

Becoming Mature in God's Word:

Lamad

Scripture Reading: Liam Parry

Psalm 119:97-99

⁹⁷ Oh, how I love your instructions! I think about them all day long. ⁹⁸ Your commands make me wiser than my enemies, for they are my constant guide. ⁹⁹ Yes, I have more insight than my teachers, for I am always thinking of your laws.

How do I Understand and Learn the Word of God?

Lamad

- Hebraic approach to God's Word
- The Hebrew language uses one root -- *Lamad* -- for the two words "to teach" and "to learn."
- **In the Hebrew culture, the teacher has not taught unless the student has learned.**
- The goal of teaching is **not focused on the impartation of facts** but the **changing of lives.**
- Knowledge, or *Yada*, involves the Hebraic concept of education - **personal encounter and response to God's revelation.**
- It is a place where we practice truth. **The classroom is not separated from life but is actually part of our lives.**

In Contrast to Reason/Study

Our Western approach is founded in the concepts of Reason/Rationale/Study (Hellenism).

Rational Christianity

- A code of ethics
- Rules/Laws/Works
- Theological Concepts/Apologetics/Philosophy
- Head Knowledge
- Often Can Lead to Guilt, Shame, Self-Effort, Arrogance, or Depression

But Scripture does not give high priority to these methods or context of learning...

- The Greek in **2 Timothy 2:15** does not say, "**Study to show yourself approved, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed.**" **This is a mistranslation.**
 - "**Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.**"
- **The only explicit reference to studying in Scripture is:**
- **Ecclesiastes 12:12**
My son, be warned: the writing of many books is endless, and **excessive devotion to books is wearying to the body.**

This doesn't mean to be a Disciple of Jesus we must check our minds at the door (**Matthew 22:37**). But it does mean that Reason and Rationale are **NOT** our chief tools in knowing God and His Word. In fact, like our own hearts (**Jer. 17:9**), **we must be cautious in trusting our own reasoning.**

Consider These Warnings

Proverbs 3:5-7

"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and **do not lean on your own understanding.** In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. **Do not be wise in your own eyes;** Fear the LORD and turn away from evil."

1 Cor. 8:1-3

...Yes, we know that "we all have knowledge"... **But while knowledge makes us feel important,** it is love that strengthens the church. ² Anyone who claims to know all the answers doesn't really know very much. ³ But the person who loves God is the one whom God recognizes.

1 Cor. 1:19-29

As the Scriptures say, **"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and discard the intelligence of the intelligent."**

²⁰ So where does this leave the philosophers, the scholars, and the world's brilliant debaters? God has made the wisdom of this world look foolish. ²¹ Since **God in his wisdom saw to it that the world would never know him through human wisdom, he has used our foolish preaching to save those who believe.** ²² It is **foolish to the Jews, who ask for signs** from heaven. And it is **foolish to the Greeks, who seek human wisdom.** ²³ So when we preach that Christ was crucified, the Jews are offended and the Gentiles say it's all nonsense.

²⁴ But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God's weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength.

²⁶ Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world's eyes or powerful or wealthy when God called you. ²⁷ Instead, **God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful.** ²⁸ **God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important.** ²⁹ **As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God.**

There is A Better Way

James 3:15-17

(These)...are not God's kind of wisdom. Such things are earthly, unspiritual, and demonic. ¹⁶ For wherever there is jealousy and selfish ambition, there you will find disorder and evil of every kind. ¹⁷ **But the wisdom from above** is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and the fruit of good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere.

