

How to Study the Bible for Yourself

Lesson 3

The goals of each Bible student is to fulfill the command in 2 Timothy 2:15 "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." As each of us studies the Bible, we will come up with differences of opinion. These differences can be eliminated by following this simple rule: "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; where the Bible is silent, we are silent; but in all things LOVE." By using the Bible as our standard, we set aside mans' opinions and allow God to show us what He means through a thorough study of ALL that the Bible has to say upon a particular topic and not by looking at a few passages.

How can I accurately interpret the Bible? By following the same guidelines that are used everyday in journalism and in life itself. Make sure that you get ALL the information before you jump to conclusions. Here are some simple steps to help you do just that:

1. Pray for God's Spirit to give you insight and understanding.
2. Ask questions of each passage:
 - a. Who is writing?
 - b. Who is it being written to?
 - c. When was it written?
 - d. What other passages talk about the same thing?
 - e. Does this fit in with the rest of what the Bible is teaching?
3. Take the Bible literally; unless the passage uses phrases that show that it is NOT literal.
4. Look up the definition of the major words.
5. Compare different translations to get the complete idea of the word.

The KEY is: to apply what you have learned to your life, so that you can be a greater servant for Christ! This means you need to ask: How does this apply to Me? Does God give me promises to claim? Does He give me commands to keep? Does He give insight to help me in my daily life? Does He give me an example to follow or inspiration to motivate? Etc.

Once you have determined WHAT God is saying and HOW it applies to you, then you must allow it to change your life. James 1:22 "do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." If we know all the answers but fail to do anything with them, they are useless, to both us and God!

Make it a DAILY habit to study God's Word. Write down what you learn and save it so that you may go back to it at a later time for insight or help.

STUDY GUIDE FOR LESSON 3

1. What is the goal of each Bible Student (according to 2 Timothy 2:15)?
2. How can differences of opinion be eliminated?
3. How can God show us what He means in a particular passage?
4. List the 5 simple steps to use, to get ALL the information.
5. What is the KEY to Bible Study?
6. What questions can you ask, which will help you apply the passage to your life today?
7. Where do we find that we are to allow God's Word to change our life?
8. What should we do, so that later on, we can go back to what we have learned?
9. Find the MAJOR words in Mark 16:16
10. Find the MAJOR words in Acts 2:38
11. List all the translations of the Bible that you can think of.
12. Locate and list the translations that you have at home.
13. Is Isaiah 40:30, 31 to be taken literally? Explain.
14. Is Acts 2:41 to be taken literally? Explain.
15. Is Matthew 25:33 to be taken literally? Explain.
16. What difference might it make, if a command is given by God in the old or New Testament?
17. Explain in your own words, why it might be important to read your Bible every day
18. Give an example of how knowledge is worthless, if you fail to use it.