

STUDYING  
THE  
BIBLE

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# STUDYING THE BIBLE

## DISCERNING TRUTH

*Background Reading: Luke 6:43-44*

**If a person is open to the Spirit of Truth** (the Holy Spirit - our Teacher), the greatest sign to show that a teaching is of God will be God's convicting power on the Word of truth when it is spoken in wisdom and faith. As the Spirit bears witness with our spirit (Romans 8:16) that the words being spoken are from God, if truly open to this truth, we will experience an inner conviction. It is this inner witness (the knowing within) that will tell us whether a teaching is of God or not (again, that is if we are open to the Spirit of God). However, many may be unable to correctly perceive this leading. For this reason they need to be protected from the enemy and themselves through submitting to God-given leadership - their shepherds (pastors and teachers) within the Body.

God's purpose in shepherding His people doctrinally is revealed in His exhortation to Timothy:

***2 TIMOTHY 4:2 Herald and preach the Word! Keep your sense of urgency (stand by, be at hand and ready, whether the opportunity seems to be favorable or unfavorable, whether it is convenient or inconvenient, whether it be welcome or unwelcome, you as preacher of the Word are to show people in what way their lives are wrong) and convince them, rebuking and correcting, warning and urging and encouraging them, being unflagging and inexhaustible in patience and teaching. (Amp.)***

Another version reads:

***2 TIMOTHY 4:2 Preach the Word (refers to the whole body of revealed Truth, which means the entirety of the Word of God); be instant in season, out of season (presents the idea of the Preacher holding himself in constant readiness to proclaim the Word); **reprove** (the***

*Preacher is to deal with sin, both in the lives of his unsaved hearers and in those of the Saints to whom he Ministers, and he is to do so in no uncertain tones and terms), rebuke (a suggestion in some cases of impending penalty), exhort with all longsuffering and Doctrine. (This tells us that the “reproving” and the “rebuking” must be done with gentleness . . . ) (E.S.B.)*

Many become shipwrecked in their faith because they never put down roots, but move from church to church, thinking they are qualified to act as their own pastors. This goes against the teaching of scripture which states that God gave the offices of the Five Fold Ministry (Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers) to the Church for the express purpose of “ . . . the perfecting of the Saints, . . . the work of the ministry, . . . the edifying of the Body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-12).

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***“ . . . Many become shipwrecked in their faith because they never put down roots, but move from church to church, thinking they are qualified to act as their own pastors. . . ”***

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**In fact part of God’s prescribed order** for our Christian life is to become committed to a local church and to submit to those whom God has placed in authority over us in this place. There are shepherds and there are sheep - and the sheep are ill-equipped to shepherd themselves. Therefore we find specific instruction in God’s Word to:

***HEBREWS 13:17 Obey them who have the rule over you, and submit yourselves (to them in the Lord): for they watch for your souls (have a responsibility for your spiritual welfare), as they who must give account (to the Lord), that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.***

This is not an authority which is to be exercised in a dictatorial way, for all things need to be taken to the Lord in prayer. While the shepherd must give account, each person is still responsible for their own spiritual walk. The key in all this is humility, and a heart's desire to please the Father:

***1 PETER 5:5 Likewise, you younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yes, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble. (Proverbs 3:34)***

***1 PETER 5:6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time (proclaims the route to the Blessings of God : E.S.B.)***

**The first sign** which shows that a teaching is of God is that it will line up with His Word - His principles. Then if it does, it must also be a balanced message, in context, and applicable for today. Indeed there are many hermeneutical rules which govern the interpretation of scripture. Biblical hermeneutics is the science of interpretation of scripture.

Note that we will not know if a teaching is correct by how much emotional response we have to it, or by how "comfortable" we feel. Both of these indicators can be based purely on the senses, and the senses are not able to accurately or objectively discern spiritual truth.

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***“. . .The first sign which shows that a teaching is of God is that it will line up with His Word - His principles. . .”***

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When God's teachings are received and acted upon in faith, His power will be released to back up His Word of truth. And there will be signs and wonders which accompany and confirm the preaching of the message of truth.

***ROMANS 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation (of spirit, soul and body) to every one who believes . . .***

***MARK 16:20 And they (the early Church) went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the Word with signs (and wonders) following. Amen.***

These signs will include lives transformed at an experiential level to express the fruit of the Spirit.

***GALATIANS 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,***

***GALATIANS 5:23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. (This fruit can only develop when Christians are led and empowered by the Spirit.)***

***GALATIANS 5:24 And they who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.***

***GALATIANS 5:25 If we live in the Spirit (speaks of salvation), let us also walk in the Spirit (speaks of ongoing sanctification, i.e. living our life on a daily basis according to the graces and energies of the Divine Nature).***

We cannot, however, rely on the numbers of people being saved and healed alone to tell us whether a certain teaching is truth or not. This is because people have wills and can reject the truth, thus choosing not to receive of God's teachings through His chosen vessels. By doing so, such people remain in bondage because of their unbelief or rebellion. Therefore we cannot rely on signs alone to establish the authenticity of a teacher or teaching.

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***“. . . We cannot, however, rely on the numbers of people being saved and healed alone to tell us whether a certain teaching is truth or not. . .”***

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**Indeed the power of the Gospel** is only realized when people receive, believe and act on God's Word in faith - for until truth is believed and acted upon, it will remain merely empty or dead words. But when it is appropriated according to the conditions of God's Word, it is transformed into the living word which can release the power of God unto salvation of spirit, soul and body.

**We can see an example** of people rejecting God's teachings when Jesus, the greatest teacher of all, returned to Nazareth, His home town.

***MARK 6:1 And He went out from thence (Capernium), and came into His own country (hometown - Nazareth); and His Disciples follow (accompanied) Him.***

***MARK 6:2 And when the Sabbath day was come, He began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing Him were astonished, saying, "From whence has this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto Him, that even such mighty works (miracles) are wrought by His hands? (They did not question the wisdom or the works, but rather His right to do such things. In their thoughts, He wasn't worthy!) (E.S.B.)***

***MARK 6:3 Is not this the carpenter, the Son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not His sisters here with us? " And they were offended at Him (disapproved of Him).***

***MARK 6:4 But Jesus said unto them, "A Prophet is not without honour (proper deference and reverence), but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house (probably meaning His brothers and sisters)."***

***MARK 6:5 And He could there do no mighty work, save that He laid His hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them.***

***MARK 6:6 And He marvelled (was amazed) because of their unbelief. . .***



Even though God had performed many mighty miracles and wonders through Jesus' ministry, people still rejected Jesus and His teachings, and the same still happens today to God's ministers. Therefore a lack of signs and wonders does not necessarily mean that a teaching or a ministry is not of God.

**However, we can state categorically** that if a teaching does not line up with God's Word, we need to reject it, no matter what so-called "signs" may accompany it (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). Thus to know if a teaching is correct and in context, we must know the principles contained within God's Word. Otherwise we could be deceived by wrong teaching and succumb to confusion and error. We need proper doctrinal filters to work through the doctrines of the Bible. In other words, scripture will not contradict itself, and will always harmonize. As we understand basic doctrines, we can use these as a filter by which other doctrine can be tested, and if true, then digested. As scripture itself tells us, we must be built up, doctrine upon doctrine, "*For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little*" (Isaiah 28:10). In this way we can progress gradually from the milk of the Word to the meat of the Word:

***HEBREWS 5:13 For every one who uses milk (doesn't refer to new Christians but those who have had opportunity to grow in the Word and haven't done so) is unskilful in the Word of righteousness: for he is (still) a babe.***

***HEBREWS 5:14 But strong meat (of the Word) belongs to them who are of full age (mature in the Lord), even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both (distinguish between) good and evil.***

***EPHESIANS 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children (immature Christians), tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men (unscrupulous teachers of falsehood), and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive (by deliberate scheming)***

Remember that the foundation of all doctrine is the Cross. Therefore anything, meaning any doctrine which is not based on Calvary - on the Cross (the Atonement) - will be false and will bring nothing but error and distraction of one kind or another.

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*“. . . We need proper doctrinal filters to work through the doctrines of the Bible. In other words, scripture will not contradict itself, and will always harmonize. . .”*

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**We are responsible** for our own personal growth in the Lord. We are responsible for what we do with what we hear. God has commanded us to seek Him and His truth with all we have, and He promises that if we do, we will find both. To do anything less than this is to deny ourselves God’s fellowship and love, and this may bring bondage into our lives and even cause others to remain in darkness (through a lack of discipleship and Christian witness on our part).

**God will protect new Christians** in their initial growth in a limited way as long as they follow Him wholeheartedly. Just as parents care for their children and protect them from harm when they can, God does the same. However the degree of help, protection and provision that God gives will depend on the individual’s willingness to allow Him to do so. And we need also to allow God to direct us in regard to the church we attend and the ministry we sit under, for in these matters we are also responsible before God. We should allow these things to be of God’s choosing, not ours - for in relation to God we are but babes, and it is He Who knows both us and the future. So leave the future in His hands, by allowing Him to lead in all these areas.

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*“ . . . We need to allow God to direct us in regard to the church we attend and the ministry we sit under, for in these matters we are also responsible before God. . . ”*

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## THE BIBLE

The word “**Bible**” is derived from a Greek word meaning “the books.” The Bible is actually a library of 66 books, of which 39 make up the Old Testament and 27 the New Testament.

The Old Testament contains the holy books of God’s ancient chosen people - the Israelites. The first book was written around 1400B.C., and the last was written about 400B.C., that is, 400 years before Christ was born.

**The books of the Old Testament** are not arranged chronologically, but according to the subjects they cover. The way in which the Old Testament books are arranged, and can be classified, is as follows:

**1. LAW BOOKS (The Pentateuch)**

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

**2. HISTORY BOOKS**

Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther.

**3. POETRY and WISDOM BOOKS**

Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon.

**4. MAJOR PROPHETS**

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel.

**5. MINOR PROPHETS**

Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

**When the Old Testament** was translated into Greek (3rd Century B.C.), the apocryphal books were added. The Apocrypha is a collection of books, between eleven to sixteen in number, written during the 400 year period between the Old and New Testaments. This was called “The Silent Period” because no divinely inspired prophets operated in the interval between Malachi and John the Baptist. The books written during the Intertestamental period, while having literary and historical merit, have been rejected by the Protestant Church as part of the canon of scripture. However the Catholic Church in 1546 A.D. declared eleven of the books to be canon. This is why you will find these eleven books, termed “the Apocrypha,” in modern Catholic versions of the Bible.

**Note:** The word “apocrypha” means “hidden” or “secret.” The term “canon of scripture” refers to that which is regarded as having been written under divine inspiration.

**The 27 books of the New Testament** are also arranged by subject or author, not according to the order in which they were written. They are classified as follows:

**1. THE GOSPELS (Good News of Jesus Christ)**

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.

**2. HISTORY**

Acts of the Apostles.

**3. PAULINE EPISTLES (Letters)**

Romans, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I Thessalonians, II Thessalonians, I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus, Philemon.

**4. GENERAL EPISTLES (Letters)**

Hebrews, James, I Peter, II Peter, I John, II John, III John, Jude.

**5. PROPHECY**

Revelation

Sometimes the Bible is referred to as “the Holy Scriptures.” The word “holy” means “set apart for a special purpose” and the word

“scripture” simply means “writings”: Thus the Holy Scriptures are “holy writings.”

**The Bible primarily contains:**

- (a) an account of the origins of man, and an outline of man’s future
- (b) the early history of God’s chosen people
- (c) God’s principles and commandments by which we are to live
- (d) God’s will and plan for mankind.

**Now the Bible is much more than a collection of books.**

Remember that it is 66 books written over a period of 1600 years by some 40 writers from many and varied backgrounds. When we consider this, we can only be amazed at its remarkable unity of thought and purpose - its remarkable integrity. Indeed the Bible validates itself, and points to the existence of the divine Author overseeing and inspiring each of the writers to produce the Holy Scriptures, uniquely integrated while flowing out of such incredible diversity.

**The Bible is God’s Word**, divinely inspired and full of truth, and God backs up His Word with His power. The Word of God provides us with boundaries, exhorts us to live according to Godly principles and contains the way to life. We should treasure God’s Word and read it daily, drawing from its pages the direction and correction we need. For:

***2 TIMOTHY 3:16 All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God (the Greek says, “all Scripture is God-breathed,” which means it is the Word of God, and, thereby, infallible!), and is profitable for Doctrine (all we believe, teach, and do must be based squarely on the Scriptures), for reproof (proclaims the use of the Word of God in setting direction), for correction (refers to restoration to an upright state), for instruction in Righteousness***

*(presents the Bible as the only guide for such instruction): (E.S.B.)*

***HEBREWS 4:12 For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions (motives) of the heart. (R.S.V.)***

***PSALM 119:105 Your Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.***

**The writers of the Bible** were inspired by the Spirit of God to write the words they wrote. This is why Christians refer to the Bible as “the Word of God.” In fact, as we have stated, the Greek word “theopneustos” found in 2 Timothy 3:16 literally means “God-breathed,” or “given by inspiration of God.” Thus the holy scriptures were breathed out by God and breathed into the hearts and minds of the writers of the Bible by the Holy Spirit. These men then wrote words from God Who is the ultimate source of what they wrote.

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***“. . . Thus the holy scriptures were  
breathed out by God and breathed into  
the hearts and minds of the writers of the  
Bible by the Holy Spirit. . . ”***

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The Holy Spirit gave His Word to the individual writers of the Bible via the temperament, culture and experience of each one. Therefore the Bible, quite often, has a human stamp on it as well as a Divine stamp, and each book displays the character of the writer as well as the character of God.

Such is the incredible power of God, that He has been able to use the human personality, disposition and experience to produce His infallible Word.

***2 PETER 1:21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.***

*“If one closely studies the Scriptures one sees that as far as instruction is concerned, the Holy Spirit does not go beyond the intelligence of the writer. While tremendous predictions were given by the Prophets concerning things they did not know or understand, this was not the case as it regards instruction. Regarding instruction, the Holy Spirit definitely inspired the writers, but did so only up to the limit of their understanding.”<sup>1</sup>*

(underlines added)

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***“. . .Such is the incredible power of God, that He has been able to use the human personality, disposition and experience to produce His infallible Word. . .”***

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There are many writers of the Bible, but one Author, that being God Almighty - and it is written proof of His love for mankind. The Bible has been divided into two sections: the Old Testament or Covenant and the New Testament or Covenant. It has been said: the Old Covenant was the New Covenant concealed and the New Covenant is the Old Covenant revealed. So BOTH the Old Covenant and the New Covenant constitute the written Word of God.

## **THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE BIBLE**

Knowing that God is in the ever eternal present, and we (mankind) are locked into a time zone, our approach and thinking when studying God’s Word (as we have previously noted) should be in the knowledge of the following:

**The present and final outcome of mankind** was known by God even before the Book of Genesis was written. With this foreknowledge, God’s Spirit chose, directed and anointed people to write down His Word. So from God’s perspective, and according to His foreknowledge, the Bible (God’s Plan of Redemption for mankind) has been constructed from the back (Book of Revelation) to the front (Book of Genesis). This explains why the Old Testament shows us many physical type-patterns of truths which apply to us

today - because God placed them there to highlight the spiritual truths of Calvary. **We could also say that everything recorded in the Bible points to Calvary.** Indeed the Old Testament sacrifices, ceremonies and festivals are a shadow or a type-pattern of the reality of Christ's sacrifice and His finished work. The precious Blood of Jesus flowed backwards from the Cross to cleanse the sins of the Old Testament Saints as well as flowing forwards from the Cross to cleanse the sins of the New Testament Saints. Everything points to the Cross, God's pivotal point for mankind's redemption.

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***“ . . . So from God's perspective, and according to His foreknowledge, the Bible (God's Plan of Redemption for mankind) has been constructed from the back (Book of Revelation) to the front (Book of Genesis). . . ”***

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**Remember too** that the books of the Old Testament contain the principles of God which are for us to live by today, just as the books of the New Testament do. These principles and commandments are contained within the historical, prophetic, literary and apostolic writings of the entire Bible.

In New Testament times, Jesus revealed to the Pharisees that God was far more concerned with justice, compassion and humility than with outward ritual e.g. man-made religious ordinances and traditions, etc. The same was true in Old Testament times and is still true today - for there is a continuity expressed throughout the whole Bible regarding God's commandments, principles and requirements. Therefore we should take time to study the Old Testament as well as the New, and not regard it, as some do, as either outdated or pertaining only to Israel. Indeed to go one step further, it is not possible to truly understand the New Testament unless we understand the Old.

**God has endorsed and will continue** to endorse and confirm His Word of Truth with His power, when people receive and act on His truths in faith. Indeed God our Creator has given this “Manual of



Life” to mankind to live by, so we can have victory in every area of our lives.

## **STUDYING GOD’S WORD**

We know that God is omniscient, having all knowledge, including foreknowledge of the destiny of mankind. Our approach and thinking when studying God’s Word should therefore be in the light of the following:

The present and final outcome of mankind was known by God even before the book of Genesis was written. With this foreknowledge, God’s Spirit, over centuries of time, chose, directed and anointed people to write down His Word (His covenant with mankind) for the benefit of mankind.

The Bible is therefore the divinely inspired, infallible and authoritative written Word of God, and we need to study it as such: 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

The Lord holds His Word in high esteem and we should do likewise. It is our “Manual of Life” and has been designed by God to provide the answer to our every need. We should thus reverence its teachings and principles and apply them to our lives as if it is the Lord Himself Who is actually speaking to us. For He does this through His written Word.

The Bible has been divided into two sections - the Old Testament and the New Testament - and together these two parts make up the complete written Word of God. We should study all of God’s Word, for through the Old Testament, we can gain a thorough understanding of what has been given to us in our Covenant of Redemption today, expressed through the pages of the New Testament. Also contained within the Old Testament are many historical accounts which give us physical type-patterns of truths for today especially in regard to the message of the Cross ( The Attonement).

Furthermore, God, being in the ever-eternal present, has foreknowledge of who will respond to Jesus and receive salvation through Him. Given this foreknowledge, God has planned everything and has allowed for all things. And He states that He will achieve and accomplish what He has promised in His Word of truth and power, and that His Word will not return to Him void: Isaiah 55:9-11. God’s foreknowledge, however, does not influence or lessen His desire to

see all men saved and come to the knowledge of the truth: 1 Timothy 2:4.

To help you study you will require some basic reference books, some could be:

1. A chain reference Bible.
2. A Strong's Concordance (or similar publication) containing a Greek and Hebrew Dictionary of the Bible.
3. A Bible Dictionary.
4. A Bible Concordance.
5. An Encyclopedia of the Bible - begin with a small one for historical studies.
6. A Hebrew, Greek and English Interlinear Bible.
7. A Parallel Bible (4 or more Bible versions in one book).
8. An ordinary Dictionary.

Start with a chain reference Bible and then add to your study reference library as you can afford it.

Remember that through knowing and living God's Word, you and others can have a victorious life in Christ. For God has said in His Word:

***HOSEA 4:6 My people (today this is Christians) are destroyed (have gone into bondage) for lack of knowledge (not head or intellectual knowledge, but revelation or heart-knowledge). . .***

***ISAIAH 5:13 Therefore My people (Christians) have gone into captivity (bondage), because they have no knowledge (understanding): and their honourable men (people of authority) are dying (both spiritually and physically) of hunger, and their multitude (people who follow them) are dried up with thirst.***

There is no easy way (or short cut) to obtaining heart-knowledge of God's Word. Sincere dedicated personal study is always needed. Without it you will do little of any significance for God on this earth.

Too many Christians, throughout their whole lives, desire to be spoon-fed the Word of God by others. Not only do they desire this, but many also want the "lumps" taken out, e.g. teachings concerning

hell, judgement, punishment, end times, bondages, commandments, personal responsibility, etc. God tells us that we are not only to hear His Word, but we must also diligently study His Word. And this means all of God's Word, not just small portions of it which feel comfortable to our senses and emotions.

The problem with some Christians is that they want to do very little work for God but still receive the same wage as if they had worked hard and long, as in the parable of the labourers in the vineyard: Mat.20:1-16. However the one who worked the least and received the same payment as the others in this parable was not like some Christians today who are basically lazy. And for God to bless lazy people with the same revelation of truth as diligent, open people would be to go against His basic principles of sowing and reaping, i.e. laziness reaps lack; diligent conscientious work reaps prosperity: Prov 13:4.

Also, do not mistake activity for progress, a common mistake in Christian circles. For we need to study diligently within the proper guidelines of truth and wisdom. For example, to study an untruth will reap no reward from heaven. Even though a person may do so conscientiously, their efforts will be in vain, and in fact they will really be moving backwards. So we need to make sure we are digesting good spiritual food.

Similarly, if we neglect our bodies and feed ourselves rubbish, the body will eventually become ill through a lack of proper nourishment. And while people usually have no problem feeding their bodies, it seems to be so difficult for many Christians to feed their spirits. This in fact appears to be an almost universal weakness and is one reason God has commanded us to study His Word diligently: 2 Tim.2:15; Rom.12:2; Josh.1:7-8.

There comes a time when we must feed ourselves personally from God's Word. This does not mean we should stop hearing the preaching of the Word - God forbid! We also need, however, to put in time and effort expanding our personal study of God's Word.

One of the reasons we should grow in God's Word is so that we will become **“strong in the Lord and in the power of His might”** (Eph.6:10) and so able to help meet the needs of others. For it is in accepting the truths contained in God's Word that people will be set

free. God will give us heavenly manna (food) to live on if we will only open our hearts to His direction, but there is no short cut to becoming a vessel of honour fit for the Master's use.

## **HOW TO STUDY EFFECTIVELY**

To help you gain the most from each study book, we have listed some basic techniques which you can utilize in order to study more effectively. You may not, at first, be able to apply all these techniques. However as you grow, you will be able to use them in expanding your studies more and more.

Just reading the studies over and over will not usually be enough for you to retain information in the long term. If you write notes while studying, this will enhance your ability to recall important points when needed. Tests have proven that if people who are studying write down important points as they are doing so, then revise these points at a later date, they have far better recall of the material they have studied. You could always write notes concerning the studies on the opposite blank pages marking and highlighting important points. By doing so you will improve your ability to recall the information you are studying.

## **EXPANDING THE STUDIES**

The following is meant as a brief guide for expanding your studies AS TIME PERMITS.

1. Before studying (or listening to teaching, etc.) be mindful of your blood-covering and thank God for it in faith. Also if needed bind in Jesus' name any influence from the enemy (e.g. unbelief, confusion, etc.), and thank your Teacher, the Holy Spirit, for what He is about to reveal to you.

2. If you are Baptized in the Spirit, speak in tongues for a little while before your study. This may help in gaining greater focus-concentration for studying spiritual things.

**3.** Look up the scriptural references given in the studies for the major relevant points and read the whole passage, not just one verse, so that you can gain a proper understanding of the context.

**4.** Analyze the scripture or principle you are studying. First deal with the logical side, then, if you can, move over into the spiritual side and analyze it, e.g. identify the “spirit” or fundamental principle of the scripture.

**5.** Are there any other scriptural references, major or minor, to the subject you are studying? If so, list them and look them up. Find additional scriptures which support these points. Remember: there are often Old Testament scriptures which parallel New Testament scriptures and vice versa.

**6.** Look for other general points of interest. Once these points have been found and written down, try to expand them as time permits.

**7.** Always keep in mind how any of the truths in the studies can be applied today.

**8.** Research, as time permits, the historical context of any scripture, e.g. time written / who wrote it? / to whom was it written? / why was it written? / has it universal applicability? / does it still apply today and if so, which aspects?

**9.** Use a dictionary to check word meanings in the studies. A tool which you may be able to use to check scriptural accuracy in a basic way is the Hebrew and Greek Interlinear Bible with Strong’s dictionary numbers accompanying each word. You can use this reference book along with other reference books to check on the proper meaning of words found in scripture.

**10.** Sometimes a parallel Bible containing four or more versions can help you better understand some scriptures as you compare them across the different versions, e.g. King James Version, New International Version, The Amplified Bible, New American Standard, etc.

**11.** Continually ask yourself questions, then study to answer them, e.g. “Righteousness” - what can we do in this state? “Obedience” - what is the beginning of obedience? “Law of liberty” - what can we do under this law? “To be set free” - how is this realized? “Expose sin” - how can we do this? “Conviction” - what is conviction? “Breaking the law” - can a Christian be under the penalty of the law? If so, how, and what may happen to them? “Tolerance” - find examples of God’s tolerance in both Old and New Testaments. Deuteronomy 28:15-68 - find other references to “the curse”. “Love” - what does the Bible refer to as the works of love?

**12.** Are there other angles from which the same major principle is taught? For example, compare Romans Ch.6 and Romans Ch.7.

**13.** Study the Bible’s history, as time permits, apart from the studies.

**14.** Study the Bible’s characters, as time permits, apart from the studies.

**15.** Continue to have a daily Bible reading program apart from the studies so that you may read through the entire Bible from front to back.

While some people may enjoy studying extra-curriculum material such as Bible history and characters, your main focus or priority should always be the study material. In other words, remain balanced in the way you divide your study time. Again, expand your studies only AS TIME PERMITS: i.e. according to the time limits given.

Be careful not to spend too much or too little time on each study. Remaining within the allotted time limits will enable you to continue progressing to subsequent studies and thus to gain the greatest overall benefit from the syllabus in a relatively short time.

Use your study time to study at a depth that you feel will enable you to answer the questions effectively at your chosen level - Intermediate or Ordinary Grade. If you feel you have achieved this before the time limit, then proceed to expand the study at a greater depth for the remaining time.

It may be difficult for some people who are studying an hour a day to find an unbroken hour each day during which they can study. Such people may need to study, for example, half an hour in the morning and half an hour at night, when the time is available. WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND, HOWEVER, THAT PEOPLE STUDY ON A DAILY BASIS IN ORDER TO OBTAIN MAXIMUM BENEFIT.

**Always remember**, as you study the Bible, that we should not be seeking knowledge for the sake of knowledge, but to have the truths of God's Word revealed to us and written on our hearts. Only in this way can we have our minds renewed, whereby God can then give us the faith and the power needed to carry out His will in our lives. With renewed minds and faith in our hearts we will be fit vessels for our Master's use, equipped for every good work, and effective against all the enemy's schemes. And this should always be our highest goal when we study God's Word. Amen and amen.

May you have the victory in Christ. Amen!

For further information or teaching material to help you grow in the Christian faith, please visit:

*CROSSROADS INTERNATIONAL*  
*FULL GOSPEL MINISTRIES*  
[crossroadsministries.org.au](http://crossroadsministries.org.au)

## NOTES



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1 S.B.C., Vol.21, Hebrews pg. v1,

*"We have a vision  
to see people living  
in abundant life  
by the power of God  
through Jesus Christ"*



[www.crossroadsministries.org.au](http://www.crossroadsministries.org.au)