

## ***What Can I Do To Make Our Bible Classes Better?***

Since we are what we think, say and do, let us determine that we will think seriously and optimistically about our Bible classes. As you talk to yourself say, "I'm going to make the best effort I have ever made to make a positive, constructive contribution to strengthen and improve our Bible classes." Having made such a commitment, we must get down to the nitty-gritty of taking the steps - doing the things conscientiously that we must do to reach that goal. Look at several practical steps to be taken:

1. I will make attendance on Sunday morning and Wednesday evening mandatory, a must (this is settled, decided, not to be debated) not optional (deciding from week to week if I feel like it and I want to work it in).

2. I am determined to be on time for services. I will break the habit of being late by planning ahead, starting sooner, making it a challenge to show the importance of this by being on time. If others in the family are helping create the problem, I will seek to solve it by discussing it with them.

3. I will show my involvement and the seriousness of my commitment to excellence in our Bible classes by working on all assignments and making daily Bible reading as much a part of my day as eating, sleeping and working. I will come to class prepared to enter into the discussions with enthusiasm and something to contribute to the class because I have taken the time to study. If I am teaching a class I will seek to be the right example to others as I reveal by my attitudes and actions how important study of the word of God is in our daily lives. I will earnestly strive to be a "workman that needeth not to be ashamed" (2 Tim. 2:15).

4. I will see our Bible classes as a means to an end. I want to truly understand the Bible better because I want to be and do what Christ wants me to be and do. I will constantly remind myself that ignorance of the Scripture is ignorance of Christ and His will for my life. As I prepare for the class, I want to see it as the means whereby I grow and grow up to a greater sense of responsibility coupled with real joy in our Lord.

5. I will use my influence to be a true and positive encouragement to teachers, the classes, and the arrangements which are in place to insure that the word of God is faithfully taught. Where I find discouragement I will seek to encourage; where I find complaints, I will show appreciation; where the seeds of doubt and discouragement are sown, I will plant faith, hope and love; where some have surrendered to apathy and indifference, I will seek to make a real difference by striving for excellence. I will seek to be like Paul when he wrote, "straining toward what is ahead, I press toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14).

***- by John Clark***

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## ***Are You An Asset?***

1. Are you sincerely seeking to live the life of a Christian, daily and constantly, in the light of New Testament teaching? Acts 10:34-35; Col. 3:17; 1 Cor. 10:31-32

2. Are you striving to grow and to improve spiritually - in knowledge of the truth, in spiritual wisdom, in love, in faith, in humility, in courage, in self-control, in steadfastness, etc.? 1 Pet. 2:2; 2 Pet. 1:5-12; 3:18; Col. 1:9-12; 2 Thess. 1:3

3. Are you really trying to set a proper example for, and to exert the proper influence upon others that you encounter daily? Matt. 5:13-16; 1 Tim. 4:12; 1 Pet. 2:11-12

4. Are you concerned about the lost souls around you, and are you using opportunities to teach them the truth? Mk. 6:34; Jn. 4:35-36; Mk. 16:15; 2 Tim. 2:2

5. Are you diligent in studying your Bible and in praying unto your Heavenly Father? Ps. 1:1-2; Col. 3:16; Eph. 3:3-4; Rom. 12:12; Eph. 6:18; Phil. 4:6

6. Do you attend all of the assemblies for worship and all of the classes of Bible study? Acts 2:44,46; 5:42; Heb. 10:24-25; Acts 20:7

7. Do you give as much as you are prospered by God and as often as you are prospered by God? 1 Cor. 16:2; Acts 11:29; 2 Cor. 8:12; 9:6-7; 1 Cor. 9:14; Phil. 4:15-18

8. Are you friendly? Do you meet and greet your brethren in Christ? Do you meet and welcome visitors at our services? Matt. 7:12; Phil. 2:4; Rom. 12:10; Jas. 2:1-5

9. Do you ever visit anyone for spiritual reasons? Do you ever call or visit those in the area who are visitors at our assemblies? Do you ever call or visit brethren who are weak or negligent or in need? Lk. 14:23; Matt. 11:28-30; Rev. 22:17; Gal. 6:1; Jas. 5:20-21; Matt. 25:34-45; Jas. 1:27

10. Are you happy and grateful that you are a Christian? Do you show it? Phil. 3:11; 4:4; Rom. 14:17; 15:13; Gal. 5:22

11. Are you really concerned about doing your part as a member of the local congregation? Do you ever volunteer for the many calls that are issued? Rom. 12:4-7; 1 Cor. 12:14-27; Eph. 4:12-16

12. Are you honestly working to make Christ, His Word, and His church first in your life? Matt. 6:33-37; 16:24-26; Lk. 9:57-62

Are you an asset to the local church? Take an inventory.

- by *Bill Crews*

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### ***Avoiding the “Uncertain Sound”***

It is not uncommon to hear folks say something like this: "I don't drink alcohol, but I'm not sure that you can say, absolutely, that it is wrong to do so." Or it might be, "I don't dance, but I really don't think that you can say it is wrong." Or even, "We don't use instrumental music where I worship, but I'm not convinced that you could prove it is wrong to use it."

The list goes on and on. It includes subjects of modest dress ("I don't wear shorts, but . . ."), missing the assemblies ("I try to be at all the services, but I can't say it's wrong to . . ."), using tobacco ("I don't smoke, but . . ."), etc. The really sad thing is that these statements often come from Christians who ought to know better.

What these people need to realize is that – even though they do not actually engage in the practice – their words amount to an endorsement that others will certainly take to heart. Will they accept the responsibility when a young Christian becomes ensnared in alcohol use and abuse? Will they acknowledge their flawed teaching when they see a teenager involved in immodest dress or the lasciviousness of modern dancing? When these things lead to other acts of sexual immorality will they shoulder their blame? What are these folks thinking anyway!?!

When Paul was addressing the use of spiritual gifts, he mentioned the danger of giving an “uncertain sound” (1 Cor. 14:8). The result of that, Paul explained, was that people would not know how to move forward. While the context was different, the point is certainly practical for those who express their misgivings about important spiritual matters.

For those who aren't certain that drinking, dancing, instrumental music in worship, immodest dress, smoking, etc., are wrong -- we make this simple request: Study! Become certain. And, in the meanwhile, definitely don't teach your doubts to others. Doing so will encourage them – especially the weak and the young – to act in violation of their consciences, and that is a sin, too (Romans 14:23). Think!

- by *Greg Gwin*