elder Edric shares five handles to read the Word right from Nehemiah 8:1-12 - read it with the *right attitude*, the *right arrangement*, the *right attention*, the *right assistance* and the *right awe*.

READING THE BIBLE RIGHT – THE FIVE HANDLES

1. READ THE WORD WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDE

Nehemiah 8 shows the hunger and thirst the Israelites had for the Word when they asked Ezra the scribe to read the Word of God to them. In the same way, we should have such an attitude in which we need to hear from God in order to function well daily. God promised us that we will be fed if we hunger and thirst for Him (*Matt 7:7-8, Prov 8:17, Jer 29:13*). Our attitude of true hunger for God means that *we go directly to the source* – listening directly to God through reading His Word and in prayer, rather than just learning about Him from sermons, books or in community.

2. READ THE WORD WITH THE RIGHT ARRANGEMENT

Nehemiah 8:3 shows three things about the Israelites. Firstly, they prioritised God’s Word. They not only set aside time but they set aside the *best* time to listen and learn. Secondly, they gave it sufficient time. This means lingering in His presence by hearing, reading, studying, remembering and meditating on the Word of God with intentionality *and* commitment. Limiting our time with God is our loss. We need to find the right arrangement. Find a place you can focus, a time to prioritise our quiet time and guard it well to give yourself sufficient time with God.

3. READ THE WORD WITH THE RIGHT ATTENTION

Verse 3 also stated that the people listened attentively. In other words, they *focused* on His Word. For us, it means that we should read the Bible at a pace that allows us to absorb and understand it. Reading the Bible with the right attention goes beyond that. When something you read stands out and speaks to you, do something that will help you to remember it – for example, underlining or highlighting the text even if it causes you to “dirty” your Bible.

4. READ THE WORD WITH THE RIGHT ASSISTANCE

The Bible is not always easily understood – even Apostle Peter found Paul’s letters difficult to understand! However, we have the resources in BBTC that can assist us in our learning. BBTC offers courses that trains and teaches us how to study the Word. Within the church, we have trustworthy leaders and people to seek help from. Do not struggle with the Bible alone! Yet when we seek help, we need to do so with discernment – do not swallow whole what another person teaches.

For starters, this is a simple three-step guide to gain a better understanding of the Word in our daily quiet time: understand the context of the passage read, find the relevance to your life and think of what God is trying to teach you through it.

5. READ THE WORD WITH THE RIGHT AWE

The Israelites wept when they heard the Word (v9). They wept not because they were emotional or weak. Rather, it was because they realised that God’s promises would always come true when they heard it read. When we have a revelation from the Word, awe – the reverence for God’s glory and sovereignty, happens. The only possible response to revelation is repentance as we acknowledge the gap between His holiness and our sinfulness, and true worship when we see Him for who He is.

Conclusion

God gave us the Word so that we will know and understand Him and how to live our lives in holiness. We should do it with these five handles - read the Bible with the *right attitude*, the *right arrangement*, the *right attention*, the *right assistance* and the *right awe*. Put into practice these five handles and with the Holy Spirit’s guidance and we will be able to live His Word out loud.

QUESTIONS

1. What is one emoji you will use to describe your current bible-reading time and why?



2. Out of the five handles given, which one(s) do you struggle most with? Why?

3. To use these five handles effectively, we first need to take steps to ensure that it happens. What are practical measures that you can take to ensure that you put them into practice?