

North Christian Church -

Pastor Ed Collins

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5/5/16 - The Gospel, Salvation, and Sanctification - Part 82

How To Master the English Bible

By James M. Gray

Perspective Matters

When reading theology, we must tap into the new creature's perspective - the one that never has a problem with the plainly stated things in the Bible.

"Sometimes we think too much."

- SG

Big-Picture Reading

If we read the Bible with the Gospel lens, we clearly see God's doctrines, the mind of Christ (1Co 2:16). However, if we read it with a doctrinal lens, we run the risk of losing sight of the Gospel (e.g., 1Co 13).

"love is perfected with us"

This doesn't mean that at salvation we become perfect lovers; it means that perfect love is now "with us", providing us with a definite hope and confidence regarding eternal life.

Cambridge Bible Commentary

The Apostle thus anticipates a possible objection. A man may say 'I can love God without loving my brother, and I can prove my love by keeping His commandments' (Jn 14:15). 'Nay', says S. John, 'your own argument shows your error: you cannot keep His commandments without loving your brother'.

Cambridge Bible Commentary

Thus then we have two revelations of God: our brother, who is His image; and His commandment, which is His will. Not to love our brother is a flagrant violation of both. As Pascal puts it, we must know men in order to love them, but we must love God in order to know Him.

The Great Litmus Test

The hallmark of true love is a base desire to live for others. "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13). The Spirit

will assure you of your faith by revealing to you His love in you (1Jn 3:19-20; 4:13).

God Wants His Children To Be Assured

God desires to let those that are of His household know that they truly are members of His family. His Spirit convicts believers that they are indeed saved.

Theology existed long before the human experience with it.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (Jn 1:1).

Have Fun Reading Your Bible

There's no rush. Let the Spirit's wisdom speak to you through scripture. Receive the "mind of Christ" with the same vigor you receive the Lord's supper, for example.

Choose Wisely...

If you had to choose between more faith or more knowledge, which would you choose? Which are you currently "pursuing"? Which is an exclusive gift to believers?

Walking (ala Col 1:10)

God has empowered us to "do" His commands - that's "walking". It's by grace through faith that we do so.

Experiencing Theology

Looking back on your own life, considering how much God has done in/through you. Your experience highlights God's basic promise that He will sanctify you (Php 1:6).

Supernatural Walking

Do you have to "try" to "be" grateful? No - you can be reminded of things to be grateful "for", but GOD is the one who GIVES us the ability to "be" grateful - that's true grace. If you "try" to "be" something you're not, you're a hypocrite (Ro 12:9).

Be Yourself!!!

Faith Is Received By the Humble

Even though the overarching theology states dogmatically that God will sanctify all of His children, some children grow up quicker than others in faith.

Faith is received by the humble.

Lk 17:5

The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!"