

“The Lost Book!”

2 Chronicles 34:14-21

Intro. – Our text tells of a house cleaning that was going on in Jerusalem. The house being cleaned was the Temple. Among the rubbish/junk, a book was found that had been lost for so long that its message had been forgotten. What was this lost book? Israel had lost the Bible. Of course, this was only a portion of the Bible we know; nevertheless, that loss was disastrous. During the days the Bible was lost, sin began to weave the whip that would eventually drive them into exile. You see, it was in these days, the days of the forgotten/lost Book that sin began planting bombs. These bombs would later blast the foundation out from the people of God!

Illus.– Prior to the French Revolution, France spent millions to fill their peoples’ minds with atheistic literature. France thought God’s Word was a hindrance to progress. The Bible became a lost Book to France. What resulted? In Paris, over half of the children born were born out of wedlock and in one year, 10,000 babies’ bodies were fished out of the sewers!

What’s my point? What about this church, this nation, this community and each of our homes? There are multitudes to whom the Bible might as well be a lost Book. Any benefits they receive from the Bible are indirect. The illiteracy of the ordinary individual when it comes to the Bible is a *fact*. The real tragedy is that this illiteracy is NOT confined to “non-church” going people.

Illus. – state university, 139 freshmen given Bible test. 75 was a passing score. Questions asked were as follows: 1) What is the Pentateuch? 2) Name 10 O.T. books. 3) Who was placed in a lion’s den? 4) Who was swallowed by a great fish? etc. 12 out of 139 passed. The average score for the class was 40%!

Illus. – certain literary society in England offered a prize for the best short story. One member copied the book of Esther verbatim (changing only the name of the characters). He won and when the president of society presented the award, he waxed eloquently of this one’s “marvelous literary style.”

Illus. – college English Professor asked what “an epistle?” was. No one said a word until one brave soul raised his hand and said, “Wasn’t that an apostle’s wife?”

Bluntly, the average individual is totally ignorant of the Bible. Why? It has and is a lost book. Most people really don’t see the value or the need in knowing, let alone, applying the Word of God to their lives.

Purpose: to better understand why everybody ought to have a vital interest in the Bible

Want to give three reasons why everybody ought to have more than just a passing interest in the Bible. I want to give three reasons if kept in mind will keep the Bible from being the lost book in your life. I want to give three reasons to establish the foundation and basis as to why sound doctrine is going to be our theme/study!

I FROM THE STANDPOINT OF LITERATURE

- want to give the following facts as to why the Bible is the single greatest piece of literature ever:

A. If You Love Biographies – Read the Bible

1. No biography makes us more knowledgeable of our heroes than does the Bible
2. We can know the men and women of the Bible better than we know our own neighbors:
 - a. we know their strengths (something every biographer writes)...
 - b. we know their weaknesses, their failures and sin (something most biographers avoid)...
 - c. we know men/women/younger people as they were, what they thought, how they sought God and found Him... and how they sinned and lost Him...

If you love biographies – read the Bible!

B. If You Love Oratory – Read the Bible

1. Daniel Webster *“If there is anything of eloquence in me, it is because I learned the Bible at my mother’s knee.”*
2. Throughout Scripture great speeches are recorded: 1) Moses before Pharaoh; 2) Joshua before Israel; 3) Paul before the crowd at Athens

C. If You Love Drama – Read the Bible

1. Rich fool... Lazarus and the rich man... The father with two lost sons...
2. The most marvelous dramas are found in the Bible...

D. If You Love Poetry – Read the Bible

- the most beautiful poetry in writing is found in the Bible...

If you love literature – read the Bible – it will fill any void missing along these lines...

II FROM THE STANDPOINT OF KNOWLEDGE

A. Knowledge in Modern Literature

1. Works of the “greatest modern” masters are literally saturated with the Bible
2. Read Tennyson, Browning, Shakespeare, Ruskin and Carlyle: to read these writers with any understanding you must know something of the Bible.

B. Knowledge in Science

1. Technical science concerning health – the Bible is full of information yet to be gleaned!
2. S.I. McMillen, M.D. author of the book *None of These Diseases...*

C. Knowledge in Geography/Philosophy Etc.

- if you want real knowledge in these and other fields.. – listen, study, and read the Bible!

III FROM THE STANDPOINT OF NEED

- the Bible is the book for the heart AND soul – it is God’s revelation of Himself to the human soul
- the Bible will make you wise in all matters, but, it’s main purpose is *to make you wise to salvation!*

A. It is a Saving Book

1. Here, let me say the Bible stands ALONE!
2. Had not God made a revelation to us through His word, we couldn’t know Him as we do.
3. If you are hungry to know God, listen, study and read the Bible – it is *the authority* in all of this:
 - a. the secret to convicting power (i.e. want people to be convicted of their sin...) = Bible!
 - b. want people to be accept the grace of God... = Bible!
 - c. want sustaining power to grow in Christ... = Bible!
 - 1) why are some Christians so weak, immature and anemic? Don’t feed on the Word...!
 - 2) you show me a Christian intent upon reading and studying the Word, and I will show you a growing, maturing Christian... “Can’t lead where you don’t know and you can’t teach what you don’t know.”
 - 3) Jeremiah 15:16 “*When Your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and hearts delight.*”
4. The lack of knowing the Word accounts for the readiness of so many to get on the bandwagon of any new fad that claims truth... The lack of knowing the Word accounts for the pitiful lack of commitment found in so many who claim to be Christians...
5. I appeal to all – give the Bible priority in your life, it is a saving book!

B. It is an Influencing Book

1. Wherever the Bible has been embraced, society becomes more kind, gentle, just, intelligent & free
2. Through the years the Bible alone has been the one consistent message of hope to the poor, sight to the blind, and release to the captive.
3. The Bible, where it is read, has been and remains the *Restorer* of national life and individual life!
4. I shutter to think what kind of decisions I would have personally made, had I not been taught the Word of God...

C. It is TRUTH

1. John 17:17 “*...Your Word is truth.*”
2. Matthew 24:35 “*Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words shall not pass away.*”

3. This why Paul appealed to two younger preachers in the following manner:
 - a. 1 Timothy 1:10-11 “...and whatever else is contrary to **sound doctrine**, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.”
 - b. 1 Timothy 4:6 “In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the **sound doctrine** which you have been following.”
 - c. 1 Timothy 4:16 “Pay close attention to yourself and to your **doctrine**; persevere in these things; for as you do this you will insure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.”
 - d. 2 Timothy 4:2-3 “Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure **sound doctrine**; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires.”
 - e. Titus 1:9 “...holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in **sound doctrine** and to refute those who contradict.”
 - f. Titus 2:1 “But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for **sound doctrine**.”
 - g. Titus 2:7-8 “In all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with **purity in doctrine**, dignified, sound in speech...”
4. What the world needs now more than anything is *TRUTH*... = sound doctrine – His word is Truth!

Conclusion: The Bible is not the only book ever lost. Truth of the matter, we have been losing books since the beginning of literature. Emerson use to say the lifetime of an average novel during his day was approximately 9 months. Books of science, history, math etc. live hardly much longer. Books grow old to us in much the same fashion toys grow old to kids.

One book, however, never has and never will grow old. It speaks to our needs as if it were written for these times alone; yet, it is the oldest of books. Its message is for the individual and for all of mankind... Its message is both timely and timeless. Men have never outgrown it. They never will. BUT, men, women and young people have lost it! Our text gives one frightening account of discovering this *lost book*. From this we must learn to not allow the Bible to become a lost book. We can't afford to let God's Word be *the lost book*. Sound Doctrine would be impossible without it!