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**Receive Full Benefit
From Reading the Bible**

PAGE 3 SONGS: 114, 113

June 10-16

**Help Yourself and Others
by Using God's Word**

PAGE 18 SONGS: 37, 92

Large-Print Edition

PART 1

STUDY ARTICLES

- **Receive Full Benefit From Reading the Bible**
- **Help Yourself and Others by Using God's Word**

Paul wrote that “the word of God is alive and exerts power.” (Heb. 4:12) But that power will benefit us only if we study God’s inspired Word and apply its teachings. These articles highlight an effective method of Bible study and show how we can allow godly wisdom to influence our ministry and our personal life.

Receive Full Benefit From Reading the Bible

“I really delight in the law of God.”—ROM. 7:22.

LOOK FOR THESE POINTS

How will reading “in an undertone” benefit you?

How can you build a reserve of Scriptural points that you can use to help others?

Careful reading of the Bible gives you what protection?

“I THANK Jehovah every morning for helping me to understand the Bible.” The elderly Christian sister who made that statement has read the entire Bible over 40 times, and she is not stopping. A younger sister wrote that Bible reading has helped her to see that Jehovah is real. As a result, she has drawn closer to her heavenly Father. She stated, “I have never been happier in my life!”

2 The apostle Peter encouraged all to “form a
1-3. What benefits are gained from reading the Bible and applying its teachings?”

longing for the unadulterated milk belonging to the word.” (1 Pet. 2:2) Those who satisfy that longing through Bible study and who apply Bible teachings have a clean conscience and a purpose in living. They develop enduring friendships with others who also love and serve the true God. All of these are valid reasons to “delight in the law of God.” (Rom. 7:22) But there are even more benefits. What are some of them?

3 The more you learn about Jehovah and his Son, the more your love for them and your fellow humans will grow. Having accurate Scriptural knowledge helps you to see how God will soon save obedient mankind from this dying system. You have a positive message of good news to share with people in your ministry. Jehovah will bless you as you teach others the things that you have learned from reading God’s Word.

READ AND REFLECT

4 Jehovah does not want his servants to rush through a reading of his Word. He told Joshua of ancient times: “This book of the law should not depart from your *mouth*, and you must in an *undertone* read in it day and night.” (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2) Does this instruction require that you literally utter in a low voice all the words you read from Genesis to Revelation? No. It means that you should read at a pace that allows for meditation. When you read the Bible “in an undertone,” it will help you to fix attention on portions that are especially useful and encouraging to you at that moment. On finding such phrases, verses, or accounts, read them slowly, perhaps forming the words with the tongue and lips. The full weight of a Scriptural point may strike you in a deeply personal way. Why is this important?

4. What does it mean to read the Bible “in an undertone”?

Because getting the sense of God’s counsel gives you strong motivation to put it into practice.

5 Reading in an undertone is helpful when you consider Bible books that are unfamiliar to you. To illustrate, imagine three scenarios. First, think of a young Christian brother whose personal reading program has taken him to the prophecy of Hosea. In chapter 4, he pauses after reading verses 11 to 13 in an undertone. (*Read Hosea 4:11-13.*) Why? Those verses catch his attention because he has been struggling to resist immoral pressures in school. He reflects on the verses and thinks: ‘Jehovah sees the bad things people do even in private. I do not want to offend him.’ The brother resolves to remain morally clean before God.

6 In a second scenario, a Christian sister is reading Joel’s prophecy and comes to chapter 2, 5-7. Illustrate how reading God’s Word in an undertone might help you to (a) remain morally clean; (b) treat others with patience and kindness; (c) build trust in Jehovah even during difficult times.

verse 13. (*Read Joel 2:13.*) As she reads that verse in an undertone, she reflects on how she should imitate Jehovah, who is “gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness.” She decides to try to eliminate the sarcasm and angry words that she sometimes uses when she speaks to her husband and others.

7 Third, imagine a Christian father who has lost his job and worries about the well-being of his wife and children. At Nahum 1:7, he reads in an undertone that Jehovah “is cognizant of those seeking refuge in him” and protects them like “a stronghold in the day of distress.” That thought consoles him. He senses Jehovah’s loving care and stops worrying overmuch. Then he reads verse 15 in an undertone. (*Read Nahum 1:15.*) Our brother sees that by preaching the good news in difficult times, he demonstrates that he, indeed, views Jehovah as his stronghold. While the brother keeps on

looking for secular work, he is now also moved to support midweek field service activity.

8 The beneficial points just mentioned are from Bible books that some may consider difficult to understand. As you examine the books of Hosea, Joel, and Nahum with a desire to learn, you will want to read other verses from them in an undertone. Imagine how much wisdom and comfort await you in the writings of those prophets! And what about the rest of the Bible? God's Word is like a productive diamond mine. Work that mine well! Yes, read the whole Bible with the goal of finding gems of divine guidance and reassurance.

STRIVE FOR UNDERSTANDING

9 While it is important that you daily read a portion of the Bible, you also want to gain understanding and insight. Therefore, make good use of the publications of Jehovah's organization to

8. Briefly share a spiritual gem that you discovered in your Bible reading.

9. How can we increase our understanding of God's will?

research the background of people, places, and events you read about. Or if you wonder how a certain Bible teaching might affect your life, you could ask a congregation elder or another mature Christian for help. To illustrate the importance of increasing our understanding, let us consider the example of one first-century Christian who strove to do just that. His name was Apollos.

10 Apollos was a Jewish Christian who was “well versed in the Scriptures” and “aglow with the spirit.” The book of Acts relates about him: “He went speaking and teaching with correctness the things about Jesus, but being acquainted with only the baptism of John.” Without realizing it, Apollos had been teaching an out-of-date understanding of baptism. After hearing him teach in Ephesus, a Christian couple named Priscilla and Aquila

10, 11. (a) How was Apollos helped to improve as a minister of the good news? (b) What can we learn from the account of Apollos? (See the box “Is Your Teaching Up-to-Date?”)

IS YOUR TEACHING UP-TO-DATE?

We want to stay up-to-date with the understanding of Bible truth so that we can share accurate knowledge with others. With that in mind, how would you answer the following questions?

■ Whom did Jesus have in mind when he spoke of “this generation” mentioned at Matthew 24:34?
—*The Watchtower*, April 15, 2010, pages 10-11.

■ When does the separating of “the sheep from the goats” described at Matthew 25:32 take place?
—*The Watchtower*, October 15, 1995, pages 21-23.

■ As stated at Luke 21:26, when will “men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth”?—*The Watchtower*, February 15, 1994, pages 19-20.

By augmenting daily Bible reading with careful personal study, we will be able to help others walk in the ever-increasing light that Jehovah sheds on his written Word.—Prov. 4:18.

explained “the way of God more correctly to him.”
(Acts 18:24-26) How did this benefit Apollos?

11 After preaching in Ephesus, Apollos went to Achaia. “When he got there, he greatly helped

those who had believed on account of God’s undeserved kindness; for with intensity he thoroughly proved the Jews to be wrong publicly, while he demonstrated by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.” (Acts 18:27, 28) By that time, Apollos could correctly explain the meaning of Christian baptism. With his increased understanding, he “greatly helped” new ones to make progress in true worship. What can we learn from this account? Like Apollos, we strive to understand what we read in the Bible. However, when an experienced fellow believer suggests how we can teach more effectively, we want to accept that help with humility and gratitude. If we do so, the quality of our sacred service will improve.

USE WHAT YOU LEARN TO HELP OTHERS

12 Like Priscilla, Aquila, and Apollos, we can be

12, 13. Illustrate how a tactful use of the Scriptures may help Bible students to make progress.

a blessing to others. When your encouragement helps an interested person overcome an obstacle to his spiritual progress, how do you feel? Or as an elder, how do you feel when a fellow worshipper thanks you for Scriptural counsel that helped him or her through a difficult time? No doubt, using God's Word to help others to improve their lives is a source of satisfaction and joy.* Notice how you might accomplish that goal.

13 Regarding true worship and false, many Israelites in Elijah's day were sitting on the fence. Elijah's counsel to those people could help an indecisive Bible student who is holding back from making spiritual progress. (*Read 1 Kings 18:21.*) Consider another situation: If an interested person fears the reaction of friends or family, you might strengthen his or her resolve to worship Jehovah by reasoning on Isaiah 51:12, 13.—*Read.*

* Of course, we do not use Bible counsel to pressure or condemn others. We should be as patient and kind with a Bible student as Jehovah is with us.—Ps. 103:8.

14 Clearly, the Bible contains many words that can encourage, correct, or strengthen its readers. But you may ask, ‘How can I have scriptures at the ready when I need them?’ Read the Bible and meditate on God’s thoughts *daily*. In that way, you will build a reserve of divine expressions that Jehovah’s spirit can help you recall when you need them.—Mark 13:11; *read John 14:26*.*

15 Like King Solomon, pray to Jehovah for wisdom in carrying out theocratic responsibilities. (2 Chron. 1:7-10) As did the prophets of old, make “a diligent inquiry and a careful search” of God’s Word for accurate knowledge of Jehovah and his will. (1 Pet. 1:10-12) The apostle

* What if you remember the key words of a passage but not the book, chapter, and verse? By looking up those words in the index at the back of the Bible, in the *Watchtower Library*, or in the concordance of the *New World Translation*, you will likely find the scripture.

14. What will help you to recall Bible passages when you need them to help others?

15. What will help you to understand God’s Word more fully?

Paul encouraged Timothy to nourish himself “with the words of the faith and of the fine teaching.” (1 Tim. 4:6) By your doing so, you will be in an excellent position to help others spiritually. At the same time, you will build up your own faith.

SURE PROTECTION BASED ON GOD’S WORD

16 Jews in the Macedonian city of Beroea had the custom of “carefully examining the Scriptures daily.” When Paul preached the good news to those Jews, they compared his words with their knowledge of the Scriptures. The result? Many were convinced that he was teaching the truth, and they “became believers.” (Acts 17:10-12) This shows that daily reading of the Bible promotes strong faith in Jehovah. Such faith, “the assured expectation of things hoped for,” is vital if we are to survive into God’s new world.—Heb. 11:1.

16. (a) How did “carefully examining the Scriptures daily” benefit the Bereans? (b) Why is daily Bible reading so important to us today?

17 For good reason, Paul wrote: “As for us who belong to the day, let us keep our senses and have on the breastplate of faith and love and as a helmet the hope of salvation.” (1 Thess. 5:8) A soldier’s heart needs protection from the enemy. Similarly, a Christian’s figurative heart requires shielding from the power of sin. What happens when a servant of Jehovah couples strong faith in God’s promises with love for Him and for fellow humans? Such a servant puts on a spiritual breastplate of the highest quality. It is unlikely that he will do anything to lose God’s favor.

18 Paul also mentioned a helmet, “the hope of salvation.” Without protecting his head, a soldier in Bible times could easily lose his life in battle. But with a good helmet, he could survive blows to the head without suffering serious injury. We

17, 18. (a) How does strong faith and love protect a Christian’s figurative heart? (b) How does hope protect us from danger?

build hope in Jehovah's saving acts by studying his Word. Strong hope enables us to resist apostates and their gangrenous "empty speeches." (2 Tim. 2:16-19) Our hope will also strengthen us to say no to those who would lead us into conduct condemned by Jehovah.

A KEY TO SURVIVAL

19 The deeper we get into the time of the end, the greater our need to rely on Jehovah's Word. The counsel we draw from it helps us to correct bad habits and to control our sinful tendencies. With its encouragement and comfort, we will pass the tests that Satan and his world bring on us. With the guidance Jehovah provides in his Word, we will stay on the road to life.

20 Recall that God's will is that "all sorts of men should be saved." Jehovah's servants are

19, 20. Why do we highly esteem God's Word, and how do we show our appreciation for it? (See the box "Jehovah Gives Me Just What I Need.")

‘JEHOVAH GIVES ME JUST WHAT I NEED’

A young Christian sister wrote: “Of all the loving reminders Jehovah gives us, those urging us to read the Bible daily have had the greatest influence on my life. I began reading the Bible in my last year of high school, and it took me about two years to read it completely. During that time, I found in Jehovah’s Word everything I needed to decide what to do with my life. Now I am reading through the Bible for the second time. But it seems that I am reading things I never saw before. Reading the Bible is as exciting now as it was the first time—if not more so! I am amazed at Jehovah’s ability to give me just what I need.”

among “all sorts of men.” So are those whom we might help through our preaching and teaching work. But all who wish to attain to salvation must gain “an accurate knowledge of truth.” (1 Tim. 2:4) Thus, surviving the last days goes hand in glove with reading the Bible and applying its inspired instructions. Yes, our daily Bible reading shows how highly we esteem Jehovah’s precious Word of truth.—John 17:17.

Help Yourself and Others by Using God’s Word

“I have considered all orders regarding all things to be right.”—PS. 119:128.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

How can you effectively use the Scriptures when teaching others?

What did Paul mean when he spoke of “setting things straight”?

What does it mean for elders and parents to ‘discipline in righteousness’?

WHEN the elders consider whether a Bible student qualifies to participate in the field ministry, they ask themselves, ‘Do the person’s expressions show that he believes that the Bible is the inspired Word of God?’* For someone who desires to become a Kingdom publisher—in fact, for all of God’s servants—the answer must be a clear yes.

* See *Organized to Do Jehovah’s Will*, page 79.

1. Why must we have complete confidence in God’s Word?

Why? Our confidence in God’s Word and our ability to use it in the ministry will help us to assist others to get to know Jehovah and to attain to salvation.

2 The apostle Paul emphasized the importance of God’s Word when he wrote to Timothy: “Continue in the things that you learned and were persuaded to believe.” “The things” that Paul mentioned are Bible truths that moved Timothy to put faith in the good news. These truths have had the same effect on us today, and they continue to help us to remain “wise for salvation.” (2 Tim. 3:14, 15) We often use Paul’s next words to show others that the Bible is of divine origin, but we may personally obtain an additional benefit from those words found at 2 Timothy 3:16. (*Read.*) Let us consider that verse in more detail. Doing so will strengthen our confidence that all of Jehovah’s teachings are “right.”—Ps. 119:128.

2. Why should we ‘continue in the things we have learned’?

“BENEFICIAL FOR TEACHING”

3 Jesus told the nation of Israel: “I am sending forth to you prophets and wise men and public instructors.” (Matt. 23:34) Jesus was speaking about his disciples, whom he taught to use the Scriptures in their ministry. At Pentecost 33 C.E., one of these “public instructors,” the apostle Peter, gave a talk to a large crowd in Jerusalem in which he quoted several passages from the Hebrew Scriptures. On hearing Peter’s application of these words, many listeners “were stabbed to the heart.” They repented over their past sins. About three thousand of them sought God’s forgiveness and became Christians.—Acts 2:37-41.

4 Another public instructor, the apostle Paul, preached the good news far beyond Jerusalem. For instance, in the Macedonian city of Thessa-

3-5. (a) How did a crowd react to Peter’s talk at Pentecost, and why? (b) Why did many in Thessalonica accept the truth? (c) What about our ministry may impress people today?

lonica, he spoke to those worshipping in a synagogue. For three Sabbaths, Paul “reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving by references that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead.” The result? “Some of them [Jews] became believers,” as did “a great multitude of the Greeks.”—Acts 17:1-4.

5 The way God’s servants today use the Bible impresses many. After a householder in Switzerland listened to one of our sisters as she read a scripture, he asked her: “Whom do you represent?” She answered: “My companion and I are Jehovah’s Witnesses.” He said: “I should have known. Other than Jehovah’s Witnesses, who would come to my house to read the Bible?”

6 How could we use the Bible to a fuller extent in our teaching? If you have the privilege

6, 7. (a) How can those teaching the congregation make good use of the Bible? (b) Why is effective use of the Scriptures on home Bible studies so important?

of teaching the congregation from the platform, use specific Bible references. Rather than paraphrasing key scriptures or reading them from a computer printout or an electronic device, *open the Bible and read from it*, and encourage the audience to do the same. Also, take time to *apply* the verses in a way that helps the audience draw closer to Jehovah. Instead of using complicated illustrations and experiences that merely entertain, use the time to expound on God's Word.

7 What do we need to keep in mind while conducting home Bible studies? As we use our Christian publications, we must be careful not to skip the Bible references. We should encourage the student to read cited texts and help him to grasp their meaning. How? Not by giving long explanations that turn the study into a series of lectures, but by encouraging the student to express himself. Instead of telling him what to believe or how

to act, we can ask well-thought-out questions that will help him arrive at proper conclusions.*

“BENEFICIAL . . . FOR REPROVING”

8 We often view the matter of “reproving” as a task to be carried out by Christian elders. And, indeed, overseers have the responsibility to ‘reprove those who practice sin.’ (1 Tim. 5:20; Titus 1:13) But reproving *ourselves* is also important. Paul was an exemplary Christian who had a clean conscience. (2 Tim. 1:3) Even so, he wrote: “I behold in my members another law warring against the law of my mind and leading me captive to sin’s law.” By studying the context of those words, we will better understand what fight Paul had to wage to control his sinful nature.—*Read Romans 7:21-25.*

* In his teaching, Jesus often asked others: “What do you think?” Then he waited for a response.—Matt. 18:12; 21:28; 22:42.

8. Paul dealt with what inner struggle?

9 What weaknesses did Paul strive to overcome? Though he did not specify them, he did write to Timothy that he had been “an insolent man.” (1 Tim. 1:13) Before his conversion, Paul’s fury against Christians had been intense. Regarding his feelings about Christ’s followers, he confessed: “I was extremely mad against them.” (Acts 26:11) Paul learned to control his temper, yet he at times must have struggled to control his feelings and his words. (Acts 15:36-39) What helped him to succeed?

10 When writing to the Christians in Corinth, Paul described the strategy that he used to reprove himself. (*Read 1 Corinthians 9:26, 27.*) He struck at his imperfect human nature with well-directed spiritual blows. Very likely, he looked for points of counsel in the Scriptures, supplicated Jehovah for help to apply them, and worked hard

9, 10. (a) What possible weaknesses did Paul contend with?
(b) How did Paul likely carry on his fight against sin?

to improve.* We can benefit from his example because we wage similar fights against our imperfect inclinations.

11 We must never become complacent in our worship. Instead, we need to “keep testing” ourselves to make sure that we are truly walking in the way of the truth. (2 Cor. 13:5) When reading such scriptures as Colossians 3:5-10, we could ask ourselves: ‘Am I working hard on deadening my sinful inclinations or am I weakening morally? In using the Internet, when an immoral site comes up, do I get out of it, or do I search out improper Web sites?’ Applying the counsel of God’s Word in such a personal way will help us to “stay awake and keep our senses.”—1 Thess. 5:6-8.

* Paul’s letters contain much encouragement on overcoming sinful tendencies. (Rom. 6:12; Gal. 5:16-18) It is reasonable to conclude that he himself applied the counsel he gave to others.—Rom. 2:21.

11. How can we “keep testing” ourselves to see whether we are walking in the way of the truth?

“BENEFICIAL . . . FOR SETTING THINGS STRAIGHT”

12 The Greek term translated “setting things straight” means “to make good, to correct, to restore to a proper, upright condition.” At times, we must take the step of setting things straight with others who misunderstand us or our actions. For example, the Jewish religious leaders complained that Jesus was kind to “tax collectors and sinners.” Jesus responded: “Persons in health do not need a physician, but the ailing do. Go, then, and learn what this means, ‘I want mercy, and not sacrifice.’” (Matt. 9:11-13) He patiently and kindly explained God’s words to all. Hence, humble ones came to know Jehovah as “a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness and truth.” (Ex. 34:6) In re-

12, 13. (a) What should be our goal in “setting things straight,” and how can we follow Jesus’ example in doing so? (b) What kind of speech has no place in “setting things straight” with others?

sponse to the efforts of God’s Son to ‘set things straight,’ many came to have faith in the good news.

13 Jesus’ example teaches us how we should help others. Someone who is upset might say in an abrupt tone, ‘I want to set something straight with you.’ But such an approach is not the intent of what is stated at 2 Timothy 3:16. “All Scripture” does not authorize us to tell others off. Like “the stabs of a sword,” sharp criticism often causes much pain and seldom brings any benefits. —Prov. 12:18.

14 How, then, can we use patience and kindness in “setting things straight”? Suppose a married couple asked a Christian elder for help to end their frequent arguments. What would the elder do? Without taking sides, he can reason with the

14-16. (a) How can elders ‘set things straight’ in a way that helps others solve their problems? (b) Why is “setting things straight” in a Scriptural way so important in raising children?

couple on Bible principles, perhaps using those found in chapter 3 of the book *The Secret of Family Happiness*. As the elder guides the discussion, the husband and wife may discern what counsel each should apply more fully. At a later time, the elder would want to inquire about how things are going in the family and offer more help if that is needed.

15 How can parents ‘set things straight’ in a way that strengthens their children spiritually? Imagine that you want to help your teenage daughter avoid a questionable friendship. First, you should find out the facts. Then, if there is reason for concern, you can talk to her, perhaps using points from *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*, Volume 2. In the days following, you can spend extra time with her. You can also observe her frame of mind as she engages

in the field service or shares in family recreation. If you show patience and kindness, your daughter will sense your loving interest. She will likely be moved to apply your counsel and avoid a disastrous turn in her life.

16 In a similar patient and kind way, we can encourage those who are worried about their health, are downhearted after the loss of their employment, or are confused about certain Scriptural teachings. Using God’s Word to ‘set things straight’ brings great benefits to Jehovah’s people.

“BENEFICIAL . . . FOR DISCIPLINING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS”

17 “No discipline seems for the present to be joyous, but grievous.” And yet, “afterward to those who have been trained by it it yields peaceable fruit, namely, righteousness.” (Heb. 12:11)
Most Christian adults agree that the discipline

17. Why should we accept discipline with gratitude?

they received from their believing parents helped them. And accepting discipline from Jehovah, as given by Christian elders, keeps us on the way to life.—Prov. 4:13.

18 Giving effective discipline is a skill. Jehovah told Christians to administer it “in righteousness.” (2 Tim. 3:16) Hence, we should use Bible principles as our guide. One such principle is found at Proverbs 18:13: “When anyone is replying to a matter before he hears it, that is foolishness on his part and a humiliation.” Thus, when elders need to speak with an individual accused of serious sin, they must thoroughly investigate the matter to obtain all the facts. (Deut. 13:14) Only then can they discipline “in righteousness.”

19 Moreover, God’s Word instructs Christian elders to correct others “with mildness.” (*Read*

18, 19. (a) Why is the counsel found at Proverbs 18:13 so important in “disciplining in righteousness”? (b) When elders show mildness and love in dealing with wrongdoers, what is often the result?

2 *Timothy 2:24-26.*) True, a person may bring reproach on Jehovah as well as injury to innocent people. Still, an elder who gets angry when counseling such an individual will not help him. However, when elders imitate “the kindly quality of God,” they may move to repentance the one who has erred.—Rom. 2:4.

20 In raising their children “in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah,” parents must apply Bible principles. (Eph. 6:4) A father should avoid punishing his son based on a one-sided report of the boy’s behavior. And violent anger has no place in a Christian family. “Jehovah is very tender in affection and merciful,” and those who have the responsibility for disciplining young ones should strive to show the same loving qualities.—Jas. 5:11.

20. What principles should parents apply when disciplining their children?

JEHOVAH'S PRICELESS GIFT TO US

21 A godly man once revealed why he loved Jehovah's law. (*Read Psalm 119:97-104.*) By studying it, he gained wisdom, insight, and understanding. Keeping its counsel helped him avoid false paths that brought heartache to others. For him, studying the Scriptures was pleasant and satisfying. He was determined to obey the God whose instructions had given him so many advantages in living.

22 Do you value "all Scripture"? With it, you build up your faith that God will fulfill his purpose. Its inspired counsel protects you from the deadly effects of practicing sin. And by explaining it skillfully, you can help others get on the road to life and stay on it. May we make full use of "all Scripture" as we serve our all-wise and loving God, Jehovah.

21, 22. What expression found at Psalm 119:97-104 best describes your feeling toward Jehovah's Word?