

The Stress of Learning

January 1995

I'm sure we all remember from our school days the hard work that it took to learn. Much time was spent listening to our teachers, taking notes on the lectures, doing homework, writing book reports, memorizing certain facts, reviewing for tests, etc. Although I enjoyed school, I distinctly remember thinking how relieved I would be to finally graduate. No more studying, no more tests, no more memorizing, no more pressure to learn.

But as I matured and became more aware of the importance and complexity of the Scriptures, it began to dawn on me that I would never stop being a student. I realized that I was not studying for a grade but for eternity; that I was not learning meaningless facts but the very nature of God and His will. As my study progressed, I also realized that there are some things in the Bible which are very difficult to understand, things which are not easily learned.

Jesus tried to stretch the minds of His audiences by using parables. Often, His disciples would come to Him in private asking for an explanation of a parable (Mt 13:36). On many occasions, Jesus used figures of speech which His hearers failed to grasp (Mk 8:15-18; Jn 3:3-4, 9-10).

Peter mentions the difficulty of some of Paul's writings: *"... in which are some things hard to understand, which those who are untaught and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures"* (2 Pe 3:16).

A proper and thorough grasp of the Scriptures depends upon our attitude and the quality of our study habits. While all of us must be occasionally reminded of the things we already know, true spiritual growth comes from digging deeper in the Word and straining to discover things not previously understood.

Learning still takes hard work, just as it did when we were in school. We should not be discouraged by the stress of learning. Just as a good physical workout is necessary to maintain stamina and muscle tone, so it is necessary to exercise our minds in order to stay sharp.

The Hueytown church is blessed with many good Bible students who enthusiastically apply themselves to learning as much as they can about it. Brethren, may we never stop pushing ourselves to *"grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord."*