

## Studying the Bible

II Timothy 2:15 “*Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*”

### ***Why study the Bible***

- We study the Bible to gain God’s approval of us. God has little use for a Christian who has no use for His Bible. I want God to approve of me. Man may never approve of me, but I hope God will. The Bible is a love letter from God written to me and to you. He has a lot to say to us. How can He speak to us if we never open the letter? Read and study your Bible daily to gain God’s approval.
- We study the Bible to train ourselves to be His workman. I do not know how to work in God’s vineyard. I learn from the Bible. A mechanic has many tools in his toolbox. Christians have only the Bible in their tool chest. I have many tools as a carpenter. Some I do not know how to use. I have not had the time to train myself to use them. God made it simple for Christians- He gave us only one tool, the BIBLE. We don’t have to worry about Shakespeare and Dickens and a thousand other writers. We concern ourselves only with the Bible. An unqualified worker in God’s vineyard simply has not spent enough time studying the Bible.
- We study the Bible to rightly divide it. The Bible is not automatically understood. It must be *rightly* divided. For example, I am not going to take a lamb to church Sunday to sacrifice on the altar. By rightly dividing the Word, I found that we no longer live under the sacrificial rules of Moses’ law, and that Jesus was the final, supreme sacrifice. God no longer demands lambs, rams, oxen, and turtledoves.

### ***The need to be saved to understand the Bible***

Are you saved? If not, studying the Bible will be aimless and empty for you. I Corinthians 2:13-14 reads “*Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 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.*” The Bible is a spiritual book. It is not a magazine or a newspaper. It is from God. The verse above says it is “spiritually discerned” which means “spiritually understood.” It is said the Bible is the only book that can only be understood by folk who know the author. Amen. It is to no avail to teach and discuss the Bible with a lost person.

If you are not saved, read John 3:16, Ephesians 2:8-10, and Romans 10:13. These verses give the salvation plan in simple understanding that a sinner can comprehend. After reading these passages, I trust you will then give your heart to Christ as your Savior.

### ***Realizing the importance of studying the Bible***

If you don’t think studying the Bible will help you, you are off to a bad start. If you do not believe the Bible is the most important book in the entire world, you will see little need to study it. Consider the importance:

- Studying the Bible is important so you can teach others the Bible. Deuteronomy 6:6-9 *“And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: 7 And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. 9 And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.”* If you only teach your children and perhaps grandchildren the Word of God, you have done a marvelous thing.
- Study the Bible to avoid error and false teaching. Hosea 4:6 *“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God (Bible), I will also forget thy children.”* Gal 1:8-9 *“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”* The land is filled with false doctrine. Will it sweep you off your feet? It will if you don’t know what the Bible has to say. Eph 4:14 warns *“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried*

*about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive”* The land is full of cults! Beware!!

- Studying the Bible lets us know God’s will and ways for our life. Psalms 119:11 *“Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”*
- Study the Bible to grow up as a child of God. We are babes when we are first saved. The apostle Paul gives us the admonition of I Peter 2:2 *“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby”* Studying the Bible will bring maturity to your Christian life. Nothing else will bring growth like God’s Word will.
- Studying the Bible shows God you love Him. John 14:15 *“If ye love me, keep my commandments.”* What are his commandments? Those things written in the Bible.

### ***Your attitude toward Bible study***

- Be prayerful before and during your study of the Bible. Ask God to give you wisdom of His Word. James 1:5 *“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.”* Oft times I have sat down with my Bible in need of answers from God, and He has never failed me.
- Accept the Bible as Truth and God’s Word never doubting! I Thessalonians 2:13 *“For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.”* There is no other book ever written that contains 100% truth as does the Bible. It is inerrant- it contains no error. It is infallible- it can never fail. Genesis 1:1 through Revelation 22:21 is one-hundred percent truth. To be defeated in Bible study, just let the Devil plant a seed of doubt in your mind concerning the validity of the Word of God.
- A desire to learn is necessary to effectively study the Bible. Matt 5:6 *“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.”* I have never enjoyed a meal

when I was not hungry. A good appetite makes a meal taste so much better.

- Be willing to work hard and to spend time in the study of the Bible. Ecclesiastes 12:12 “*Much study is a weariness of the flesh.*” Bible study makes the flesh weary. Bible study takes time the Devil does not want you to spend. The phone will ring. Company will drop by just as you get into the study of God’s Word. The kids will start fighting. Your favorite show will come on TV.
- Assume a childlike mind in the study of God’s Word. Matthew 11:25 “... *thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.*” The person who thinks they know more than God will never glean from His Word. The person who makes up his mind that God cannot tell him anything is doomed from the start. I do not mind getting on my face before God weeping asking for morsels from His precious Bible. Approach the study of the Bible with the attitude that you will never grasp all the knowledge contained therein. The Bible is too vast. However, know for sure that God did not give man a book He did not want him to understand.

### ***Various approaches to Bible study***

- Individual Book study  
Bible means “book of books.” The Bible is made up of 66 books. I believe this method to be the most difficult but most rewarding kind of Bible study. To start, choose a short book like I Peter. First, gain general understanding of the book by reading it through more than once. Then, determine: Who wrote this book? To whom did he write? Where did he write it? When did he write it? What was the purpose in writing? What were his circumstances during the time of writing? What were the circumstances of those to whom he wrote? Is the book about one or two people or perhaps about a group of Christians or even a nation? Then, study verses and how they fit into the overall book. To understand verses, understand words. You need Strong’s Concordance (best), Young’s Concordance (second) or Cruden’s Bible Concordance to look up words. This will be a great help.
- Passage study  
Psalms 23 (example) is a wonderful passage of the Bible to study. Who is the writer speaking to? When did he speak? What is subject

or purpose of the passage? Study the passage word-by-word and verse-by-verse.

- **Topic study**

Choose a topic in the Bible. For example, choose blood or angels or heaven. Search passages in the Bible where the topic is discussed. Use the concordances (found in back of Bible), Bible center references found on each page, or a book such as Nave's Topical Bible to direct you to the scriptures where the topic is discussed. Write down what you have found and discovered.

- **Biographical study**

This is a form of topic study but is about a person. For example, you may wish to learn about the life of Joseph. Again, go to the concordance to find the scriptures where the person is mentioned. Examine all the places where the Bible speaks of the person you are studying. How did God use them? What circumstances did they face in life that you can learn from? How did God communicate with them? What was their family like? Some Bibles have a handy index of proper names in the back that is very helpful.

- **Geographical Study**

This is another special form of topical study. It is about a place. For example, you may wish to study the Jordan River or perhaps Mount Calvary.

- **Typology study**

This is the study of how an event, person, or even a building serves as a type of something. For example, the Passover spoken of in Exodus 12 is a beautiful type (picture) of Christ as the Lamb of God shedding His blood on the Cross to free man from sin. Another example is the Tabernacle of Moses in the wilderness as a type (picture) of Christ. The ceiling of the Tabernacle is white linen, a type (picture) of the righteousness of Christ. The silver foundation of the Tabernacle is a type of Christ's redemption of the sinner at Calvary.

- **Nationalities or groups of people**

Examples: The nation Israel, backsliders, infidels, skeptics, the persecuted, children.

Wonderful Bible study tools (may possibly be found online):

1611 Holy Bible  
Unger's Bible Dictionary  
Nave's Topical Bible  
Strong's Concordance

***Reference verses***

I Corinthians 2:13-14 *“Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 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.”*

Galations 1:8-9 *“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. 9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”*

Acts 17:11 *“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”*

Hosea 4:6 *“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”*

John 14:15 *“If ye love me, keep my commandments.”*

Amos 8:11 *“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD:”*