

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE.

There is a gain in systematic and thorough Bible study; there is a gain in intelligent Bible-reading, typically or by a single book at a time; there is also a gain in the regular daily reading of the Bible, chapter after chapter, in course, throughout the year. This latter reading may, at times, be perfunctory, but it has its practical value even then. Those men who are most familiar with the Bible in all its parts are commonly those who have been in the habit of reading the Bible through, in course, year after year, and who have thereby become gradually familiar with portions of the Bible which they would not have looked up in ordinary topical reading or study. Nor does this formal reading of the Bible interfere with more earnest and thorough occasional Bible-reading. On the contrary, it makes that kind of reading all the more satisfactory when it is undertaken. It is a good thing to read a chapter in the Bible at the close of the day's work, even though its reading be somewhat irksome, and the temptation to sleep be a strong one for the hour. But that should not be one's only way of Bible reading; nor is it likely to be.

—S. S. Times.

PERSONALITIES.

Keep clear of personalities in general conversation. Talk of things, objects, thoughts. The smallest minds occupy themselves with personalities. Personalities must sometimes be talked, because we have to learn and find out men's characteristics for legitimate objects; but it is to be with confidential persons. Do not needlessly report ill of others. There are times when we are compelled to say: "I do not think Bouncer is a true and honest man." But where there is no need to express an opinion, let poor Bouncer swagger away. Others will take his measure, no doubt, and save you the trouble of analyzing him and instructing them. As far as possible dwell on the good side of human beings. There are family boards where a constant pro-stant process of depreciating, assigning motives, cutting up character, goes forward. They are not pleasant places. One who is healthy does not want to dine at a dissecting table. There is evil enough in man, God knows! But it is not the mission of every young man and woman to detail and report it all. Keep the atmosphere as pure as possible, and fragrant with gentleness and charity.

—John Hall, D. D.

SELF-DENIAL.

Self-denial, for the sake of denial, does no good; self-sacrifice, for its own sake, is no religious act at all. If you give up a meal for the sake of showing power over self, or for the sake of self-discipline, you are not more religious than before. This is mere self-culture, which, being occupied forever about self, leaves you only in that circle of self from which religion is to free you; but to give up a meal that one you love may have it is properly a religious act—no hard and dismal duty, because made easy by affection. To bear pain for the sake of bearing it has in it no moral quality at all; but to bear it rather than surrender truth, or in order to save another, is positive enjoyment, as well as ennobling to the soul. Did you ever receive even a blow meant for another in order to shield that other? Do you not know that there was actual pleasure in that keen pain far beyond the most rapturous thrill of nerve which could be gained from pleasure in the midst of painlessness? Is not the mystic yearning of love expressed in words most purely thus—*Let me suffer for him?* This element of love is that which makes this doctrine an intelligible and a blessed truth. Sacrifice, alone, bare and unrelieved, is ghastly, unnatural, and dead; but self-sacrifice, illuminated by love, is warmth and life, giving himself for man. *F. W. Robertson.*

Never leave your way to seek a cross, nor go out of the way to avoid one; appointed crosses are real blessings.

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