

# How To Study Your Bible

**Illumination:** enlightening, 1 Corinthians 2:11

**Revelation:** uncovering, 1 Corinthians 2:10

**Inspiration:** supernatural influence, 1 Corinthians 2:13

**Verbal, plenary inspiration:** God influenced the writers, through illumination, revelation, and inspiration, so that every word in the Bible conveys the exact message God intended. John 6:63, Jeremiah 1:9

## False theories of Biblical Inspiration:

**Intuition:** The Bible is just like any other good book; the authors were "really spiritual" which allowed them to write such a good book.

**Partial:** The Bible contains the word of God, or it becomes the word of God according to the leading of the Spirit.

**Concept:** God gave the general ideas to the writers, but not the words.

**Dictation:** God disclosed every word, and the writers were just copying.

## Objections to Verbal Plenary Inspiration

False translations have been produced through the years:

answer; God has had a hand in transmitting scripture.

There are contradictions in the Bible:

answer; things could be seen from a different angle by different witnesses, and all apparent problems will yield to careful study.

There are errors, exaggerations:

answer; the God of all creation can perform miracles, and apparent errors will yield to careful study.

## Evidences attesting to Inspiration

Inherent claims: 2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:20-21, Hebrews 1:1-2

Christ's claims: His quoting Scripture, John 5:39, John 10:34-35

Changed lives: Pitcairns Island, with the crew from the *Bounty*

## Why people don't study their Bible

It's too hard to understand (the Spirit will lead you)

It's not relevant to our lives today (the subjects in the Bible are timeless)

It's too much work; I don't have enough time (you have time for what is important to you)

## Why we should study

It is the only way to know about God.

It is the only way to know God's will for us.

It is a guide for all facets of our life.

It is our duty.

## Before you begin

Pray; Psalm 119:8, John 14:26, 16:13, Ephesians 1:17-18, James 1:5

Have confidence in the Word: Psalm 32:8, Hebrews 4:12, 1 Peter 1:23

## When you read

Start easily; Hebrews 5:13-14, 1 Peter 2:2.

Empathize with the Bible characters.

Make it practical; apply it to your life.

Obey God; have a correct attitude to the Word.

Meditate throughout the day; Deuteronomy 6:6, Job 23:12, Psalm 1:2.

## When you study

Look for Christ; John 5:39, Luke 24:27, 24:44

Be aware of grammar, history, setting, theology, applications, divisions.

Make your own interpretation, then seek help. 1 Peter 2:9

Compare Scripture with Scripture. 2 Peter 1:20

Take a literal approach, but consider:

symbols

types

prophecy

parables

customs

## The Joy of Discovery In Bible Study, by Oletta Wald

### **Methodical Bible Study**

- Step 1 - Observe exactly what the author has written.
- Step 2 - Interpret objectively what the author has written.
- Step 3 - Summarize concisely the main thoughts presented.
- Step 4 - Evaluate fairly what the author has written.
- Step 5 - Apply personally the message revealed.

### **Focus Your Thoughts**

- Seek to discover the writer and his purpose.
- Seek to discover who the readers were.
- Make note of things that are compared.
- Make note of things that are contrasted.
- Make note of things that are repeated.
- Make note of logical relationships.
- Make note of generalizations.
- Make note of progressions in thought.
- Make note of the use of questions.
- Make note of grammatical constructions.
- Make note of literary form and atmosphere.

### **The Process of Application**

- Beliefs; what specific truths can I learn?
- Attitudes; how should my outlook change?
- Actions; what should I do differently?
- Sins; what should I confess and forsake?
- Examples; what example should I follow?
- Challenges; what goals should I strive for?
- Promises; what promises can I claim?

The Bible: Yours To Enjoy, by Richard De Hann

**Three Requirements for Bible Study**

a confidence in the Scriptures.

a dependance upon the Holy Spirit.

an acceptance of God's will.

**Four Rules for Bible Study**

read sensibly; line upon line, milk before meat.

interpret literally; don't force symbolism.

think historically; circumstances and conditions.

distinguish properly; between Israel, Church,  
unsaved.

**Three Key Principles for Bible Study**

keep it practical; let it speak to your needs.

keep it Scriptural; compare Scripture with  
Scripture.

keep it personal; recognize portrayals of Christ.

## How Can I Understand The Bible?, from Radio Bible Class

### **Twelve Rules for Bible Study**

Seek the help of the Holy Spirit.  
Interpret the Bible literally.  
Consider the immediate context.  
Keep the whole Bible in mind.  
Concentrate on essential truths.  
Remember the original readers.  
Begin with less difficult passages.  
Move from known to unknown.  
Enjoy Biblical imagery.  
Be sensitive to prophetic patterns.  
Get the big picture first.  
Realize your limitations.

### **Seven things Bible study does for us:**

Discovers and convicts us of sin, Hebrews 4:12.  
Cleanses us from the pollution of sin, 1 John  
1:9  
Imparts strength, Exodus 12, Deuteronomy 8:3  
Instructs us in what we are to do, James 1:22  
Provides a sword for victory over sin, Ephesians  
6:17  
Makes our lives fruitful, Psalm 1:1-3  
Gives us power to pray, John 15:7

### **Six rules for interpreting prophecy:**

Interpret in context.  
Interpret literally.  
Be careful with symbols.  
Look for immediate fulfillment.  
Be consistent.  
Don't go too far.

Guidelines for the Understanding of the Scriptures, by  
J. Vernon McGee

1. Begin With Prayer, 1 Corinthians 2:9-14, John 16:12-15, John 14:26
2. Read The Bible, Nehemiah 8:1-3
3. Study The Bible, Nehemiah 8:8
4. Meditate Upon The Bible, Deuteronomy 6:6-9,  
Psalm 1
5. Read what others have written on the Bible.
6. Obey the Bible.
7. Pass The Bible on to others, Hebrews 5:12,  
Romans 12:7

How to study each chapter: you should locate-

- the theme
- the most important verse
- the most important word
- the teaching about Christ
- the command to obey
- the promise to claim
- the new truth learned.

## How we got our Bible

- 500 BC The Masoretes, a group of scribes, standardize the Hebrew text of the OT. Masoretic text still used.
- 250 BC The Septuagint; a translation of the Hebrew scriptures into Greek. Used and quoted by Christ and Apostles.
- AD 410 The Vulgate; the entire Bible translated into Latin, completed by Jerome in Bethlehem.
- 1383 John Wycliffe translated the Bible into English, basing his work on the Vulgate.
- 1456 Johann Gutenberg printed the first Bible, in Latin.
- 1516 Erasmus published a parallel Greek-Latin New Testament, developed later into the Textus Receptus.
- 1522 Martin Luther published a German NT, based on the original language, plus the work of Erasmus. Luther published his Old Testament in 1534.
- 1525 William Tyndale translated the first printed English NT. He completed his work in Germany because of government opposition in England. His translation is based upon the Vulgate, Erasmus, and Luther. Tyndale was martyred in 1536 while working on the Old Testament.

The following were basically completions and revisions of Tyndale's Bible: 1535, Miles Coverdale; 1537, Chained Bible; 1537, Matthews Bible; 1539, The Great Bible; 1560, Geneva Bible; 1568, Bishops Bible.

- 1611 King James Bible; based upon the Bishops Bible,

with consultations of the Hebrew and Greek texts.

- 1859 An ancient Septuagint (c. 350-400) found at a monastery near Mt. Sinai is taken to St. Petersburg, and published as Codex Sinaiticus. Sold to British Museum in 1933.
- 1867 Codex Vaticanus (c. 350-400), a copy of the Septuagint in the Vatican Library, is published. A photographic edition is issued in 1889.
- 1885 English Revised Version
- 1901 American Standard Version
- 1931 Ancient manuscripts including portions of the OT and NT are found in Egypt. They date from A.D. 200-250.
- 1947 The Dead Sea Scrolls are discovered near Bethlehem. Eleven caves produce 400 Hebrew manuscripts, dating from about 250 B.C. to A.D. 100.
- 1952 Revised Standard Version
- 1971 Living Bible, a paraphrase of the ASV.
- 1971 New American Standard
- 1978 New International Version

A thorough knowledge of the Bible is worth more than a college education. **Teddy Roosevelt**

I am not disturbed by what I do not understand in the Bible; what worries me are the things I do understand.  
**Mark Twain**

If you see a Bible that is falling apart, the owner probably isn't.

The Bible is always a new book to those best acquainted with it.

Ninety-nine Christians in every hundred are merely playing at Bible study; and therefore ninety-nine Christians in every hundred are mere weaklings, when they might be giants, both in their Christian life and in their service. **R.A. Torrey**

Such is the depth of the Christian Scriptures that even if I were attempting to study them and nothing else from the early boyhood to decrepit old age, with the utmost leisure, the most unwearied zeal, and talents greater than I have, I would still daily be making progress in discovering their treasures. **Augustine**

It is blessed to eat into the very soul of the Bible, until, at last, you come to talk in scriptural language, and your spirit is flavored with the words of the Lord, so that your blood is Bibline and the very essence of the Bible flows from you. **C.H. Spurgeon**

The Bible has something to say about every aspect of life. "Let's pray about it" many believers suggest, when they should go to the Word of God and read about it.

God's Word will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from God's Word.

Discipleship means adherence to Jesus Christ alone, and immediately. The wisest course for the disciple is always to abide solely by the Word of God in all simplicity. Jesus knows only one possibility; simple surrender and obedience, not interpreting it or applying it, but doing and obeying it. **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

It is not mere words that nourish the soul, but God Himself, and unless and until the hearers find God in personal experience they are not the better for having heard the truth. The Bible is not an end to itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate and satisfying knowledge of God, that they may enter into Him, that they may delight in His presence, may taste and know the inner sweetness of the very God Himself in the core and center of their hearts. **A.W. Tozer**