

A Noble Pursuit

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A noble pursuit which is not only worthy of time but also of eternity is DAILY BIBLE READING. Luke, the beloved physician and historian wrote about the Bereans who “received the word with all readiness of mind, and **searched the scriptures daily**, whether those things were so. Therefore many of them believed, also of honorable women which were Greeks, and of men, not a few” (Acts 17:11-12).

In comparison with the people in Thessalonica the Bereans were “more noble.” Nobility usually refers to being born high up on the social ladder as are kings and queens or princes and princesses. However, this passage refers to them being “noble-minded.” Newman’s lexicon has “open-minded” (p. 75). An analysis of the passage in Acts shows that their noble-minded character stems from their setting, attitude, response and results upon encountering the gospel of Christ.

The Bereans were Jews with whom Paul and Silas studied. They met together in the synagogue, the place where the Jews worshipped the one true God. The result of their noble pursuit was that “many of them believed.” The effort and example of the Bereans commends itself today to those wishing to improve the status of their spiritual lives. The resolution to adopt the receptive attitude of the Bereans toward not just a casual acquaintance with the Scriptures but a serious searching of the same on a daily basis can demonstrate itself to be a noble pursuit with all the attendant blessings, privileges and promises God has in store for the believers.

Daily Bible reading is a “noble pursuit.” Unfortunately, some have no interest in it. Some don’t want to do it. Some want to know “Do I have to do it?” Some want to do it but don’t. Some say they couldn’t make it through the day without it. The Bereans encountered by Paul and Silas on the Second Missionary Journey were more noble than the Thessalonians because of their daily perusal of the scriptures. Without any embarrassment or reservation Paul commended the Ephesian church both to God and “to the word of his grace” stating confidently that it is “able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified” (Acts 20:32). S. I. McMillen, a medical doctor, has discussed the need for daily Bible reading from the standpoint of good physical and mental health. He refers to Dr. William Sadler’s textbook for physicians in which he urges doctors to “encourage their patients to engage ‘in daily, systematic Bible reading.’” He affirms the therapeutic value of Bible reading citing forty-three Bible verses as examples. With reference to the passages McMillen observed, “Each of them, if assimilated into the mind, can accomplish more than any sedative or tranquilizer” (*None Of These Diseases*, p. 97).

Pulpit Helps reported the following information on “Americans and the Bible.” “72 percent of the people believe the Bible to be the Word of God, but only 12 percent read it on a daily basis. 18 percent of Protestants are daily Bible readers, 4 percent of Catholics. 41 percent of Protestants read the Bible less than once a month or never, 67 percent of Roman Catholics are non-readers.” *The Good News* provided this information: “A Gallup youth survey shows that

daily Bible reading is rare among teens. Those who never read it or read it less than twice a month, outnumber those who read it every day, 51% to 12%. Among church-going teens, 20% read the Bible daily, 36% weekly, and 14% monthly.” How would adults and teenagers in the churches of Christ stack-up against these figures? One thing is for certain, more of us could benefit from reading the Bible daily. More Christians will read the Bible daily when there is more interest, determination, and discipline to do it. The church where this is done will be stronger and be blessed by engaging in such a “noble pursuit.”