


How to Study the BIBLE

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Introduction

If there is any skill that the Christian cannot live without, it is the ability to read and understand the Bible. While the electricity from earth to heaven is prayer; the mail from heaven to earth is the Word of God. Those who have had the privilege of growing up in the Lord's House are taught from the earliest of our days that "we stand alone on the Word of God, the B I B L E..."

With that being the case, it should stand to reason that one of the most important aspects of making disciples, is the act and necessity of teaching people how to read and discern the scriptures appropriately rightly dividing the word of truth. When the Apostle Paul gave instructions to young pastor and preacher Timothy, he told him expressly in 2 Timothy 2:15 to; **Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth** (KJV)

The Apostle Peter wrote something in his second letter that underscores the necessity of having a good and right understanding of the Bible: 2 Peter 1:16-21 – **"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."** (KJV) Without going into all that is in the passage, there is one gigantic principle that sums up this primary point. After Peter has defended his preaching and his writings by saying, "We haven't made this up, we have seen with our eyes, and heard with our ears . . ." he goes on to essentially say,

“but above our eyes and ears, we have something even more sure, more certain than sight and sound, and that is the Sure Word.” This Word is more settled, more certain, more sure, than even what our eyes have seen and our ears have heard.



General Outline

#1 – How to Approach the Bible - How you come to the Bible very often will determine how you leave.

- a.) Coming in the Right Spirit
- b.) Coming with the Right Sight
 - (1.) It is Absolutely Authoritative
 - (2.) With Strict Constructionist View



(Meaning that the “Bible said what it said before you got here, and it says what it will say after you leave.” No real Bible study is dependent on what “this passage means to you.” Real Bible study deals with what this passage means, period.)

- c.) Coming with the Proper Attitude— **“He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”** *Never go to the Bible with an opinion; you are going there to get one.*

#2 – How to Navigate the Bible

- a.) The divisions of the Bible—Two testaments – 66 Books / OT – 39 Books / NT – 27 Books
- b.) The divisions of Bible divisions
- c.) The publications of the Bible. Learning to follow references/to use Bible Maps/ to use the concordance/ Understanding the annotations etc.

#3 – How To Investigate the Scriptures

- a.) Context Studies - Time of writing/ Intended Audience/ Reason for Writing/ Place of Author/ Audience/ General Subject
- b.) Background Studies – Customs and Culture
- c.) Word Studies – Using Language helps and dictionaries.

#4 – How to Extrapolate the Scriptures – Stepping from what the text says into knowing what that means.

- a.) Six Necessary Questions – Who, what, when, where, why, how.
- b.) Three Fundamental Understandings.
 - (1.) The Historical Understanding
 - (2.) The Theological/Spiritual Understanding
 - (3.) The Logical/Practical Understanding



#5 – How to Incorporate the Scriptures—Learning to examine ourselves, and thoughts concerning our interpretations of passages. Does our conclusion, harmonize with the rest of the scriptures.)

#6 – Everyday Light on the Scriptures— Moving beyond the basics, there are several things that enable us to go deeper.

- 1.) – Classification Identifying our Type of Study – by books, by biographies, by subjects,
- 2.) – Education about the Scriptures – everyday, ordinary uses of our language.
- 3.) – Meditation – thou shalt meditate on them day and night
- 4.) – Devotion – our loyalty to the scriptures.
- 5.) – Memorization **“I will hide His Word in my heart”**
- 6.) - Saturation of the Scriptures – “daily”
- 7.) - Sanctification of the Scriptures – **“sanctified by the truth”**
- 8.) - Glorification of the Scriptures – Psalm 138:2
- 9.) - The Discrimination of the Scriptures – revealed to the righteous only. **“The Secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him.”**
- 10.) - Transformation from the Scriptures – “that book jus made me stop swearin’, drinkin’, lyin’, and blaspheming, an you say it taint true?!?!?” unbelievable!



#7—Everyday Language of the Scriptures— While the Bible is a sacred book, it traffics in human communication. The same practices and basics for reading do not evaporate because this book is divinely inspired. The things we learn about in order to understand earthly literature, are the same things that we use to understand divine literature.

7 Types of Figures of Speech

1.) Simile – This is the single most common type of figure of speech in the scripture according to Philips and Bullinger. A simile is to state an equivalence between two things, it generally has a connecting word between two things.

2.) Metaphor – This is when one thing stands for another without a connecting word. One thing, IS something else.

3.) Paradox – “Two opposing thoughts, words, or statements with contrary meanings intended to present a solid Bible truth.” –

4.) Irony – or as some call it, “Sarcasm”. An Ironical statement expresses a thought in such a way that it naturally conveys the opposite meaning.

5.) Personification – Assigning human qualities, to unintelligible things. This figure of speech is used prolifically throughout the texts.

6.) Anthropomorphism – A particular kind of “personification” or “humanizing” It is the “humanizing of God.” Or the idea of assigning to God human qualities, and/or even physical qualities.

7 - Hyperbole – To say more than is literally meant; it is the overstatement of a case for the purpose of adding intensity to it.

#8 – Everyday Life Under the Scriptures— God has two very basic intentions for the relationship between His Word, and our lives. The Spirit of God in our heart, uses the Word of God in our heads, to do the Work of God in our lives!

#1 – It is to be a Permanent Presence— #2 – It is to be a Transforming Power

Chapter 1 - How to Approach the Scriptures:

One of the best principles to understand about studying the Bible is the fact that sometimes, how you come to the scriptures will determine how you leave them. The reality is that our inward condition will affect your ultimate understanding.

These are four spiritual exercises that you need to go through to “warm up” as you get ready to study the Bible.

I. Recognize your Inability



*Note – This is a supernatural book, and its truths cannot be unlocked merely by natural means. Its gospel is plain enough for natural man to see; but all of its goodness is buried underneath Jesus. You’ve got to go through Him in order to get to the good stuff.

A. When Jesus spoke to the Pharisees in John 8:43 & 48, He said this, “**Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word . . . He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.**”

B. 1 Corinthians 2:14 – “**But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.**”

C. Psalm 25:14 – “**The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant.**”

II. Render your Availability

Before you study, render your will to whatever the Lord will show you. To borrow a saying from other preachers, there is no reason for God to give you more to rebel against. Realize that the economy of God’s information exchange is nearly opposite to that of ours. Men often say, “seeing is believing.” With God, “believing is seeing.” – Faith comes first. The point being this; never wait to hear what God says to decide to obey Him. Decide to Obey Him, so that you will be able to better hear what God says.

A. Genesis 18:17-19 – “**And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.**”

Paraphrasing that statement we might say that “The Lord said, ‘I know Abraham’s will, and He’s willing to obey me . . . shall I hide anything from Him.’” In perhaps the most exhausting statement on the believer and his Bible is found in the majestic 119th Psalm. It is worthy of whatever time it takes someone to give themselves to a full study of that work of divine poetry. In such a poem, among many other things the psalmist captures the attitude every believer should have, which is the idea that says, “Lord, I’ll do it, now show me; rather than saying, Lord show me, and I’ll do it.”

Psalm 119:15-16 – “**I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.**”

“**He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.**” – Jesus said on numerous occasions – Matthew 11; 13 Mark 4, 7, Luke 8, 14.

III. Request God's Oversight

We have already admitted that we cannot do this on our own. We have already accepted the fact that this supernatural book doesn't merely open itself up through natural understanding. So we request help. Going back to our previous reference of the 119th Psalm, climbing down to the 18th verse we read:



Psalm 119:18 – “Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.”

Psalm 25:4-5 – “Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou *art* the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.”

Psalm 43:3 – “O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles.”

There has never been a better person to help you understand a book than the author who wrote it.

IV. Read it under Authority

Next – actually read the book! Do not skim, but read with diligence, under the watchful eye of God the Father.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Tim 2:15 (KJV)

The word that is used there for “study” is the word that means, “be diligent” under God, rightly dividing His word. He sees just how much or how little effort that you really are using trying to rightly divide His book!



We always remember that in discerning the scripture the text is king. It is to impose upon us, we do our best to never impose our view onto it.

When we can come to the Bible, Recognizing our Inability, Rendering our Availability, Requesting God's Oversight, and Reading it Under Authority, we are in the right condition to properly study the Bible.



Chapter 2 - How to Navigate the Scriptures:

Perhaps one of the most helpful tools of knowledge when coming to the scriptures is knowing the Bible “map.” Not necessarily the maps in the back, but rather the landscape throughout. It is a helpful and a good idea to know about where to begin looking and studying when dealing with a particular issue.

It helps to know its divisions, its subdivisions, the locations of its subjects. It will never do a man any good to look for the life of King Saul on the back side of Philemon. Knowing the scriptures general layout is like using a hammer on a nail, rather than the heel of your shoe.

Divisions of the Scriptures - 1 Volume; 2 Testaments; 66 books; 39 in OT; 27– NT

Divisions of the Divisions:

Old Testament

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

New Testament

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Divisions of the Old Testament Prophets:



- 1.) _____
- 2.) _____
- 3.) _____

Division of New Testament Epistles:

- 1.) _____
- 2.) _____
- 3.) _____
- 4.) _____

Old Testament

Job	21-1600 BC	Job ??
Genesis	16-1401 BC	Moses
Exodus	16-1401 BC	Moses
Leviticus	16-1401 BC	Moses
Numbers	16-1401 BC	Moses
Deuteronomy	16-1401 BC	Moses
Joshua	16-1401 BC	Joshua
Psalms	14-500 BC	Multiple
Judges	11-901 BC	Samuel?
Ruth	11-975 BC	Unknown
1st & 2nd Samuel	10-701 BC	Unknown
Proverbs	900s BC	Solomon
Ecclesiastes	900s BC	Solomon
Obadiah	860-840 BC	Obadiah
Joel	835-795 BC	Joel
Jonah	755 BC	Jonah
Amos	750 BC	Amos
Hosea	750-710 BC	Hosea
Micah	735-710 BC	Micah
Isaiah	700-681 BC	Isaiah
Nahum	650 BC	Nahum
Zephaniah	635-625 BC	Zephaniah
Habakkuk	615-605 BC	Habakkuk
Ezekiel	590-570 BC	Ezekiel
Lamentations	586 BC	Jeremiah
Jeremiah	586-580 BC	Jeremiah
1st & 2nd Kings	561-538 BC	Unknown
Daniel	536-530 BC	Daniel
Haggai	520 BC	Haggai
Zechariah	480-470 BC	Zechariah
Ezra	450-440 BC	Ezra
Nehemiah	450-440 BC	Nehemiah
1st & 2nd Chronicles	440-430 BC	Ezra
Esther	435-430 BC	Unknown
Malachi	430-424 BC	Malachi



New Testament

NT Book	Date Authored	Author
James	Mid-40s	James, Jesus' half-
1 Thessalonians	50-51	Paul
2 Thessalonians	50-51	Paul
Galatians	55	Paul
1 Corinthians	55	Paul
2 Corinthians	56	Paul
Romans	57	Paul
Mark	Late 50s-early 60s	John Mark
Matthew	Late 50s-early 60s	Matthew
Philemon	61-62	Paul
Colossians	61-62	Paul
Ephesians	61-62	Paul
Luke	62	Luke
Acts	62	Luke
Philippians	62	Paul
1 Timothy	63-64	Paul
Titus	63-64	Paul
1 Peter	63-64	Peter
2 Peter	65	Peter
2 Timothy	65	Paul
Hebrews	68	Unknown
Jude	Late 60s-early 70s	Jude, Jesus' half-brother
John	Late 80s-early 90s	John
1 John	Late 80s-early 90s	John
2 John	Late 80s-early 90s	John
3 John	Late 80s-early 90s	John
Revelation	Late 80s-early 90s	John



Most study Bibles will have the basics in order to help the reader get the right framework:

- Theme, Authorship, Date, Audience, Historical Setting, Purpose for Writing, etc.

Read these 7 verses without any thought to the background information:

Romans 13:1-7— “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. **2** Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. **3** For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: **4** For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. **5** Wherefore *ye* must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. **6** For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. **7** Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.”

Ask these questions:

Who is Paul writing To? _____

Where was Paul when he wrote the book? _____

Who was on the throne in Rome at the time of Paul’s Writing _____

Read the passage again: Does the background information help with understanding the passage?

Write the main things that you hear when we reading this passage with the background info:



Chapter 3 - How to Investigate the Scriptures:

We have learned how to Approach the Scriptures, we have learned how to Navigate the scriptures, and now we are going to look at how to investigate the scriptures. This is that part of studying that begins to crack the surface on the deeper things that the disciple wants to find.

1.) Identify the _____ of your Passage:

a.) For example, in the book of Proverbs, there are many verses that are “self-contained” subjects. Meaning that the verse you read may have nothing to do with the verse above it or behind it. It may be a complete subject or thought in and of itself.

(This may be seen more easily in the likeness of a paragraph within the passage.)

Proverbs 22:1-6

1. A *GOOD* name is rather to be chosen than great riches, *and* loving favor rather than silver and gold.
2. The rich and the poor meet together: the LORD is the maker of them all.
3. A prudent *man* forseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished.
4. By humility *and* the fear of the LORD *are* riches, and honor, and life.
5. Thorns *and* snares *are* in the way of the froward: he that doth keep his soul shall be far from them.
6. Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

Looking just at those six verses, we notice that they are not one singular thought, but a small collection of complete thoughts independent from the others. For example:



verse 1 and 2 form a complete subject

verse 3 seems to be a thought all by itself

verse 4 has nothing to do with verse 5

verse 5 has nothing to do with verse 6, etc.



On the other hand sometimes the chapter divisions are in the wrong place also. You may have to go across chapter lines in order to get the full story.

A couple of examples:

(1.) Matthew 16:28, actually begins the story in Matthew 17:1. The entire thought, or the entire story may transcend the divisions within your scriptures.

(2.) Colossians 4:1, actually goes with the subject in the last verse of Colossians 3.

Now all of that being said, the bottom line here is to find the start and the finish of what it is that you are going to read. Leaving something out of the context insures you will be missing something, and adding to the context might bring you something that just isn't so.

2.) Fortify the _____ of your Passage:



Ask the necessary questions: a.) _____ b.) _____ c.) _____
d.) _____ e.) _____ f.) _____

*Note— Important parameters to remember: *Author and Audience; Time and Place; Subject and Reason*

The main point here is to get all your bearings about the passage of scripture that you are going to read.

3.) Clarify the _____ of Your Passage: *Read what it says from author to audience, repeatedly.*

Reading through your text more than once is like breaking up your garden with a tiller; one pass might break the ground, but it's the rest of them that soften it. Reading through the chosen text repeatedly helps to clarify the subject content of what you are reading.

4.) Specify the _____ of Your Passage:

One of the most important things to recognize when you read your Bible is the fact that it wasn't written in your life time. While that should be as obvious as the noonday sun failing to see that can cause some unnecessary misunderstanding.

When we really study through our Bibles, we essentially have three bridges to cross in order to get the most from the passage.



A.) The _____ – What it said when it was written. - Times



B.) The _____ – What Biblical customs and manners may come in to play within the text of the subject? - Traditions



C.) The _____ – Dictionaries, Maps, and Language helps. - Tools



*Note – Some examples: - Luke 11:5-8 – “And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; ⁶ For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? ⁷ And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. ⁸ I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.” Luke 11:5-8

Here are a few necessary things to know that bring depth of understanding to the text.

- The traditions and inconveniences of a single roomed house.
- The disrepute of failing expected hospitality when someone comes to your house.
- The routines of bread making.
- The normality of hosting unexpected travelers.

Matthew 23:27 - “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness.”



A cursory reading of this verse with a working knowledge of the customs and the times tell us that this is actually a double insult to the Pharisees. They had set themselves up to be a standard for all men to aspire to, and lorded themselves over others. Jesus however called them white-washed stones which when thought about, puts them to double shame. Not only were they dead on the inside, but they symbolically served as their own sign to the rest of the Jews to be avoided, not imitated. When you bring the culture into it, you see that sepulchres were white washed so that Jews could clearly see them, and wouldn't accidentally stumble across them and render themselves ceremonially unclean. Whitewashing a stone was a sign that said, “watch out and avoid.”

Some things that should be normal for anyone studying any subject.

1. Define your unknown, questionable or obviously important words in the text; in both the English and the original language from such dictionaries.

a.) – Example – In 1 Corinthians 4:1 the apostle Paul says, “**Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ.**” Now that sounds great, Paul; you're a minister of Christ. When we think of the English word *minister*, we think of a prime minister or the minister of defense. A minister is an elevated thing; it's a dignified term. But the Greek word is *huperetes*, which means a third-level galley slave on a ship. Paul said that when the record goes in for him, let it be said that he was nothing more than a third-level galley slave for Jesus Christ.



2. Look for repeating words, phrases, or **concepts**:

For example, Romans 1:17-20— “For therein is the **righteousness** of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. For the **wrath** of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because **that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.** For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, *even* his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.”

- (a.) The _____ of God is Revealed
- (b.) The _____ of God is Revealed
- (c.) The _____ of God is Revealed



3.) Look for “Stair steps” in the passage; or chain reactions. ie – when this happens, then this happens, then this happens . . .

Verse 18, sets in motion, a chain reaction that extends all the way through the rest of the chapter.

Now all of that being said, what we've done is “investigate the scriptures.” We have sought to get out all of the information out of them that we can.

Investigating all they say, and Interpreting all they mean, is not the same thing.

5. – Amplify the Correspondents of Your Passage

It is time to find those passages that are discussing the same subject, or reference the same ideas, or correspond to the text you are reading. This is the practice of comparing scripture with scripture.

For example there are three different kinds of cross-referencing that help bring things together:

A. _____ **Passages:** These are passages specifically addressing the same events subjects or issues.

1.) The feeding of the 5000 is the only miracle recorded in all four gospels. If you are really going to study it then you need to read and bring in all accounts.

2.) The word “Deuteronomy” means “second giving of the law” or “second rendering.” Deuteronomy is a repeat of the laws given in Exodus/ Leviticus.

3.) 1 and 2 Kings, and 1st and 1st and 2nd Chronicles we find many of the same stories, much like in the gospels.

Taking in all of the available accounts of the events told in the scripture gives the complete picture and details that may not be at the forefront of your mind.

The Rich Young Ruler . . . Matthew 19:16-22; Mark 10:17-22; Luke 18:18-23



Mark is the only one that records, “**And Jesus beholding him loved him . . .**” - Some scholars assert that this phrase betrays Mark as this particular rich young ruler.



When you do a scriptural profile of John Mark you find that he was raised in a very wealthy family, and his mother is credited with having a large home in Jerusalem. (Acts 12:12) Whether Mark is the rich young ruler or not, that little detail makes the story that much more intimate at the least, and opens the mind to some depth at the most.

B. _____ **Passages:** These are passages that may not be speaking about the same event or issue, but contains the same theme or principle of the passage you are studying.

*If a primary theme in your passage is prayer, then you would do well to give reference to other passages on prayer.

* - If a primary theme in your passage is giving, then you would do well to bring in other references about giving.


* - The same goes for people. When you are looking at the prophet Jonah, you want to look at all other passages of scripture that deal with Jonah.

How do you do that? *Topical Bibles; Chain Reference Bibles; The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge (Print and digital); Your Concordance;*

**most all of these can be accessed freely at: Biblehub.com; Studylight.org; Blueletterbible.org*

**many digital programs can be downloaded freely; as well as some at minimal costs. At the same time some very large digital library helps can be purchased at rather expensive prices.*

C. _____ **Passages:** These are scriptures that at first glance seem to contradict other scriptures. These types of passages can be very enlightening and intriguing to the serious student.

*Note – **Rule to Remember** – Scriptures always agree with one another; but sometimes they agree in harmony, not necessarily melody. 

For example:

Hebrews 11:6 – “But without faith *it is impossible to please him*; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”


Psalms 147:11 – “The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy.”

The question might then be; “What does it take to please God?” The writer of Hebrews declares it to only be by faith. The Psalmist declares that the Lord is pleased with those who fear Him. Are they contradictory? Not at all. When these verses are put together, we can see that Biblical Faith and Spiritual Fear are two sides of the same coin. Where there is the Bible kind of faith, there is the right kind of fear.

Sometimes you have to think through a subject, or a verse.



What does the Bible say about Fear . . .

 - “God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and a sound mind.”

- 2 Timothy 1:7

Yet it also says:

- “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” - Psalm 111:10

*Note – You can put those two together and come to the conclusion that the Bible does not teach us not to fear, rather, the Bible teaches us *what* not to fear.

Such a practice will keep things in harmony, and context; as well as prevent us from running too far in the wrong direction.



Having learned how to approach the scriptures, navigate the scriptures and investigate the scriptures, it is time to extrapolate them. There can be no application without interpretation, and there can be no interpretation until there is investigation. We are simply following the logical movements in trying to properly discern the texts.

One Rule To Remember - The meaning of the scripture is a matter of _____, not a matter of _____.

In other words, it means what it means regardless of who is reading it. It does not mean one thing to one person, and another thing to another. It means the same thing to everyone.

The distinction between recognizing what something says in words, and means as a matter of communication can be seen in this simple example. Anyone may get a medical report, get their definitions correct, pronounce the words right, and clearly state exactly whatever the report says. Explaining what it means, and all the ramifications of such is an entirely different issue.

Nehemiah 8:8 – “So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused *them* to understand the reading.”



- Note they _____ it, gave the _____ of it, and caused the hearers to _____.

Matthew 5:21-22 – “**Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, THOU SHALT NOT KILL; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.**”

They understood with their mind what the scriptures said, but it took Jesus to open them up to what the scriptures meant.



I. What Not To Do!

A. _____

1.) Remember that Paul said in 1 Timothy 5:17 – “**Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.**”

Don't be lazy with your thoughts. Lazy thinkers have a tendency to put the minimal amount of thought and mental or spiritual energy into thinking through a text.

B. _____



- 1.) Example – When Joseph’s brothers put him in a pit, someone might liken that to the “pit falls in life.”

Or as one teacher explains, “For example, the rabbis said that if you take the consonants of Abraham’s name, b-r-h-m, and add them up, you get 318. Therefore, when you see the word Abraham, it means that he had 318 servants. That’s *not* what it means. It means Abraham.

II. What To Do!



A. Read it _____.

- 1.) With your properly defined words and phrases in mind.
- 2.) Literal speech contains, “figures of speech” “symbolisms” and “metaphors.”

For example, “One of these days Alice, I’m gonna send you to the moon!” Literal speech in every culture CONTAINS metaphoric expressions.

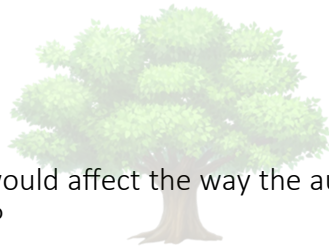
B. Frame it _____ – within the investigated framework.

- 1.) We know what it says, but when you say it to who Paul was saying it to, the meaning becomes richer, and deeper.
- 2.) Apply all of your “investigated” factors to what you’ve read.
 - a.) Jew, Gentile?
 - b.) Time/ Custom
 - c.) Geographic or/Political Dynamics



What light do the investigated facts shed on the passage of scripture that you just read?

Some questions to ask?



- ~ Are there any customs that would affect the way the audience received this message, or the way the author wrote this message?
- ~ Does the “timing” of the passage change the meaning of the passage?
 - Are speaking of something before the Cross of Christ, or after the Cross of Christ.
 - Are we speaking of an eternal principle, or something limited to the Levitical law?

Genesis chapter 9 – the Noahic Covenant. It was “Pre-Law” and there is still a rainbow in the sky. It was an eternal covenant with man, that did not change at the cross of Christ.



C. View it _____



1.) Let the sense make sense. Let truth build upon truth.



In other words, we might call this spiritual mathematics. If A plus B equals C, then stop at C and go no further.

Notice some examples:

Psalms 85:10 – “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed *each other*.”

Isaiah 32:17 – “And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever.”

Romans 14:17 – “For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”

Laying out all of those scriptures next to each other it should be relatively easy to deduce “righteousness and peace” are intrinsically entwined.

Let the logic of the text that you are studying flow.



2.) Watch for Parenthetical Statements:

a.) Romans 2:12-17



“For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; (For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel. Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God...”

Read the thought with the parenthesis; and without the parenthesis. Read only within the parenthesis. Within the such passages thoughts are often tucked neatly into other thoughts.

Sometimes parenthetical thoughts are not necessarily marked grammatically, but they may show up within a larger context. Notice this example in 2nd Corinthians.

2 Corinthians 2:12-13 – “Furthermore, when I came to Troas to *preach* Christ’s gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, 13 I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia...”

2 Corinthians 7:5-6 – “For, when we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without *were* fightings, within *were* fears. 6 Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus.”





Almost five chapters of Paul's writing occurs between the full story of when the Lord comforted him by the coming of Titus. Sometimes the complete thought is only found after the two sections are brought together.

D. Think through it _____.



Sometimes scholars or theologians speak of the "synthesis" principle. This is the understanding that scripture never contradicts scripture.

Ask these questions:

- 1.) Does what you understand, contradict anything else that you currently understand?
- 2.) Does it fit with the rest of the Bible?

Deductive reasoning is a conclusion reached based upon the combination of existing statements or established facts.

- A – All preachers use the Bible
- B – Jeff is a preacher
- C – therefore Jeff uses the Bible.



This comes to light in the very nature of the people known as Baptists.

- Who may rightly be Baptized? – Those with an open honest confession professing that their dependency on Jesus Christ for their own salvation.

Can an infant do that? – No – Therefore based upon one fundamental teaching of the scripture we can conclude that the common assertion of Infant Baptism has no place, value, or scriptural merit.

Inductive reasoning – a conclusion is reached based upon repeated observation.


- A – All the squirrels I've seen have bushy tails.
- B – Therefore all squirrels must have bushy tails.

For example; every time the scriptures give us glimpses of people meeting the Glorified Christ, or a Messenger from Heaven, those people go to their knees with an overwhelming sense of unworthiness.

For example:

- Some people say "because the disciples met on the first day of the week."
- AND because when they take the Lord's supper we see it on the First day of the week"
- then We MUST take the Lord's Supper EVERY First Day of the week.



 How then does that work with the rest of the scripture? – Paul said in 1 Corinthians 11:26 – **“For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do shew the Lord’s death till he comes.”** Essentially what the Apostle did was to leave the frequency of the supper up to the will of the church. It is not wrong to observe it every Sunday; however it is not Biblically mandatory.

Your conclusions from “logic” must fit what the rest of the scriptures are teaching.



There are times in the Bible when what we are reading is a prescription. Meaning that this is a prescribed practice for all believers to observe. Then there are times that what we are reading is a description. Meaning that the text is merely describing the practices of the early churches. Since the Bible is our only authority, where we have no prescriptions, we follow the descriptions. However when we have both prescriptions and descriptions of the same thing, we are compelled to follow what is being prescribed. Where we have neither prescription, nor description, then whatever practice we are discerning lends itself to a freedom, so long as no other scriptures are violated.

