

HOW TO STUDY YOUR BIBLE

Have you ever wondered why there are so many different denominational groups in the world today? Why are there so many varied beliefs regarding salvation, the end times, and the work of Christ. The answers to these questions have many facets.

1. The unsaved do not understand the things of God for they are spiritually discerned.
2. Many study the Bible ignorantly perpetuating the same error.
3. Some, affected by their lack of morality, must teach incorrectly or expose their own sin.
4. Many do not know how to study the Bible and don't check on those teaching them.
5. Many use the Bible as a tool to prove what they believe already (prejudicial influence).

The Bible is obviously no ordinary

*The Bible is a revelation of the mind of God, not a riddle! Jesus is the Light of the world.

Where should we begin to find out how to study the Bible? Let's begin with an overview of the entire Bible.

ABC OUTLINE OF THE BIBLE

A. God dealt with mankind as a whole: Gen. 1-11

1. Creation 1-2
2. Fall 3-5
3. Flood 6-9
4. Dispersion 10-11

B. God dealt with mankind through Israel (Gen. 12 - Malachi)

1. Through the patriarchs - Gen. 12-50

(Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph)

2. Through Israelite leaders - Ex. 1- I Sam. 8

(Moses, Joshua, Judges, Samuel)

3. Through the kings - I Sam. 9 - 2 Kings 24

(Saul, David, Solomon, Divided kingdom)

4. Through foreign nations - 2 Kings 25 - Malachi

(Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece)

C. God dealt with mankind through His Son (New Testament)

Gospels, History, Epistles, Prophetic book

What is hermeneutics? It is the science of interpretation. We will study principles, rules and methodology of interpretation. Why? So that we can accurately study and teach the Word which God gave to us. To understand His Word correctly is understand His purpose and design for our lives correctly.

Interpretation comes from the Greek word ερμηνευω meaning to explain the meaning. Examples of this are found in Neh. 8:1-8; Luke 24:47; Matt. 1:23

HURDLES YOU MUST CROSS:

Linguistic (crossing from one language to another)

Geographical (Middle east to Middle West)

Cultural gap (morality)

Historical (generation)

Theological (Isa. 55:8-9)

Psychological (intangible)

PREPARATION OF THE INTERPRETER

Delight in the Scripture

persistence in study, love the Word of God

obedience

honest approach for a rich, deep, mature understanding

yielded to God's purpose

accept the language as God's vehicle. It is adequate.

Dependence upon the Holy Spirit of God

prayer: before, during and after study

the Holy Spirit's leading

restraint: we do not know everything, don't be afraid to say you don't know

Regular church attendance and Bible study

Development of skills

intelligence

education

BASIC APPROACH TO BIBLE STUDY

Observation: what does it say? Read full passage

Interpretation: What does it mean?

Application: What does it mean to me?

Integration: What does it mean to the rest of the Word?

THE SEVEN APPROACHES TO BIBLE STUDY

synthetic: as a whole, make up your own

analytical: inquisitive, investigative, critical, resolving to first principles

historical: past

topical: familiar, popular, up to date, theme oriented, contemporary

biographical: personal accounts of individuals, character studies

theological: doctrinal, dogmatic, textual, exegetical

devotional: pious, personal application to life

SUMMARY OF LITERAL INTERPRETATION: We must have some basis for interpretation

1. Literal meaning of sentences is the normal meaning in all languages. This is a basic rule of any communication and keeps us away from double sense interpretation.
2. All secondary meanings depend upon the literal meaning
3. A literal approach yields a comprehensive system of knowledge. It exercises control. If it does not measure up, it is suspect.
4. Doesn't rule out figures of speech.
5. The only sane check on imagination. Fact
6. The Holy Spirit used language that was exact and comprehensible
7. The Old Testament, when used in the N.T. favors the literal interpretation.
8. God gave us our minds to understand His Word.

GENERAL RULES OF INTERPRETATION

1. Discover the meaning without preconceived ideas
2. Read the passage in its own context
3. There is one correct interpretation, not some imaginative solution
4. One interpretation, but many applications to the truth
5. How was it meant to be understood by the people to whom it was written
6. Use reference material last, after you have deduced truth
7. Make Christ central in your understanding:
8. Any language has a normal understanding
9. View any Scripture from the immediate context and the context of the entire 66 books
10. We must have faith in certain areas
11. Remember, teachers who are wrong about Christ are wrong about other things.
12. Read your Bible pen and paper handy
13. Strong's Concordance: choose meaning that relates to the passage.

FIGURES OF SPEECH

1. **Simile**: comparison by "like" or "as" of two unlike things.

Her lips are like rubies"

2. **Metaphor**: Direct comparison - term or phrase compared with something which is not literally applicable. "She is the flower of my life"- Luke 13:32

3. **Metonymy**: To use the name of one thing for another related thing such as the kingdom of heaven being a metonymy for the kingdom of God. Also see Luke 16:29 Moses and the prophets, or Babe Ruth and baseball.

4. **Personification**: Personal characteristics to an inanimate object or abstract idea

5. **Apostrophe**: Direct address to a person who is not present.

6. **Hyperbole:** A conscious exaggeration, such as, seven times hotter, fortified their cities up to heaven (used for effect).

7. **Irony:** The opposite of what is meant to be said. Used in ridicule, contempt, satire, humor.

9. **Riddle:** Concise saying meant to be hard to figure out, using ambiguous or obscure terms.

10. **Euphemism:** Substituting a more mild, inoffensive expression for an indelicate unpleasant one. "He passed away" or "he went to his place"

11. **Parables:** A story of a life-like everyday event, a plain appealing to a vivid spiritual truth

(to interpret parables: understand earthly elements and customs, recreate the context from all the clues you can, accept thankfully what is interpreted by Jesus, attempt to determine the main point, proportionately deal with the central and supporting teachings, and understand the whole story).

12. **Allegories:** Less important, but still there. Speaking to imply something other than what is said. Examples: I Cor. 9:9; Deut. 25:4 where oxen means ministers. Paul makes the O.T. quote mean something other than what it was really meant.

Gal. 4:21-31 "which things being allegorized." This section is supplemental to his argument. He does not base doctrine on this passage, he supplements arguments. You want to allegorize, I will meet you on your own ground (ad hominem).

13. **Fables:** A fictitious story to teach a moral lesson. Judges 9:1-21; Ezek. 17; 2 kings 14:9

14. **Typology:** A type is an historical event extended by its reality to foreshadow a later event. It does not have reality. Romans 5:14 shows Adam as a type of Christ. Often there is agreement between the type and antitype (Jesus and the Lamb).

APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLES

Study the following passages from a devotional point of view

Psalm 119:121-128

What does it say?

What does it mean?

What does it mean to me?

What does it mean to the rest of the world?