

How Do We Study The Bible? (Part III)

➤ = next PowerPoint

➤ Intro:

- **brief series on Bible study**
- **previous lessons:**
 - **Why is Bible study important?**
 - **How do we study the Bible? (Part I)**
 - purpose of Bible study, process to come to know God's word
 - Bible study tips: read, examine (search), study with a teacher, repetition
 - **How do we study the Bible? (Part II)**
 - know yourself, and the way you learn
- **this lesson:**
 - **How do we study the Bible? (Part III)**
 - method of interpretation

➤ There are many methods of interpreting the Bible

- **"Hermeneutics"** is the **study of methodological principles** of interpretation (Webster) (i.e., a set of rules whereby the Bible is interpreted).
- - **"Methodology"** is a body of methods, rules, and postulates employed by a discipline.
- - **Various methods in use today:** mystical method, allegorical method, superstitious method, spiritual method, apologetic method, ecclesiastical method, hierarchical method, dogmatic method, inductive method, deductive method, rationalistic method which is modernism, literal method
- - **depending on the method of interpretation selected, the interpretation will change**
 - **2 Pet. 3:16** a false teacher can invent a method favorable to his doctrine – **distort, twist**
 - **illus.: baptism and salvation**
 - one method leads a person to conclude baptism is not essential to salvation
 - another method leads a person to conclude baptism is essential to salvation
 - **illus.: thief on the cross**
 - one method leads us to think that thief was saved without baptism and we are too
 - another method leads us to think his salvation has nothing to do with our salvation today
- **problem:** choosing the correct method can mean the difference between salvation and damnation
- **solution:** not to choose a man-made method, but study the Bible, as taught by the Bible
 - **God's word equip us with everything we need to know, to interpret it properly**
 - **2 Tim. 3:16-17** **Scriptures profitable** for teaching, reproof, correction, training in righteousness, equipping us for every good work – **teaching us everything we need to interpret**

➤ **Bible principles of interpretation**

- **God's word (the Bible) is truth**

- **Jn. 17:17** Jesus, praying to God, your **word is truth**
- **Lord's church recognize God's word (Bible) as the only standard for truth**
- **other churches recognize other standards of truth** – interpret based on external things
 - **illus.:** some churches make a **creed, catechism or church manual** more authoritative than God's word
 - **illus.:** some churches make **oral tradition** more authoritative than the God's word
 - **illus.:** some churches make the **writings of men (commentaries, books, scholars)** more authoritative than the God's word
 - **illus.:** some have their own **Bible**
- **our responsibility is to learn the truth revealed in God's word, love it, obey it**

➤ - **we can understand God's word**

- **Eph. 3:4; 5:17** read, understand, mystery of Christ
 - **God has given us the mental capability to understand** exactly what He means, and what we are to do
 - **our responsibility:** work hard, study and learn, so we understand
- **false teachers lure people into their doctrine by alleging we can't understand it** – alike
 - since we can't understand God's word, we're okay as long as we do what we "think" is right

➤ - **we must "reason" to come to correct conclusions regarding God's word**

- **OT:**

- **Is. 1:18** (God to Israel) "Come now, and **let us reason together,**" Says the LORD. . . ."

➤ - **NT:**

- **Acts 17:2** Paul in **Thessalonica**, reasoned from the **Scriptures**
- **Acts 17:17** Paul in **Athens**, reasoning with Jews and Gentiles **every day**
- **Acts 18:4** Paul in **Corinth**, reasoning, **trying to persuade people**
- **Acts 18:19** Paul in **Ephesus**, reasoned with Jews
- **Acts 19:8-9** Paul in **Ephesus** again, reasoning, **persuading them about the kingdom of God**
- **we must logically think through** the things taught in God's word, to come to the correct conclusion
- **2 Tim. 2:15** "**rightly dividing the word of truth**" (KJV)
- **2 Pet. 3:16** **incorrect reasoning results in twisting** (distorting) the Scriptures

➤ - **there are no contradictions in God's word**

- **1 Cor. 14:33** **God not God (author) of confusion** – word is harmonious, does not contradict itself

➤ - **Heb. 6:18a** **impossible for God to lie** – word is harmonious, does not contradict itself

- **perfect harmony of God's word, demands perfect harmony in logic and interpretation**

- **note: a few minor scribal errors** (God's word perfect, not copyists or translators), but nothing that changes the meaning of God's word pertinent to anything we must do in worship and service, or to be saved

- - context / precision of words
 - God's word taken out of context is twisted (distorted)
 - **2 Pet. 3:16** false teachers twist (distort) Scriptures
 - **illus.: Scriptures taken out of context**
 - Judas "went away and hanged himself" (Matthew 27:5). "Go and do the same" (Luke 10:37).
 - - God's word must be interpreted through precise understanding of each word
 - **Heb. 4:12** God's word precise to the utmost degree – understand, and teach others accordingly
 - - **illus.: Sadducees took Scriptures out of context** and didn't interpret using exact meaning of words, resulted in false doctrine
 - **Matt. 22:23-28** Sadducees' question, thought proved no resurrection, taken Scriptures out of context that were not related to resurrection and ignored others
 - **Matt. 22:29-33** Jesus' answer, used precision of God's word to prove resurrection, **1st person singular pronoun, present tense**, proving the **people have eternal souls (Lk. 16:19-31)**
 - - **illus.: salvation**
 - **Mk. 16:16** "and" meaning that believing and baptism equally important
 - **Acts 2:38** "for" (*eis*) denotes movement and contact, meaning that baptism is necessary before God forgives us
 - we must understand God's word within context, understanding the precise meaning of the words
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- - an interpretation of a Scripture can't contradict other Scriptures
 - interpretation of a Scripture must be consistent with all the Scriptures
 - if an interpretation of a Scripture is contradicted by another Scripture, it must be false
 - **illus. Sadducees above:**
 - **Matt. 22:23-33** Jews interpreted law of woman without children to mean no resurrection, which was contradicted by another Scripture and therefore wrong, Jesus said they didn't "understand the Scriptures"
 - **Jesus didn't go into a discourse lasting days, addressing every possible detail** of their doctrine and every scenario, He **presented one Scripture** that refuted it, that was sufficient
 - **illus.: thief on the cross**, Jesus told Him he'd be in Paradise with Him that day
 - **some people conclude you don't have to be baptized** to be saved because thief was saved without being baptized
 - **Matt. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:21; etc. contradict; therefore conclusion must be false**

- - **Jesus recognized the need to establish authority**
 - **Matt. 21:24-27** Jesus recognized the need to establish authority
 - **Jesus:**
 - never recognized the need to adopt a hermeneutic
 - never taught by first setting the rules of interpretation
 - has not given us a rule book to use in interpreting His word. The Bible is sufficient without any man-made rules of interpretation
 - **Eph. 3:4; 5:17** we can understand when we read
 - **2 Tim. 3:16-17** Scriptures profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, training in righteousness, equipping us for every good work – teaching us everything we need to interpret
 - **teachers of man-made religions**
 - insist that a particular method of interpretation be used - their hermeneutic
 - incorporate creeds, catechisms, and other gospels
 - insist we are under grace, and there is no law to obey today, therefore **no authority** to establish
 - **our task is to learn how to establish authority from God's word**, interpreting the Bible as we're taught in the Bible, then do the things God authorizes (**Matt. 28:18; Col. 3:17**)
 - **next lesson:** review of authority

- **end Part III:**
 - **review PP** basic principles of interpretation in the Bible
 - **inv.**