

THANKSGIVING FOR GOD'S TREASURE

This month most of us will give thanks to God with even greater intensity than we do the rest of the year for the gifts with which He has blessed us. This is very God-honoring (Ps. 50:23). We will thank God for salvation, family, work, provision, health, and so much more. One blessing we do not want to forget is His Word. In fact, we are told to treasure God's Word in our hearts (Ps. 119:11; Prov. 2:1; 7:1)—seeking wisdom in it as we would seek for hidden treasure (Prov. 2:4).

With this in mind, one of the great acts of thanksgiving we can render to God this November is to recommit to read and study the Bible. Do you realize that the words on those thin gold-edged, leather-bound pages are from the eternal God who created all things, who knows all things, who has always been? We should delight in and love this Word from God (cf. Ps. 119:47-48), as well as view it as pure, right, and true (Ps. 33:4; Titus 1:2; 1 Peter 2:2).

Here are two suggestions to help you in reading the Bible.

Choose A Time And Plan

Many people don't read because they don't know where to start or what to do. Once you choose the time of day you will open up your Bible, choose a tool for helping you. Here are some ideas:

(1) Get a subscription to Table Talk. This is by far the best and most helpful devotional and Bible study guide you can find. Two samples are on our Resource Table. Order at 800-435-4343 or www.ligonier.org. This also has a guide for reading through the Bible in a year.

(2) Use the devotional Our Daily Bread. This is one of the most widely-used devotional guides. It is brief and good. It is available at 616-974-2210 or www.rbc.org. You can read it on-line each day at this site or have it mailed to you. It also has a guide for reading through the Bible in a year.

(3) Have a devotional email sent to you each day. Go to www.eword.gospelcom.net and subscribe. You will receive an email each day with a Bible passage to read and also a few comments or quotes.

Choose A Bible Version

Here is a rundown on the reading level of the best options (I will move from the more literal, word-for-word

translations to the phrase-for-phrase or concept-for-concept translations [these latter ones more commonly called paraphrases]). The number behind each version is the reading grade level. Keep in mind the newspaper is targeted at about a 5th grade level.

King James Version: 12th.

New American Standard: 11th

New King James Version: 9th

English Standard Version: 8th

New International Version: 7th

New Living Translation: 6th

I believe the best translation overall—considering both accuracy and readability—is the English Standard Version.

For more on versions and study Bibles see our brochure on the resource table.

Pastor Tom