

The logo for 'H.A.B.I.T.S. BIBLE' is centered within a white speech bubble. The text 'H.A.B.I.T.S.' is in a dark blue, sans-serif font, and 'BIBLE' is in a larger, multi-colored font where each letter is a different color (B: blue, I: light blue, B: green, L: yellow, E: orange). The background of the slide is a colorful, low-poly geometric pattern in shades of blue, yellow, and orange.

H.A.B.I.T.S. BIBLE

Good Morning!

Today we are continuing our Sermon Series entitled **H.A.B.I.T.S.**, *which this morning is going to focus us on the importance of Bible Study.*

Now, by a show of hands, how many of you would say that you have developed *habits* over the course of your life? [every hand should be up]

And what everyone recognizes about *habits* is that some are good, and some are bad.

The logo features the text "H.A.B.I.T.S BIBLE" inside a white speech bubble with a drop shadow. The background is a colorful geometric pattern of triangles in shades of blue, yellow, and orange. The text "H.A.B.I.T.S" is in a dark blue, sans-serif font, and "BIBLE" is in a larger, multi-colored font where each letter has a different color: B (blue), I (light blue), B (yellow), L (green), E (orange).

H.A.B.I.T.S
BIBLE

And if you're one of those people who doesn't think they have bad habits.....just ask one of the people you live with and they will fill you in QUICKLY. If you're a parent, ask your children, you will be swiftly humbled.

And just like we seek to minimize our bad habits and maximize our good habits in a common everyday human sort of way, ***spiritually speaking*** our aim should be no different.....in fact the spiritual dimension is vastly more significant.

The logo features the text "H.A.B.I.T.S BIBLE" centered within a white speech bubble. The background is a colorful, low-poly geometric pattern in shades of blue, yellow, and orange. The text "H.A.B.I.T.S" is in a dark blue, sans-serif font, and "BIBLE" is in a larger, multi-colored font where each letter has a different hue (blue, green, yellow, orange).

H.A.B.I.T.S
BIBLE

The purpose of this study is for us to understand the H.A.B.I.T.S that produce life-long spiritual growth as Christians...because that's what we all want right?

We are here assembled as THE CHURCH because we believe that by investing here we will grow, but the question remains how does that spiritual growth come about exactly?

Is it in listening to powerful sermons? Is it in going to Christian conferences? Is it in having spiritually and emotionally powerful experiences? Is it found in avoiding the big sins or bad influences?

The logo for 'H.A.B.I.T.S BIBLE' is centered within a white speech bubble. The background of the slide is a colorful, low-poly geometric pattern in shades of blue, yellow, and orange. The text 'H.A.B.I.T.S' is in a dark blue, sans-serif font, and 'BIBLE' is in a larger, multi-colored font where each letter has a different color (B: blue, I: light blue, B: yellow, L: green, E: orange).

H.A.B.I.T.S
BIBLE

And while I think all of these things are helpful I would contend that an integral part of a time-tested, fruit-bearing, vibrant Christian life is found in the development of ***spiritual disciplines***.

Because you see church the addition of these disciplines to our lives *[is one of the factors that]* moves us further down the path we call sanctification.

Sanctification the process by which the Holy Spirit, fills us and, works within us, to make us more like Christ.

The logo features the text "H.A.B.I.T.S BIBLE" centered within a white speech bubble. The background is a colorful, low-poly geometric pattern in shades of blue, yellow, and orange. The text "H.A.B.I.T.S" is in a dark blue, sans-serif font, and "BIBLE" is in a larger, multi-colored font where each letter has a different color (B: blue, I: light blue, B: yellow, L: green, E: orange).

H.A.B.I.T.S
BIBLE

You see, the Scriptures tell us that the Spirit of God gives believers the power to grow closer and closer to the image of Christ, as we work through these disciplines/practices/H.A.B.I.T.S

And so, in our H.A.B.I.T.S series we have already taught in past sermons on the H = Having a Prayer Life; the A = Accountability, and the T= Tithing/Learning the Spiritual Discipline of Giving.



And this morning we are going to continue to flesh out the “B” in H.A.B.I.T.S which stands for Bible Study.

And I am going to build on Pastor Nate’s teaching from last week, where we learned about the trustworthiness/reliability of the BIBLE, by now laying out some perspectives on *Why We Should Study The Bible*.

2 Timothy 3:16, 17 (ESV)

¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ *that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

And our source text for this sermon series is 2 Timothy 3:16, and 17 which reads.....

Read:



Now verse 16 is telling us **WHAT** scripture is.....it is God's word, it is profitable for teaching, reproofing, correction and training in righteousness.

But what verse 17 does is something different.

Verse 17 tells us **WHY** we have the scriptures, why we have God's word.....and that is going to be our focus this morning.

Verse 17 talks about the notion of the believer being **completed** through the study of God's word.



*You know a couple of weeks ago Pastor Nate referenced the movie Jerry McGuire and the infamous line from that film “show me the money” well there was another popular line from that movie, when Tom Cruise says the words [to Renee Zellweger} that all women of the 90’s wanted to hear from Tom Cruise, the words “**You complete me,**” while all of us guys just gag.*

The reason why this movie line has been repeated over and over again in popular culture is because we all recognize deep down inside our own need for **completion.**

2 Timothy 3:16, 17 (ESV)

¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ *that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*

We know there is something missing from us, but often we misdiagnose that longing.....we fill it with anything and everything, just trying to feel completed.

And you know, 2 Timothy 3:17 makes the case that neither Tom Cruise or Renee Zelwegger nor any other mortal being have anything to do with our completion.....but rather that God's word plays a critical role in equipping us to be complete Christians, complete Disciples of Christ.....to have our longing satisfied.



And so you might be wondering, *“Ok so the study of God’s word is supposed to help complete me, but practically how does that work itself out in my life?”*

Well church family, the practical application of 2 Timothy 3:16, 17 is that as we study the words of the living God...study is a means not an end..... In other words we do not study just to know facts, and then to repeat those facts to ourselves and others.

NO! The entire point of knowing God’s word/studying God’s word.....is that through our study we are preparing ourselves for the GOOD WORKS [that Ephesians 2 tells us] God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:10 has long been a passage of scripture that believers have gone to, to highlight our true purpose and identity. **READ:**

We are His workmanship, created for good works, which God prepared for us to walk in long, long ago.

And church you see this is the goal of Christian discipleship.....that we find our identity in Christ...that we see ourselves, our lives tied to Him. And then, the outworking of this is ***good works***, not that we do these good works in an attempt to save ourselves, but rather the good works are a natural outpouring from the life a believer.



And Church what I am going to contend this morning and what I think the scriptures bear out, is that our study of the Bible ***IS A MEANS TO THIS END.***

Meaning that we study the Bible as a means to BECOME HIS WORKMANSHIP.

We study God's word to prepare ourselves in advance for the GOOD WORKS THAT GOD WANTS TO FLOW OUT FROM OUR LIVES AS A TESTIMONY OF HIS GRACE TO AN UNBELIEVING WORLD.

But in order for that to happen we must be prepared.

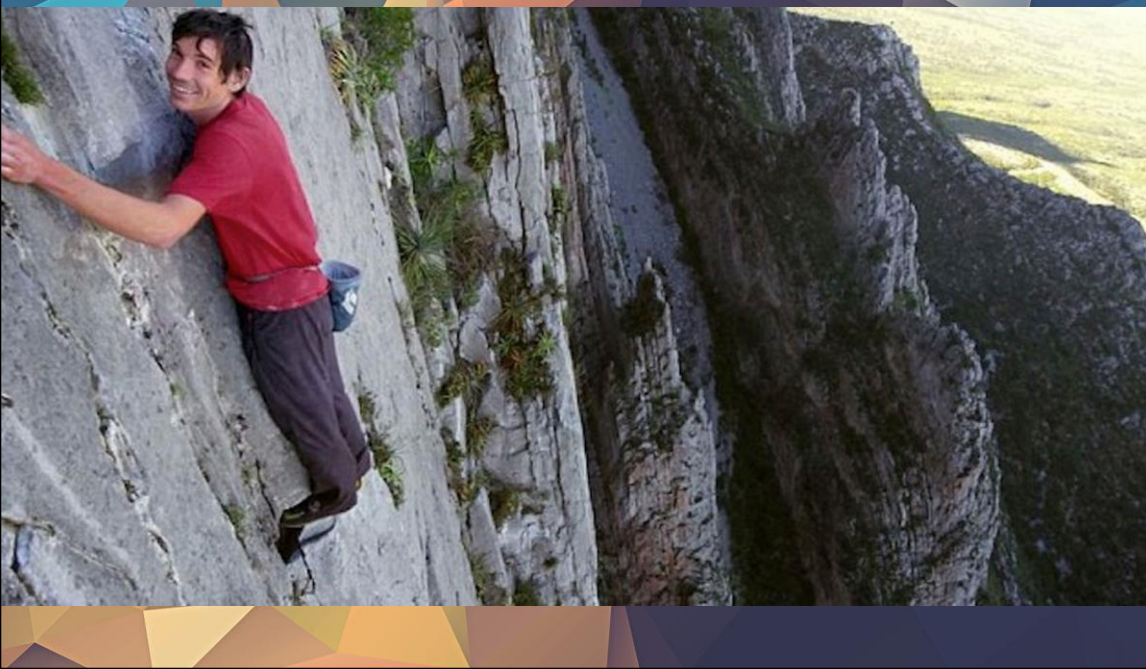


Illus:

This is a picture of El Capitan in Yosemite National Park. This rock face stretches 3,000 feet high into the sky, and it is a rock climber's dream.

Usually teams of climbers work together using ropes to traverse El Capitan, and only the most skilled climbers dare tackle this climb, and it usually takes a day or two.

If you look closely you can see a tracing of the route most climbers take. Clearly this endeavor would take a lot of preparation.



This next picture is of a man name Alex Honnold who became a rock climbing legend last year when he became the first person to ever FREE CLIMB El Capitan. [free climb means he used NO ROPES, Alex had no harness, and no climbing partner].

And he did it in record time of just 4 hours.

Now while this feat seems crazy to us...it didn't feel crazy to Alex because he said he'd been preparing for the moment since he was 11 years old.....and 20 years later he was equipped to do the impossible.



And you see church the corollaries here are obvious.

The Christian life can be easily compared to a 3,000 foot climb. The New Testament writers were constantly comparing our discipleship to Christ to a difficult physical endeavor.

And just like Alex Honnold holding on to the side of El Capitan for dear life.....often times we feel like we have little to hold onto.....often times the circumstances in our lives leave us feeling like we are climbing without a rope.



Now, what do you suppose would have happened if Alex had only prepared for 20 weeks instead of 20 years to climb El Capitan?

Well, he still would have made the headlines but it would have been a story of a tragic fall rather than a triumphant climb.

And you see often times we fall in our lives “spiritually speaking” because we have not adequately prepared ourselves for the task at hand.

Jesus keyed in on this idea in Luke chapter 14, where he lays out the cost of discipleship.

Luke 14:27, 28 (ESV)

²⁷ Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸ For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?

Jesus says in verses 27 and 29 of Luke chapter 14.

Read:

What Jesus is highlighting in this passage is that following him is going to take INVESTMENT on our part. That being a Christian isn't a passive exercise.

Jesus points to the fact that before we plan to do something like build a building, we sit down and plan out how we are going to get that done...we are intentional about it...we get prepared for what is to come.



H.A.B.I.T.S BIBLE

WHY SHOULD WE STUDY IT?

Likewise the expectation is laid out for us today as 21st century Christians, that our pursuit of Christ will cost us something.

Church we must go inward with this, looking into our hearts and asking the tough questions like..... *“am I investing in what will produce Christlikeness in my life?”*

“Am I counting the cost of following Jesus and making decisions that will reinforce the H.A.B.I.T.S that will lead to a fruitful Christian life.”



Asking, *“do I see the study of God’s word as a critical component in my development/my completion as a Christian?”*

Illus:

A few years ago our family took a trip to Redwood National Forest. **[Change Slide]** This is a picture of Ethan and Ella standing on top of a Redwood Tree.....surrounded by other Redwood trees.

And I remember the sheer astonishment of standing in this forest, amazed by how tall these trees were, but it wasn’t just the trees, the ferns, the grasses, everything grew bigger in the Redwood Forest.



I asked one of the guides for an explanation as to why these trees were so big.....and they explained that because of all the moisture the coastal area receives, there is constantly new soil being introduced to the area.

This new soil filled with nutrients is constantly bringing new nourishment to these giant trees providing them constant fresh sustenance that then allows them to grow clear into the blue sky.



And you see for the believer, the scriptures are to be that same sustenance.

As we read God's word, it brings new nourishment into our lives, allowing us to grow spiritually, so that we can be ready for what God has in store for us.

I fear that for many of us, we view the reasons to study the bible primarily in regards to what it will do for us. In other words we study as a means to know more for ourselves.....and then we stop short of looking outward with what we are learning.

Don't fall into the trap of
studying the Bible without
doing what it says.

Francis Chan

quotefancy

Notable Pastor and Author Francis Chan is quoted as saying.....**Read:**

This is a very important point Francis is making here. We do not study as Christians just to know...we know so that we can apply, and that by applying truth we might please our Father in Heaven.

And Francis goes onto illustrate this concept by telling a story about informing his daughter that she needed to go clean her room.

He said that when he tells his daughter that she needs to clean her room, she knows exactly what she's expected to do...CLEAN HER ROOM.

Don't fall into the trap of studying the Bible without doing what it says.

Francis Chan

quotefancy

He says, if my daughter were to come back to me [still having not cleaned her room] and say... *“Dad, I’ve taken the time to remember what you have said to me, and I have memorized your words that you want me to clean my room”* Francis said my daughter wouldn't do that because she knows that wouldn't cut it.

He goes onto say that if my daughter came back a second time and said, *“Dad, I have still remembered that you want me to clean my room, but now I’ve learned it in Greek and Ancient Hebrew.”* Francis said my daughter wouldn't say or do that because again she knows that wouldn't cut it. I want her to clean her room.

Don't fall into the trap of
studying the Bible without
doing what it says.

Francis Chan

quotefancy

Francis continues on with the illustration stating: if my daughter came to me yet again and says, *“Dad I remember that you want me to clean my room, so what I’ve done is I’ve got a bunch of my friends together to talk about what cleaning my room might look like.”*

Francis’ point was that if we wouldn’t stand for that lack of obedience from our own children, then most certainly God will not appreciate our inaction either.

Therefore again: **we must not fall into the trap of studying the Bible without doing what it says.**



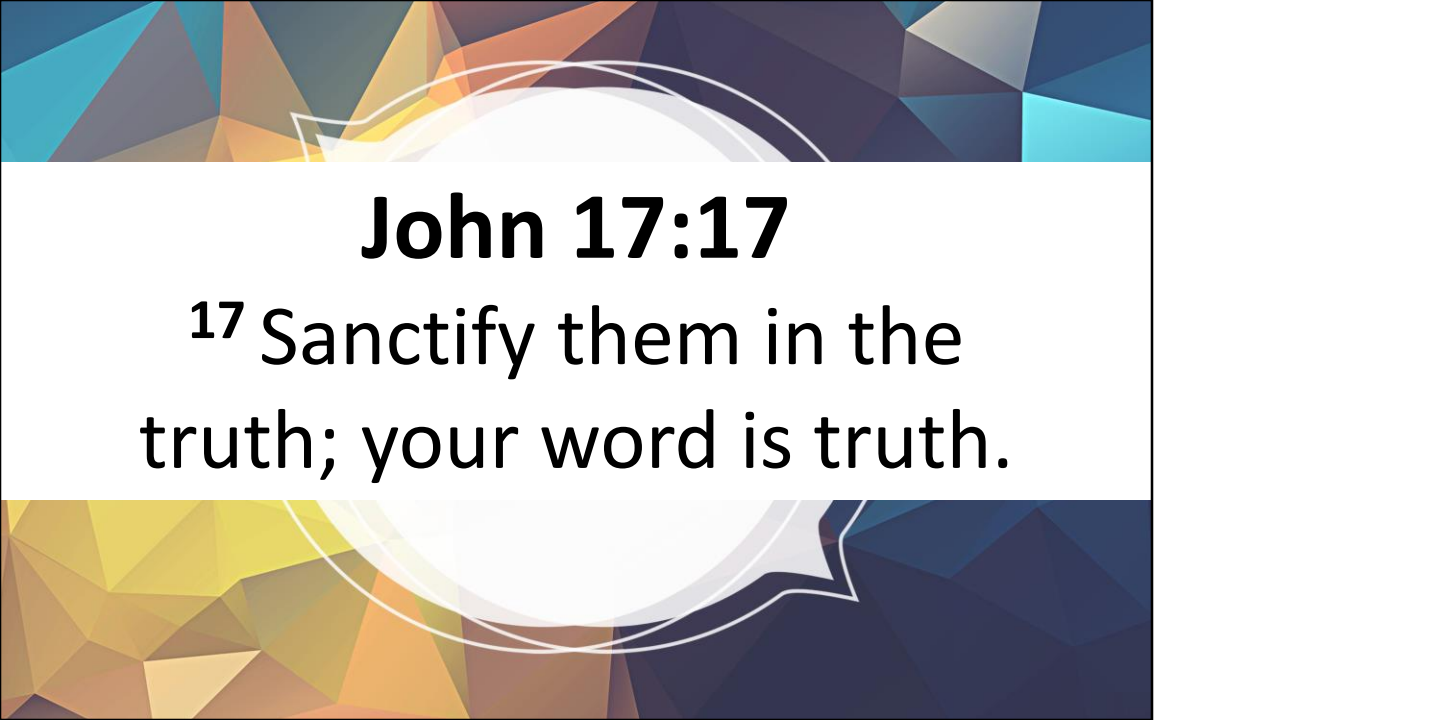
John 17:17

¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

On the night before His execution, Jesus met in the upper room with His disciples and prayed what is known as His High Priestly Prayer.

And in this prayer Jesus poured out His soul to the Father in behalf of His *disciples present and future*. This prayer was for their sanctification.

And here is what he said...¹⁷ *Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.* Church think about this...in the final moments of his earthly ministry, your sanctification was at the forefront of Jesus' mind. Think about that!



John 17:17

¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

And here in this prayer we see Jesus aligning the believers personal sanctification, along with THE TRUTH/THE WORD OF GOD.

In other words.....we are sanctified, as we add truth to who we are, and truth is found in the word of God.

The implications of Christ's words here are profound.

Because there isn't one person here who wants to live in error. Not one of us desires to live with wrong perspectives and motives.

John 17:17

¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth.

To sanctify someone or something is to set that person or thing apart for the use intended by its designer.

No, we want to be sanctified.

*To sanctify someone or something is to set that person or thing apart for the use intended by its designer.

And for those of us who have bowed our knee and have confessed Jesus as Lord.....we have been set apart for a purpose by our designer.

And as we study God's word, by the power of the Holy Spirit...God's plan is revealed.



And you see, this is a beautiful thing...God does have a plan for us.

There is a route we can take in life that leads to the divine.....and on top of all that we have been provided with perfect directions along each and every part of the route.

But the question remains, are we studying those divine directions?

By a show of hands, how many of us here this morning have ever used GPS of any sort?

And by another show of hands how many of us have gotten lost because we used our GPS?



Illus:

I heard a story a few years back in Time Magazine of a woman Sabine Moreau, a 67-year-old Belgian woman, who was driving to pick up a friend in the neighboring city of Brussels, just 90 miles from her home.

But based on the faulty directions she got from her GPS, **she drove all the way to Croatia some 900 miles away.** This is a true story, look it up.

This would be like driving to visit your friend in, Baltimore but ending up in Atlanta, **Crazy!**

The logo for H.A.B.I.T.S BIBLE is centered within a white speech bubble. The text 'H.A.B.I.T.S' is in a dark blue, sans-serif font, and 'BIBLE' is in a larger, multi-colored font (blue, green, yellow, orange). Below the logo, the text 'WHY SHOULD WE STUDY IT?' is written in a smaller, dark blue font. The background of the slide is a colorful, low-poly geometric pattern in shades of blue, yellow, and orange.

H.A.B.I.T.S BIBLE

WHY SHOULD WE STUDY IT?

The journey took the woman across ***five international borders.***

She stopped several times to get gas and take naps, but she kept pressing onward until she ***hit Zagreb, the capital of Croatia.***

After a few days her son got worried and called the police, who located Sabine by following her bank statements.



Sabine told a Belgian newspaper that she let the navigation system take over, shutting her mind off. [quote] “I was absent-minded so I kept on putting my foot down. I saw all kinds of signs, first in French, then in German, and finally in Croatian, but I continued driving because I was distracted. It wasn’t until I hit Zagreb, Croatia’s capital — a day later — that I realized something was seriously wrong.”

Now, this story is illustrative of what often happens in our lives...we set out with a plan, but due to faulty directions, we end up ***WAY OFF COURSE IN LIFE.***



And as we are headed the wrong way there are **many signs along the way** to indicate that we are headed in the wrong direction....but far too often [like Sabine] we are too distracted to see them/to stop and take notice.

And in the end we are left with a choice...will we continue down the same road, with the same BAD DIRECTIONS that got us lost in the first place.....or will we TURN AROUND/ALTER OUR COURSE and FIND A **BETTER** WAY?

In closing, I'd like to encourage you/exhort you to make the Bible your directional map in life.



Realizing that what our world offers in terms of directions is nothing more than a busted GPS system/a faulty GPS that will take us wildly off course if we allow it.

Second, I'd like us all to think deeply about the idea of the scriptures sanctifying us [*what Jesus prayed on our behalf in Luke 17:17*], remembering that we don't study just to know, we study to become more and more set apart that we might be used in His service. And without Bible Study we will not be prepared for that.



But remember, study is a means, it is not the end. God isn't going to be impressed even if you've memorized the entire bible if you have not then applied any of it.

You see the ends God wants to achieve through our study of His word, is our sanctified lives offering good works back to The Father, **which He prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.**

Amen

Pray: Offering