

How Do We Study The Bible? (Part I)

➤ = next PowerPoint slide

➤ Intro:

- brief series on Bible study
- last lesson: Why is Bible study important?
- this lesson: How do we study the Bible? (two parts)

➤ What is the purpose of Bible study?

- **Heb. 5:11-14** Bible study results in growth, maturity, accustomed to righteousness, senses trained to discern good and evil
 - if not study the Bible: dull of hearing, need to start again with elementary principles, not mature, senses not trained

- - **Col. 1:10-12** Bible study results in walking worthy, pleasing God, bearing fruit, knowledge, strength, steadfastness and patience, inheritance
 - if not study the Bible can't have these things

➤ What is the process whereby we come to know God's word?

- **Col. 1:3-9** the process by which Christians come to have knowledge of God

- - **vs. 5b** hear the gospel, word of truth
 - read the Bible, listen to lessons, "hear" what the word says
 - - **vs. 7** learn the gospel, word
 - learn: to increase one's knowledge, to learn by use and practice, to acquire the habit of
 - our job is to know how to learn (e.g., school, job), and do it regarding God's word
 - - **vs. 6b** understand the truth – result of hearing and learning
 - understand: to accept and fully apprehend (some trans. "know")
 - accept the word of God as truth, apprehend it as that, became thoroughly acquainted with it
 - - **vs. 9** knowledge in all spiritual wisdom and understanding
 - knowledge (*epignosis*): full knowledge, applying God's word and becoming a spiritually mature Christian
 - - **2 Pet. 1:2-4** knowledge (*epignosis*), have everything pertaining to life and godliness, partakers of God's divine nature
 - - **2 Pet. 1:5-7** components where by we come to have *epignosis* – Bible study and application
 - - **2 Pet. 1:8-10** result: fruitful, not blind or short-sighted, remembering purification, make certain calling, never stumble, abundant entrance into eternal kingdom
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- - **illus.: Paul studying, learning, striving to be a better Christian every day**
 - **Phil. 3:12-14** not already attained, not already perfect, not laid hold of the prize, forgot was behind and reached forward to what as ahead – striving to be better every day
 - **1 Cor. 15:31** died daily – recommitted daily – strove to be better daily
 - **2 Tim. 4:13** Paul asked Timothy to bring books (parchments) with him, so he could study in prison, possibly the Scriptures (Old, New) and other helpful books

➤ Bible study tip: **Read the Bible**

- **1 Tim. 4:13** public reading of Scripture commanded

➤ - **Matt. 7:26** must hear before we can act (obey) – **Rom. 10:17**

- **Rom. 10:17** reading God's word is one way people hear the word, which is necessary to salvation

- **illus.:** Scripture reading during our Sunday assemblies, and in our classes

- **illus.:** my method of preaching and teaching – “Bible” teacher, not entertainer

- **contrast:** less and less Bible reading in assemblies, which as some point will become sin, if not already

- **it will become less and less popular to have godly worship**, as people desire less and less to read God's word read

➤ - **Paul ordered that his epistles be read** (Scripture, **2 Pet. 3:16**)

- **Col. 4:16; 1 Th. 5:27** letters to be read by other churches, and to all the brethren

- **What do you think it was like to have a letter from Paul** (Scripture) and read it?

- like Israel when Ezra read the law, standing for ½ the day, and weeping

- how many times, how slow or fast, how many days straight, in assembly, in small meetings

- copy, memorize, scrutinize every detail

- cf. today

- **reading the Scriptures is a fundamental aspect of being a Christian, and being a church of Christ**

➤ Bible study tip: **Examine, search the Scriptures**

- **Acts 17:11** Bereans examined (searched) the Scriptures

- not just listen to Paul teach and believe on that alone, they took what he said and examined the Scriptures if see if what he said was true

➤ - **examine (search)** means to “sift up and down, make careful and exact research as in legal processes (as in Acts 4:9; 12:19, etc.) the Scriptures for themselves” (Robertson)

- **when we examine the Scriptures**, we meticulously go over them to understand exactly what is said, and go to great measures to put our ideas and the ideas of others to the test compared to God's word

- **illus.:** a man wanted to know the truth about salvation and baptism

- **pulled out every Scripture** on the subject, **analyzed** it carefully, **examining** every word, studying the Scriptures in their **immediate and greater context**

- then **studied all the major doctrines on the topic and scrutinized them**, to make sure he hadn't missed anything with his study

- **he examined the Scriptures, just as if it were a legal process – this is what we do**

- **upcoming lesson:** How do we examine (search) the Scriptures?

➤ **Bible study tip: Study with a teacher**

- **Acts 8:30-31** eunuch realized he needed a teacher, someone to guide him
 - we need people to guide us, to help us, point us in the right direction, point out inconsistencies, show us things we've not thought about
- illus.: Bereans, studied with a teacher (Paul), but studied for themselves, searched the Scriptures daily (**Acts 17:10-11**)
 - **as a result**, many people believed
 - **same result today**: hear story over and over, even from some in this audience
 - **when people are concerned enough about God's word to examine it**, they usually **learn** the truth and are **converted** to Christ

- - **we have weekly opportunities** to study with a teacher
- **2 Bible classes, 2 sermons** weekly at the church building – **importance, priority**
 - **one-on-one Bible studies** are always available when desired
 - **telephone Bible studies** are easy, convenient, fast
 - **email and online**
 - **no reason for anyone not to study with a teacher, if that's what they want**

➤ **Bible study tip: Repetition**

- **repetition is the first principle of learning**
 - **illus.: flash cards**, doing something repeatedly until it sticks (committed to memory)
 - **illus.: advertiser** has their **phone number** spoken and shown numerous times on an ad, knowing that it will help you remember it
 - **e.g., need a lawyer? call 1-800-law-need**
- - **apostolic example: we learn God's word through repetition**
 - **Rom. 15:15** Paul reminded brethren "again" – **1 Cor. 4:17; 2 Tim. 1:6**
- - **2 Tim. 2:14; Tit. 3:1** work of preachers and teacher is to remind brethren
- - **1 Pet. 1:2** Peter was always ready to remind brethren – **important work**
- **as faithful brethren we're happy to learn by repetition** – read, study the same old story for years
 - **need to be reminded**, review, or we'll forget
 - **those who don't know yet, need to learn** – e.g., young people, new Christians
 - **sadly, brethren in some congregations don't want to be reminded**, want to hear something new and entertaining – tired of the same old story

➤ **End Part I:**

- **tips on how to study the Bible:**
 - **read, examine, study with a teacher, repetition**
 - **continue the lesson next time** with more tips on Bible study, then the following lesson will be specific tips on examining the Scriptures
- **inv.:** remind, commanded to do to be saved