

Title: Preparing to Study the Bible

Introduction

Some people are so intimidated by the scope and size of the Bible that they never have enough courage to begin reading it and studying it.

How do you move a mountain? One shovel full at a time

The way to read and study the Bible is one passage at a time

You see, any large task is manageable when you break it down into bite size portions.

Tonight we are going to talk about the basic tools for Bible study, the rules for interpreting passages and the Holy Spirit's role in teaching us when we study.

I. Basic Tools For Bible Study

How does one grow spiritually? (Answer, by maintaining a personal relationship with Jesus.)

Each of us has the responsibility and the privilege to pray and study God's word for ourselves

Many Christians never mature in their relationship with the Lord because they rely on someone else's teaching and prayer life – they rely on someone else to feed them....that's ok when you're a baby, but when you mature you begin to feed yourself...

Illustration

Can you imagine someone expecting to grow strong and healthy by watching a healthy person

A healthy person good habits are going to have no effect on the unhealthy person's condition

We need to be filled up, Fired up and ready to go when we come to the Word.

What are the tools of a Bible Student?

Illustration – a bible, glasses, pencil, paper in a tool box (the Bible, Mind/eyes, pencil and paper)

A. A Readable Bible

Why did King James I commission the Bible in English in 1611 (Answer, so that the common man could read the Bible in the language of the day.)

It is amazing how much the English language has changed

Illustration...

Please read the following, it is a passage, told completely in the language of the KJV, which is excerpted from the example given by Dr. Jack Lewis in *Questions You've Asked About Bible Translations*

All of the terms you may not be certain of are used in the KJV, and references are provided at the bottom of the page to "clarify" meaning

"Sith the noise of the bruit of this school hath reached to thee-ward, we trust that our concourse liketh you well-particularly those who blaze abroad that there is error here. Whoso setteth thee against us-whoso saith we offend all-speaketh leasing. We be not affrighted, but withal, we are straightened in our bowels. We knoweth well that what thou wilt hear straightway wilt fast close up thy thoughts. With some we be abjects, some have defied us; but there has been no daysman betwixt us. They subvert the simple!"

References: Ez. 35:6; Jer. 10:22; 1 Sam. 19:4; Prov. 1:21; Esther 8:8; Mk. 1:45; Prov. 25:14; Jas. 3:2, Psa. 4:2; Lk. 24:37; Acts 25:27; 1 Tim. 5:13; 2 Cor. 6:12; Mt. 4:20; Gen. 20:18; Psa. 35:15; Num. 23:8; Job 9:33; Gen. 31:37; Lam. 3:36; Prov. 14:15.

The first two references to help clarify the meaning

Ezekiel 35:6

Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord God, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee: **SITH** thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee.

Jeremiah 10:22

Behold, the noise of the **BRUIT** is come, and a great commotion out of the north country, to make the cities of Judah desolate, and a den of dragons.

(Answers)

sith = if

bruit - rumor or announcement

Which version should you use?...a readable one...

Some aspects of your readable Bible

1. It should contain maps locating places you read about in the scriptures
2. it should have cross references
3. It should have a concordance

We must use our eyes and mind for observing words, sentences, paragraphs, facts, names, places, promises, warnings, and so forth.

As Christians we are able to see what was hidden from us before we were believers

Books of the Bible that held no meaning to us are now rich with meaning.

It is the work of the Holy Spirit to illumine the Word to us. (Illumine means "to make clear")

1 Cor. 2:10-15

but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit.

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. [11] For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. [12] We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. [13] This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. [14] The

man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. [15] The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man's judgment:

The Holy Spirit quickens the word to man when we need special encouragement

I make it a practice to mark or put dates next to verses that the Lord would quicken to me.

The paper and the pencil are to keep track and write down topics you may want to study...

Now lets talk about

II. THE BASIC RULES OF INTERPRETATION

What is the diff. Between Bible study and devotional reading? (you may be able to read several chapters devotionally, but study requires reading a limited number of verses and applying rules of interpretation.)

You may wonder where I begin to study the word of God

What book do I begin with?

How many verses should I study?

Begin with a short book (ex. Colossians)

Study 20 -25 vs. per day

or

Go passage by passage – a good study bible will help break the text into fairly good contextual blocks

You may use someone else's outline

Rule #1 Ask questions about the passage

1. who is speaking
2. what is happening or needed
3. when did this happen
4. where did this happen
5. How did God meet the need
6. what does this mean to me

You may not be able to answer all of the questions from every passage.

It becomes important then to read the context to help you...

Rule #2

EXPLAIN THE MEANING OF A PASSAGE AS IT RELATES TO THE CONTEXT

Many times false teaching arise from taking a verse or a part of a verse out of context...

For example

Claiming God's promises while ignoring the conditions that go along with them.

Matthew 6:33

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Others will use a verse to support their own belief without paying any attention to the intended meaning which comes from its context.

For ex. A man wants to divorce his wife and he uses...to support his desire

1 Cor. 7:1

Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman.

Of course this verse alone is not enough to support his argument

When we read all of ch. 7 and Eph. 5, and 1 Timothy 4:1-4 we see that divorce is not acceptable to God...

When a passage presents limited teaching or a seeming conflict, we need to study other passages that give related teachings

Rule #3

COMPARE THE PASSAGE WITH OTHER PASSAGES THAT GIVE RELATED TEACHINGS

Scripture interprets scripture

This is a good reason to have a chain reference bible or references to related text.

- II. Finally you need to recognize the relationship between prayer and your study of God's word

Why is prayer so important

It's a living word
Divinely inspired

Which is taught us by the HS

Who quickens us and illumines his word to us

We need His help with

Psalm 119:18-19

Open my eyes that I may see
wonderful things in your law.

[19] I am a stranger on earth;
do not hide your commands from me.

Let's interpret God's word....

PRAYER

Matthew 6:33 (context vs 25-34)

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Who is speaking?

What things are being referred to?

How – or under what conditions will they be given?

What does this mean to us?

God will supply the basic needs of our life if our focus is on God's Kingdom and desiring his righteousness

Psalms 37:4

Delight yourself in the Lord
and he will give you the desires of your heart.

Matthew 19:29

And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life.

Has God ever fulfilled MT 6:33 in your life