



Chapter 10: Supporting Materials

Walk with the Word does not see itself as some kind of "store" or central place that you have to be dependant upon in order to succeed.

We see ourselves as a starting point; hopefully the beginning of a transition in which **you** are generating everything to meet your ministry's needs. "Success" for us means that you and/or your local ministry or organization becomes completely independent, making your own Bible studies in concert with a reading plan, generate your own study aids, and in general develop everything as a result of your own study of God's Word. The materials provided on Walk with the Word should be thought of as a way to help get things started. They can be used immediately and for as long as you like, but we strongly encourage you to think of them as examples that you can pattern your own ministry tools after. As you study through the Bible personally, and you discover gifts in other members of your local organization, you will want to eventually develop and disseminate these things yourself.

Bible Studies

All of the Bible studies available on the Walk with the Word web site are actual small group and/or Sunday School lessons that were either used in real life while following the reading plan, or continue to be added as we cycle through the entire Bible time and time again.

Because the emphasis is on application, you can't miss the fact that the format we choose to use most often is "question and answer". The passage of Scripture to be studied is usually read completely through

by the group and the leader then facilitates group discussion by going through the passage point by point.

This is a group application of the *Inductive Bible Study Method* that employs observation, interpretation and application. By asking questions of the group, the leader is, in reality, training people to stop and thoroughly observe the particulars of the passage, make an interpretation as to what it means within the context of the passage, and finally to share how it applies to them personally. Rather than using the model of a lecturer and audience in which there is limited interaction, the measure of success of this approach is that the participants actually contribute more than the facilitator. This is why it is not difficult for you to eventually develop your own, similar materials because you'll see how easy it is to put a little formatting behind your own study of the passage that results in sharing your personal observation, interpretation and application while guiding group discussion of same.

Email Newsletter

Most studies will initially be transmitted via our weekly email newsletter in concert with the reading plan. The newsletters themselves are archived and available on the web site but each study is also formatted and published as a Bible study and available for download from the web site.

Subscribing to the newsletter ensures that you get a Bible study that comes from the proscribed reading for that week. This not only keeps you in the habit of studying every week but provides an example of what you can accomplish with small groups or other local ministries.

The newsletter is easily re-distributable to others but also serves as an example of what you can do yourself. It doesn't take a lot of skill these days to generate and disseminate an email newsletter. For those that have Microsoft Office 2000 or later, you can create your study in Word. Change the view to "Web Layout" and the document is converted

instantly to a web format without you having to do a thing. Graphics, colors, etc. are all handled in the background. While still in Word, select File | Send To | Mail Recipient and you will see the message in the body of an email message in which you choose to whom to send it using your email address book. If you can write it/format it in Word, the tools are built in to automatically convert and send it via email.

When your Bible studies become much sought after and your distribution list starts getting into the hundreds you'll have to employ a more sophisticated solution to distribute your studies, but that's probably a "nice" problem to have to deal with, eh?

"How To" Study Guides

Again, in the spirit of wanting to help "jump start" interest in personal Bible study and taking it to the level of hearing God speak through His Word, the study guides on Walk with the Word are oriented towards these goals.

It's important to note that we're not saying this is the only way or the only approach. We're merely suggesting that of all the available approaches and methods that this is one of the best **STARTING** points. We absolutely want you to go deeper, maybe even learn Greek and Hebrew and attain a much higher set of Bible study skills. We've identified what we believe is not just the starting point, but the reference against which all further, deeper study should be measured. In other words, even should you go on to attain a degree in theology, all the skills and methods you acquire must ultimately focus back on the application of what God is saying through His Word. As Jesus said, it's "the doers", not "the hearers".

Graphical Study Aids

This is an area where we strongly encourage you to share with us so that we in turn may share the benefits with others. Visual aids, charts, graphs, maps, tables, timelines, etc. are extremely effective ways of

grasping the context of a passage of Scripture or to clearly communicate complex concepts of doctrine/theology.

The materials provided on Walk with the Word have been developed in the course of actual teaching. We're not ashamed to admit we scour Bible dictionaries, Bible atlases and a myriad of web sites and books for ideas. (Why re-invent an already well-constructed wheel?)

While our emphasis is ever on application, we all need to realize that there's a minimum level of information or education that needs to take place in order to understand the context of any given book or passage within the Bible. So our aim is to provide the basic historical, cultural or linguistic information that best aids in the observation, interpretation and application of the passage.

For instance, it's helpful to visually show how the first half of Daniel is completely different in content from the last half of Daniel. It's interesting to visually represent the 6 different types of people in each of the opening chapters that struggle in their knowledge and relationship with God, whereas in the last half of Daniel it's valuable to see and compare the images resulting from God's revelations to him. Readers become personally connected to the first half of Daniel as they see examples of varying degrees of handling a relationship with God and contrast it to their own walk. And then in studying the prophetic portions of Daniel to realize that God keeps coming back to the issue of relationships with Him.

You will find a number of bookmarks available on the web site that we've been developing for each book of the Bible. On one side are highlights, sometimes even outlines of the book, and on the other side reminders of applying the Inductive principles to that particular book.

Book Reviews

We're not specifically in the book review business. It's not like publishers are sending us books in the hopes that a review provided

on our site will generate sales revenue for that book. The less grandiose truth is that we're providing reviews of books that we just so happen to have actually read in the pursuit of enriching our own walk. You will find that the assessments we provide hope to convey the type of person for which a particular work may be best suited.

For instance, *Let the Reader Understand* by McCartney and Clayton is a book we recommend for the person that really wants to acquire deeper Bible study and interpretation skills at an intermediate level, but short of the detail of study associated with a seminary textbook. While we want to convey that a book, overall, is doctrinally sound, we also want to provide an evaluation of the levels, differentiating between text books versus primers versus "pop" theology.

Reviews of Internet Resources

You really need to be careful. Most of the time it's extremely difficult to effectively discern who is operating a web site, their true beliefs, even the validity of the doctrine they're trying to convey. While it isn't fool-proof, one of the advantages of books is that publishers themselves filter out many things due to the nature and costs of the publishing and distribution system, and there are numerous independent book review resources to give you a good idea not just about the content but the background and point of view of the author. It's not 100% effective, but far more so than for the Internet.

It takes only a few dollars a month these days to put up and run a web site. There are no "filters" and rarely is there Christian accountability. Many web site reviewing services have come and gone and continue to attempt to provide information about new sites but it's extremely difficult.

Our focus is to identify Internet-based resources that may assist in the pursuit of hearing God speak through His Word. But in the end we need to heed Jesus' admonition, "Do not be deceived." You need to be discerning of **ALL** that is presented on any given web site to firmly

know who is a good shepherd and who is a false one. (If you're not doing this with Walk with the Word then you've flunked out already. Simply providing this advice does not exempt us from your scrutiny.)

The Costs

In case you haven't noticed the disclaimer at the bottom of each and every page at the Walk with the Word web site, here it is again:

"Permission for personal and/or not-for-profit use freely granted."

There are no costs for using any of the Bible studies or materials on this site within these parameters.

As to financial support for personnel behind the scenes at Walk with the Word, the "Donation Policy" on the "About This Site" page clearly states:

"Your prayers and support are much coveted but monetary donations for Walk with the Word are neither sought nor desired."

"Please contribute first to your local church, then if able to a ministry spreading the Gospel in your local community such as the Gideons, and finally if able to an international missionary organization such as MAF or Wycliffe. This is an application of Jesus' command in Acts 1:8, "...and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.""