

ABSTRACT

A Christian has to be continuously exposed to the God's Words. In the absence or inability to hear these words from other sources, personal Bible reading becomes an important discipline of Christian life. Personal Bible Reading surveys among Christians elsewhere in the world showed a declining trend. It was difficult to know the situation among Tamil Methodist Church members as such research was lacking or has not been done. This thesis then investigates personal Bible reading habits among Tamil Methodist Church members in Malaysia and its significance with a view to improving its existing strength and overcoming existing weakness.

The study discussed the set up and practices of the Tamil Methodist Churches in Malaysia. It discussed the avenues available for members to know the Scripture through regular church programmes. These avenues were found to be inadequate and underutilised. It then discussed the necessity of the members to read the Bible and the suggested ways of reading it. Results of the study showed that although the level of personal Bible reading habits among Tamil Methodist Church members was much better as compared to other studies in the World, it did reveal other useful facts with regards to Bible reading habits.

The study highlighted many areas of Bible reading were lacking in quality. Many respondents had not completed reading the whole Bible. Many respondents did not pray before or after reading the Bible. Neither did they meditate on the words of the Bible after reading. Family Bible reading sessions were also lacking.

It is hoped that the study would help Pastors, Church leaders and planners to effectively disseminate the Word to their members by avoiding or correcting existing weaknesses. It is also hoped that this study will be helpful or be the basis for more in-depth studies and researches.