

# Bring the Books Too

by J.C. Philpot

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*J.C. Philpot emphasizes the necessity of personal spiritual growth and diligent study for effective ministry.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 4:23, Colossians 3:16, 1 Timothy 4:13, 2 Timothy 4:13

**Topics:** "Ministerial Integrity", "Spiritual Growth"

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## Description

J.C. Philpot emphasizes the importance of ministers finding their own happiness and home in the truths they preach, needing to first taste and enjoy these truths in their own hearts for it to edify others. He highlights the necessity for ministers to continually exercise their minds on God's truths to prevent their ministry from becoming cold and lacking power. Philpot addresses the issue of ministers not reading the works of good men due to various reasons, encouraging them to engage in profitable reading, meditation, and prayer to be well-established in the truth and able to defend it against errors.

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## Transcript

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"When you come, bring my coat that I left in Troas with Carpus; bring the books too, and especially the ones made of parchment." (2 Timothy 4:13)

A minister who would profit the family of God needs to have his own heart well established by grace, and to find his happiness and home in the precious truths which he brings before the people. But he needs food for himself as well as for the people; and what he brings before them must have been first tasted, handled, and enjoyed in his own heart, or it will not profit and edify them. Besides which, unless there be more or less of continual exercise of mind upon the things of God, his ministry will get cold and vapid; there will be no fullness or variety in it, no point, pith, or power.

But many of the servants of God cannot read the works of good men; some for fear of stealing other men's thoughts and words; some from an inability of mind to read and digest anything but the Bible; some for lack of means to possess their works; and some from sheer laziness and a lack of that deep interest in and love to the truth which is necessary for profitable reading and meditation. But you will say, "Do you wish me then to hash up dead men's brains and bring before the people what I have pilfered from authors?" By no means. This is what no honest man would or could do, for his own conscience would fly in

his face and accuse him of theft and dishonesty. "But what is the difference," you will urge, "between reading good men's writings and getting instruction from them and bringing that before the people, and stealing their words downright at once?"

A good deal of difference. We remember well an observation made to us in private conversation by our dear and esteemed friend, the late Mr. Warburton, for it so exactly agreed with our own experience that we have never forgotten it. "I often read," said he, "Mr. Huntington's works, for my own soul's profit, but I never can make the least use of them in the pulpit. There," he added, "I must have it all my own, and just as the Lord is pleased to give me." This is the very distinction we are drawing.

A minister's own soul needs feeding and instructing. The Scriptures, we well know, must be the grand source of all his instruction. This is the pure undefiled well of heavenly truth at which thousands have drunk, and yet it flows still as full, as divine as ever. But there are many points on which ministers, as well as others, need instruction that they may have clear, sound views of the truth, and be well and firmly established in it, able to contend for it, and to defend it against all errors.

Now, we firmly believe that, if instead of yawning and lounging their time away in sloth and idleness, or gossiping from house to house, they would apply their minds to reading, prayer, and meditation, live more alone, commune more with their own heart, be more separate from everything worldly and carnal, and give themselves more to the work, when out of it as well as in it, in the home as well as in the pulpit, they would find the benefit of it, not only in their own souls, but in the exercise of their ministry. A cold, lifeless, indifferent heart--though at various times, every servant of God has to mourn over his coldness and deadness--but a heart habitually cold, lifeless, and indifferent, and rarely otherwise, cannot be expected to warm up and cheer the drooping desponding, hearts of the family of God.

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