

BIBLE STUDY SOUL STEWARDS

by Rev. Thomas Soltis, SELC Stewardship Director

Critical Questions

- Q.** What does Christian stewardship involve?
A. The management of all of life and life's resources to the glory of God.
- Q.** What should motivate it?
A. Love for Christ.
- Q.** How is Christ-centered love created?
A. By the power of the Holy Spirit thru the Holy Scriptures.

Life thru Nourishment

Everyone needs to eat to live. Spiritual nourishment is also essential for spiritual life. The Word of God is life-giving soul food. Jesus says: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God." (Matt. 4:4) Hebrews 4:12 tells us: "The Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword." God's Word pierces hearts and souls to instill spiritual life and strength.

Search the Scriptures

God has given us a free will to manage time. In our busy world, prioritizing its precise amount in any given day is essential. Otherwise important things are left unattended. God's Word is an important priority. Time must be given for daily Bible reading and regular church attendance where God's Word is read and explained. Sermons, however, normally do not offer opportunities for questions. They are bound to occur. Some can be answered; some not. Romans 3:33 refers to the frailty of weak, sinful, human minds to fully comprehend God: "How unsearchable are His judgements and His paths beyond tracing out." God says of Himself: "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." (Isaiah 55:9) Nevertheless Christ decreed: "Search the Scriptures." (John 5:39) Searching involves asking questions. There is a difference between asking questions and doubting. Doubting denotes an element of unbelief. Honest questions asked in faith, however, simply seek to know more about what one already firmly believes.

Sometimes while seeking an answer to a question which cannot be answered ("beyond tracing out" - Rom. 3:33), additional questions may arise which can be answered and faith greatly enriched. An excellent place to search the Scriptures with faith-filled questions is a Bible Class.



Bible Class Suggestions

- > The ideal size for good interaction is about 12.
- > A number of classes should be offered featuring different topics. Time and place can be varied.
- > Classes should be 4 to 6 weeks with a rest period between to promote the next series of classes.
- > Leaders who do too much talking without class interaction kill a class.
- > "CCC" (coffee, cake & conversation) provide a setting for Bible based "koinonia" (fellowship) which bonds Christians in faith and love.

An effort to Involve Everyone

In the early 60's, Sts. Peter & Paul Lutheran Church, Lorain, OH, endeavored to engage the entire congregation in Bible study with a degree of success. During the time Sunday School classes were held in the educational unit, adults in groups of eight to twelve, gathered in all parts of the church - pews, balcony, narthex, choir alcove, offices, etc. There were no regular teachers. Booklets were provided with members of the class taking turns leading the sessions as moderators.

Promoting Bible Class Study

"Stewardship Advisors" offer some excellent helps for encouraging Bible classes. A program titled, "Encouraging Bible Studies", offers a format to publicize Bible studies, newsletter article, lay reader talk, survey/questionnaire, and banner.

www.stewardshipadv@aol.com (248-644-6150)

Other Resources

- www.cph.org (Bible studies)
- www.biblestudybuilder.com (create own studies)
- www.selc.lcms.org (stewardship articles)