



**FIRM FOUNDATION** Series

## Studying the Word

### **II Timothy 2:15**

*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

### **II Timothy 3:13-17**

*13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*

*14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;*

*15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

*16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:*

*17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

### **Why Should We Study?**

We read in our opening scripture that we are to study to show ourselves approved unto God. Casually picking up the Bible and reading a verse here or there, skipping around from thought to thought or just not paying attention to what you are reading are all poor study habits.

**Psalms 119:16** *I will delight myself in thy statutes; I will not forget thy word.*

The importance of Bible study cannot be overstated. It is vital to know God's Word. The Word of God shows us that we are sinners. It tells us that we need a savior and, that savior is Jesus Christ. The Word tell us what we must do to be saved.

Once we are saved we still need the Word to continue to grow as Christians.

It is "our daily bread". It is our "manna from heaven".

It is the Book where we learn all about God and His nature and His principles.

We must study the Bible to learn about Christ.

If we do not know the Bible, how can we ever know what Christ thinks or says or teaches?

If we are to be "Christ-like" we must know and apply the scriptures to our lives in order to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord."

Studying means we give time to pondering what we have read.

We investigate further into the subjects and/or principles that are found through our reading of the Word.

Studying helps us to find treasures in the Word that are missed by just simply casually reading the Word.

### **Proverbs 2:1-9**

We must “know” the Word of God in order to “hide” the commandments in our hearts.

**Psalms 1:2** *But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.*

**Psalms 1:3** *And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.*

### **What Bible Study Does For Us**

- **Approves us to God** – study makes us unashamed, approves us to God, shows we are a workman, and enables us to rightly divide the Word of Truth. **II Timothy 2:15**
- **Equips us with Answers** – equipping us with answers to give others a reason of hope that is within us. **I Peter 3:15**
- **Arms us with the Sword of the Spirit** – taking the sword of the spirit implies more than a Bible in our hand. Hiding of the Word in our heart and mind for recall in times of need or temptation.
- **Produces Power and Confidence in Prayer** – through reading the Word, you will develop faith that God hears and answers prayer. **I John 5:14-15, John 15:7**
- **Gives Joy** – joy is a great product of a Christian life. Reading the word produces joy in your life. **John 15:11**
- **Gives Peace in Living** – God wrote to us in His Word that we can have peace in this world because He has overcome the world. **John 16:33**
- **Help in Decision Making** – Why make decisions on your own? God will help you make the right choices through His Word. **Psalms 119:105**

## Divisions of The Bible

As you can see on the bookcase below the Bible can be divided into ten different categories. This will be important as you further your understanding of the Bible.



### Top 3 Bible Study Resources

1. **Study Bible** – A Bible that has additional notes and commentary throughout the text. Generally, each Study Bible will have one or more of the following characteristics: a chain reference system connecting passages of like topics, concordance, reference index, subject index, book introductions and outlines, maps and timelines. Recommended: *Thompson Chain Reference Bible, Nelson Study Bible*.
2. **Bible Dictionary** – A Bible Dictionary is not merely a definition of Bible words. Rather it is a collection of concise entries explaining and describing items that are mentioned in the Bible or are otherwise associated. Recommended: *Unger's Bible Dictionary, Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Hasting's Dictionary of the Bible*.
3. **Bible Concordance** – A useful tool for studying the Scriptures, a Concordance takes every single word of the King James Version and lists where each word can be found in the Bible. Beside each word is a reference number to find the Hebrew or Greek word and its original meaning. It is also useful for locating Scripture verses that you know the words to but do not know the book, chapter and verse. Recommended: *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*.

### Additional Recommended Resources

- *Nave's Topical Bible*: Scripture comprehensively arranged by topic
- *Reese Chronological Bible*: Scripture arranged chronologically
- *Halley's Bible Handbook*: An almanac of Bible information
- *The Companion Bible*: KJV and commentary side by side columns (Bullinger)
- *Barnes Notes or Biblical Illustrator*: Multi-volume Commentary Set
- *Basic Pentecostal Doctrine Notebook*: Scripture arranged by doctrine
- *Bread Chart*: A yearly Bible reading plan available in FPC bookstore
- *Bible Reading Calculator*: Creates a customized reading plan for you to finish reading the entire Bible or sections of the Bible in a time frame you decide. Readily available on various Bible websites for free and formatted to print.

## **Hermeneutics**

Hermeneutics is a careful method of Bible Study. It is defined as *the method of interpreting Scripture; drawing out of a text its intended meaning*. The purpose of this discipline is to ensure that the message God intended for us is accurately understood by man.

### **Three questions must be asked of any text:**

1. What does it say?
2. What does it mean?
3. How does it impact me?

### **Rules of Hermeneutics: Read the Bible literally**

- Keep it in context
- Treat parables as such
- Interpret Scripture with Scripture, recognizing it does not contradict

## **Methods of Study**

**Hearing the Word** – The Scripture tells us that faith comes by hearing the Word of God. Knowing this we can see that hearing is a primary way of studying God's Word and an open ear can result in a wealth of knowledge being acquired.

- Hearing solid teaching and preaching
- Listening to the audio Bible

**Reading the Word** – There may not be a more impacting method of study than reading and searching the Scriptures for yourself.

- Read the Bible through on a one-year plan
- Read and study one division of the Bible at a time
- Read, study and understand Scripture through cross referencing

**Memorizing the Word** – Scripture encourages us to hide the Word of the Lord in our hearts. Knowledge of God’s Word can be acquired and retained if we will discipline ourselves to commit Scriptures and facts to memory.

- Key verses on primary doctrines: Salvation, Holy Ghost, baptism, repentance, faith, grace, nature of God, etc.
- Entire selected chapters such as Psalm 1, 23 or 150, Hebrews 11, etc.
- Books of the Bible and their order in the Old and New Testament
- The Ten Commandments
- The Beatitudes
- The Fruit of the Spirit

**Studying the Bible Topically** - This method is to study the various subjects mentioned in the Bible. Study each individual subject by itself. Go through the entire Bible to find out what it has to say on any particular subject...

- Use a Concordance
- Topical study of the Bible is a good way to master any subject found in the Word of God. Go through the Bible and see what it has to say on any given subject. This is easily done.
- Suppose the subject you desire to study is "Prayer." Begin by looking up all words pertaining to that subject including: prayer, pray, prayed, praying, ask, supplication, intercession, etc.
- There are four important suggestions regarding Topical Study of the Bible.
  - Be systematic
  - Be thorough
  - Be exact
  - Arrange the results in an orderly way and write them down
- Begin with those subjects you need the most

### Suggested topics to start studying the Bible...

Sin	Love: to God, to Christians, to all
The Atonement (the Blood of Christ)	Future Destiny of Believers
Justification	Future Destiny of the Wicked
The New Birth	The Character of Christ
Adoption	The Resurrection of Christ
Sanctification	The Ascension of Christ
Holiness	The Holy Spirit
Assurance	The Attributes of God
The Flesh	Grace
Cleansing	Messianic Prophecies
Faith	The Church
Repentance	Joy
Prayer	The Judgment
Thanksgiving	Life
Praise	Peace
Worship	

**Studying the Bible by Chapters** - This method of Bible study is not beyond any person of average intelligence who has fifteen minutes or more a day to put into Bible Study.

**First step:** Select the chapter.

**Second step:** Read the chapter five times. Read at least one time out loud.

**Third step:** Divide the chapter in natural divisions and choose headings for them, describing their contents.

**Fourth Step:** Write down the major points of the chapter in their proper order.

**Fifth Step:** Write down the central truth of the chapter.

**Sixth Step:** Write down the key verse of the chapter if there is one.

**Seventh Step:** Write down what new truth you have learned from the chapter.

**Studying an entire Book of the Bible** - Start with a small book, preferably from the New Testament. The book of James, Titus, 1 Peter, or 1 John are all good choices for first timers.

- Next spend some time, perhaps several days, reading through the entire book. Read it more than once. Take notes on the ideas that jump out at you.
- Look also for "life application principles." An example of a life application principle in the book of James is: "Make sure my faith is more than just a statement - it should result in action."
- Using a Bible dictionary, look up the meaning of the word in the original language.
- Consider using a commentary, lexicon or Bible dictionary. This will greatly increase your understanding of the scriptures.

We must know His Word. We must obey His Word. Therefore, we recommend that before we ever read any books "about" the Bible, we first must read and study the Bible for ourselves.

People who write books about the Bible are human and humans can and often do make mistakes. Not everything written in books explaining the Bible is 100% accurate. Many times, these books are slanted to a particular persuasion or denominational belief. Jesus said, "*And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*" **John 8:32**

The "truth" Jesus is talking about is the Word of God.

*This lesson is adapted notes from The Discover Course by Reverend Bill Hobson*