

Talk It Over

Training In The Word
(Week 1)
Why Bother

SMALL TALK

1. Some people love chocolate chip cookies hot out of the oven with a glass of cold milk; Is that you? Why or why not? What would be better than that for you?

VIEWPOINT

2. **READ Hebrews 5:11-14.** Why does the writer to the Hebrews hesitate to give the readers further information? What was their problem?
3. What is the difference between solid food and milk? By design, who is milk for?
4. What is wrong with prolonged immaturity?
5. How does solid food help one mature in Christ (Hebrews 5:14)?

GETTING PERSONAL

6. How would you describe your spiritual appetite now: (a) "I'll just nibble"? (b) "A good meal now and then is nice"? (c) "I'm famished for all I can get"? Why?
7. When have you been spiritually lazy? What got you going again?

PRACTICE!

8. Devote Daily, Pursue Relationally, Guide Biblically, Live Authentically, Engage Missionally (3 Qs to help):

Training In The Word (Week 1) Why Bother?

Many forms of training are about getting in shape.

I've heard people say, "What's wrong with "round"? Round is a shape."

Yes. ... but is that really the shape you want?

I. Your **SHAPE** is your choice:

You will either be conformed by the world or by the Word

Romans 12:2 (NIV) Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Why bother with training in the Word? It will shape you into the likeness of Jesus!

And this is why this series is a very important series.

Now, we could stop there, but that is a very short message, and I think I can do better than that, so let's keep going shall we.

Now, let's consider this:

Why People Don't Bother Training In the Word:

Some common reasons:

- They perceive that it is ancient and no longer relevant.
- They perceive that it is confusing. They don't feel like they get anything out of it. They don't understand it. It is like not wanting to jump into water when you don't know how to swim.
- They think, "I'm not a minister. I've never been trained. I don't know how."

- They think, “I don’t have time.”
- They think: “I have my doubts about the Bible.”

Those are not all

Why Bother Training in the Word:

It is relevant! It works!

It is NOT too difficult to learn how to study it practically.

It is essential for an optimum life.

It is reliable.

A STORY: Why Bother? (adapted from Loving God... by Charles Colson)

Pelouze had made a dumb mistake, no doubt about that. He had been overly conservative and then had failed to tell the company’s controller what he had done. Management didn’t discover the adjustment until papers were filed with the Securities Commission for the stock offering, too late to change it. Worst of all, Pelouze had neglected to consult the AICPA Professional Standards of Accounting (a book he was supposed to know inside out and follow well). Had he done that, he would have discovered he didn’t have to make the accounting adjustment that he did. An adjustment that unnecessarily forced the client company to have to wait one more year to offer a stock option that would have raised 7 million dollars for their company.

A short time later Pelouze sat before Dave (his boss), recognizing even before his boss said a word, that he had better start thinking about his next place of employment.

Dave, his boss, did not spare him. After the introductory lashings, he became bitterly vindictive. He flipped open his desk copy of the AICPA Professional Standards of Accounting. “See this,” Dave said. “Do you see this? You don’t have to go to Duke for eight years, Mr. Pelouze, to read this. Any schoolboy can read it. But you seem to be one of those educated beyond your intelligence.”

Later that evening at home, Dave (the boss) was still tense, and was replaying the ugly scene in his mind with Mr. Pelouze. Then

suddenly his own vindictive words took on new meaning. It was as if God was saying to him, “Dave, aren’t you treating the Bible with exactly the same neglect that Pelouze was treating the “accounting Bible”? You claim to be a Christian, Dave, but you yourself don’t know the book you are supposed to know inside out as your guide to life” ... Dave was stunned into the realization that he was treating the Bible like some magazine to just flip through, reading here and there as impulse moved him. He wanted spectacular results in his Christian life, but put in thoroughly mediocre effort. He would have to change or give it up.

The Pelouze incident prompted Dave to begin training in the Word with intentionality.

II. Don’t expect **SPECTACULAR** results with **MEDIOCRE** training

Luke 6:40 (NIV) The student is not above the teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like their teacher.

Ephesians 6:4 (NIV) Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV) All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for... training in righteousness,

Without training in the Word don’t expect good results just because you “believe”. How much do you really believe if you don’t believe the truth enough to put into practice Jesus’ instructions to “abide” in his teaching and his teaching “abide” in us?

So, what do we do. Today we talk about ...

III. Take **BABY** steps

1 Peter 2:2 (CSB) Like newborn infants, desire the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow up into your salvation,

I want to show you 3 things from a baby.

1. **Attitude:** I need this!
2. **Appetite:** I want this!

3. **Aim:** I'll slowly grow from this!

- **Attitude: I need this!**
 - God has made babies to know this by what they feel inside.
 - How often do baby's drink milk? They are not calmed until they have what they need.
 - Just as a baby grabs for the bottle, you grab for the book.
 - In the beginning it helps to have a spiritual parent guiding you and helping you learn that "you need this!" The nurturing parent knows how much you need this and teaches you by their help that not only do you need this, you want this.
- **Appetite: I want this!** It doesn't take long for a newborn to crave, long for and "desire" what they need.
 - But, let's be honest here. For most of us, this appetite is a cultivated appetite, a cultivated taste, something that becomes a joy over time.
 - **ILLUSTRATION:** I didn't start reading the Bible for myself until I saw how much joy was on the face of my sister who was reading for herself and growing for herself. There was a joy in her that made me want to read it for myself. So, in high school, I began to read it for myself. Here is my experience: It takes a while to cultivate a taste for the Bible, or to begin to understand the Bible, enough to cultivate an appetite. You move from I need this to, I want this, over time and use.
 - **ILLUSTRATION:** Training makes you like something more. The first time you train in long distance running, what does it feel like? It feels terrible. It is only after training and sticking with it that you begin to enjoy it more and more.
- Some view it the Bible as "nasty medicine" tastes horrible but supposedly good for you.
 - Some people view the Bible like "shredded wheat" cereal. It is dry and tasteless to them.
 - Some people view it like "Peaches and cream". They just can't get enough of it.

- Only those who have trained in God’s Word for a while come to appreciate it the way this Psalm describes it.
- **AIM:** What is the aim of the Bible? It helps us GROW! Please note. The Bible is not only that you may KNOW! It is about transformation, not merely information. The aim of the information is transformation!
 - The aim is not to make you a smarter sinner. The aim is to make you more like the savior!

Some new believers grow very fast.

Some long time believers have not grown much at all in years.

Good Question: Am I growing up, or just growing old?

Why is that? The difference is whether they are personally training in God’s Word or not!

- Only after a season of training, and training well, do you begin to enjoy God’s Word the way people close to God have described it.

Psalm 19:7–10 (CSB) The instruction of the Lord is perfect, renewing one’s life; the testimony of the Lord is trustworthy, making the inexperienced wise. ⁸ The precepts of the Lord are right, making the heart glad; the command of the Lord is radiant, making the eyes light up. ⁹ The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the Lord are reliable and altogether righteous. ¹⁰ They are more desirable than gold— than an abundance of pure gold; and sweeter than honey dripping from a honeycomb.

The mark of maturity is not how much you understand, but how much you use! In the spiritual realm, the opposite of ignorance is not knowledge but obedience.

--Howard Hendricks, “Living By The Book” .

What's essential? Training in God's Word is essential. Why bother? It's essential.