

Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church
2080 West Grand Blvd.
Detroit, Michigan 48208
Nathan Johnson, D.D., *Senior Pastor*

Church_Covenant_Lesson_13%20Final%20Submission[1]

Lesson 13: “Study Diligently”

Scriptures: *Matthew 21:1-15; Zechariah 9*

Goal: To embrace and fulfill our covenant relationship with God and one another.

Objective:

- To develop a commitment to studying God’s Word diligently.
- To understand the importance of religiously educating our children.

Church Covenant Segment:

“We also engage ...to study diligently the Word of God; to religiously educate our children.”

Introduction

God requires us to read and study his Word diligently and consistently. *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth”*. (2 Timothy 2:15) However, studying diligently without obeying God’s Word is a good example of building your house on sand and wasting your time. When the storms come and our houses are destroyed, are we prepared to weather the storm? As a church family and people of God, we must prepare our hearts to both study and obey him; for God’s Word is the one strong foundation that will sustain us.

The Book of Ezra provides the perfect blueprint for studying diligently God’s Word and identifying ways to religiously educate our children. Ezra, a scribe, Priest and scholar loved the Word of God. He studied God’s law and prepared himself to interpret and teach the laws of Moses to the Israelites, after God fulfilled his promise to return them to the Land of Promise. Ezra used his skills as a scribe to teach God’s Word to the people. *“For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord, and do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments”* (Ezra 7:10).

To Ezra, diligence was reading the laws aloud to everyone who could hear and understand him. Nehemiah 8:3 states: *“And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of Law.”* Like Ezra, we must bring our hearts, minds, skills and talents to bear as we study, obey and teach God’s Word to our children and church family.

Dialogue Web ~ Interactive Bible Lesson

Study Diligently

“All Scriptures is God- breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness so that every man of God may be equipped for every good work” (Timothy 3:16). When we study the Word it draws us closer to God and gives us a clearer understanding of who He is and what He requires of us as a community of believers. By studying the Word, it puts us in full communion with God and reveals the hidden truth of His Word through the aid of the Holy Spirit. The knowledge given by the Spirit gives the Word vibrancy, light and power in our lives.¹ When we are grounded in the knowledge of Jesus Christ through God’s perfect Word, we are not subject to false teaching and doctrines because God through His Word gives us the wisdom and the discernment we need. *“Then we will no longer be like children, forever changing our minds about what we believe because someone has told us something different or because someone has cleverly lied to us and made the lie sound like the truth.”*(Eph. 4:14).

*“The second commitment is to religiously educate our children.”*² Children are to be taught spiritual and moral values, principles for living, and worth in the sight of God through the Word of God. Our children must be taught to reverence God and bear the image of His Son. There is only one right way to rear children and that is God’s way. This begins with early training and teaching through consistent loving discipline throughout the child’s upbringing.³ *“Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it.”* (Prov. 22:6) When we religiously educate our children we prepare them to seek the Lord who gives them salvation.⁴ We know that salvation is that free and precious gift received by faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *“And you fathers do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”* (Eph. 6:4)

<i>Guiding Questions</i>	<i>What the Scripture Says</i>	<i>Class Discovery Points</i>
1. Why should God’s Word be hidden in our hearts?	1. Psalms 119:11 Isaiah 55:10,11	
2. Why should every believer study diligently the Word of God?	2. . II Timothy 2:15 II Timothy 3:16 Psalms 119:105	

¹ Turner, William C., A Journey through the Church Covenant, page 74

² Ibid

³ MacArthur Study Bible

⁴ Turner, William C., A Journey through the Church Covenant , page 75

<p>3. How does the truth of God's Word protect us against false teachings?</p> <p>4. How does the Word of God acknowledge prayers and praises from children?</p> <p>5. Why should we teach our children to reverence the Word of God?</p>	<p>3. Ephesians 4:14</p> <p>Matthew 7:13,14</p> <p>3. Matthew 21:16</p> <p>4. Ecclesiastes 12:1</p> <p>5. Proverbs 22:6</p> <p>6. Luke 18:16,17</p>	
<p><u>Class Summary Statement</u></p> <p><i>Maintaining family and secret devotion is essential because...</i></p>		

Lesson Summary

The Word of God is the single most important tangible and spiritual possession that Christians own. Scripture says that; "*In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God....And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us*"² The Word is the Gospel and the very reflection of God in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. God's ways, His will, His instructions for living and worshipping Him, and His plans for

⁵The Holy Bible, St John 1: 1, 14, King James Version

all of mankind are contained within the inspired Word of God which is without error. God reveals Himself through His Word. How else can we know God or His ways or desires except by the diligent study of the Word?

One needs only to read through the Old Testament account to realize that God desires that we know and understand Him. The New Testament reveals the depth of His love for man for it records the sacrificial death of His only Son, Jesus. God has revealed Himself to man throughout history. He desires to have a people who are His own and yet our faith history demonstrates our continuous attraction to other gods. Diligently studying God's Word helps us to develop an intimate relationship with Him. This lesson affords us an opportunity to make a critical self-examination as a church family. What does the time you spend studying God's Word demonstrate about the quality of your relationship with Him? When we are persistent in studying God's Word, meditating on it, allowing it to permeate our hearts and minds, it is unlikely that we will be drawn to false gods. In like manner, taking care to teach our children the Word of God allows them to have a strong foundation for life.

God's Word is eternal (Psalms 119:89) and a light for our path (Ps. 119:105). In it we can find comfort, peace, knowledge, counsel and wisdom for living. We are to embrace it, meditate on it day and night while seeking to obey its righteous decrees.

“For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.”
(Hebrews 4:12)

The Word of God is life-changing and penetrates the very core of our being. We must allow it to shape us spiritually and shape our minds, will, and emotions. Joshua 1: 8 states, *“This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.”* Being persistent in our study of God's Word and religiously training our children, allows God's plan for us, in us and through us to become a reality! May God be praised!

Going Deeper (Journal Writing)

Closing Prayer:

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HAVING BEEN LED, AS WE BELIEVE, BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior; and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge and holiness; to give it a place in our affections, prayers, and services above every organization of human origin; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrine; to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God has prospered us, towards its expenses, for the support of a faithful and evangelical ministry among us, the relief of the poor and the spread of the Gospel throughout the world. In case of difference of opinion in the church, we will strive to avoid a contentious spirit, and if we cannot unanimously agree, we will cheerfully recognize the right of the majority to govern.

We also engage to maintain family and secret devotion; *to study diligently the word of God; to religiously educate our children;* to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintance; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be kind and just to those in our employ, and faithful in the service we promise others; endeavoring in the purity of heart and good will towards all men to exemplify and commend our holy faith.

We further engage to watch over, to pray for, to exhort and stir up each other unto every good word and work; to guard each other's reputation, not needlessly exposing the infirmities of others; to participate in each other's joys, and with tender sympathy bear one another's burdens and sorrows; to cultivate Christian courtesy; to be slow to give or take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, being mindful of the rules of the Savior in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, to secure it without delay; and through life, amid evil report, and good report, to seek to live to the glory of God, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

When we remove from this place, we engage as soon as possible to unite with some other church where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

Each month we will include a copy of the Church Covenant and highlight the current lesson. It is our hope that this will give the larger context for the passage being studied.