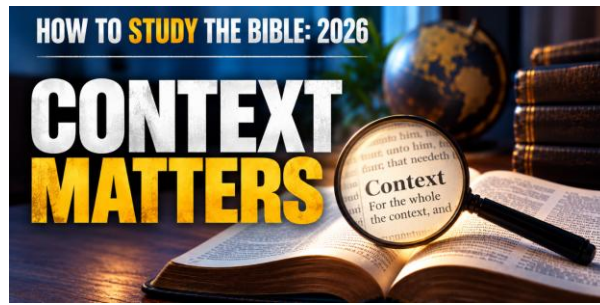




Series: How to Study the Bible in 2026

INTRODUCTION

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

If God commands us to study so that we will **RIGHTLY DIVIDE** the Bible, it must be possible to **WRONGLY** divide the Bible. Wrongly dividing the Bible results in taking verses out of context.

The Bible has proper divisions: we must learn them so we can rightly divide the Bible.

Consider these common “Christian” phrases that we hear every day in our world...

- The professing Christian responds to the concerned friend, “The Bible says, don’t judge me!”
- The athlete scores a touchdown and proclaims, “I can do all things through Christ.”
- The smooth, modern preacher shares the message, “God has a wonderful plan for your life.”
- The Christian friends encouragingly say, “Where two or three are gathered Jesus is here.”
- The concerned saint lovingly shares, “God won’t give you more than you can handle.”
- The excited charismatic is excited to hear, “Ask anything in the name of Jesus, and it is yours!”
- The spiritual person sees something happen and says, “It is a sign! It was meant to be!”
- The religious person says to the Bible believer, “We are all God’s children.”
- The Christian gets a house and says, “We need to pray over this building and its contents.”
- And on and on... “Claim the promise” ... “Follow your heart” ... “God wants you to be happy.”

1. THERE IS A SERIOUS DANGER IN TAKING A VERSE OUT OF CONTEXT.

There is no proper understanding of the Bible without a proper understanding of context.

Scripture with Scripture

Psalm 56:5 – *Every day they wrest my words...*

People were taking David’s words out of context. The words of God are wrestled every day!

Jeremiah 23:36 – *... for ye have perverted the words of the living God...*

This is a very serious charge – God’s words are not to be manipulated or changed.

Matthew 22:29 – *Jesus answered... Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures...*

They were wrong because they did not know the Scriptures. They memorized + quoted verses.

The 2026 Problem: Speed of Information

A person sees a Bible verse on social media... they screenshot it, share it, like it, and maybe add some comments. But do they know what the verse or passage means in its proper context? We have become accustomed to consuming information in small packages – a headline, a quote, a clip, a post, a 30-second video. And unfortunately, sometimes we approach the Bible the same way. God did not give us a collection of inspirational quotes. He gave us His eternal words. And the words of God must be clearly understood in their proper context.

2. CONTEXT PROTECTS US FROM MISHANDLING THE WORD OF GOD.

Context is a Heaven and Hell issue! False cults and false teachers prey on people.

Satan has been mishandling and misleading with Scriptures since Genesis 3!

Scripture with Scripture

2 Peter 3:16 – ...*wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

To wrest means to twist or distort. It could be using them incorrectly ignorantly or intentionally.

Mathew 4:6 – ... *for it is written...*

Satan quoted Scripture to attempt to lead or manipulate Jesus to go against His will.

2 Corinth 11:13-15 – ...*such are false apostles... angel of light... his ministers...*

There is a very dark side to intentionally using Scripture to lead people astray!

Key Truths

- ✓ Someone who uses the Bible incorrectly **ignorantly** must learn how to study the Bible.
- ✓ Someone who uses the Bible incorrectly **intentionally** does so to their own destruction!

3. DEFINING BIBLICAL CONTEXT

Biblical context is a factor by which God sheds light upon a subject through either near passages or remote details bearing upon the same **theme**.

A. NEAR CONTEXT – start with the verses around the verse.

The preceding **verse(s)** and following **verse(s)**.

The preceding **passage(s)** and following **passage(s)**.

The preceding **chapter(s)** and following **chapter(s)**.

Example #1 – Matthew 7:1-2

WHAT IT IS NOT TEACHING:

It is not teaching us not to judge but rather teaching us not to have a critical or judgmental heart towards others...and what happens to someone who does.

WHAT IT IS TEACHING:

It teaches us how to judge.

Example #2 – Matthew 18:20

WHAT IT IS NOT TEACHING:

That Jesus is only with you at certain times. Is Jesus with you when you are saved? Yes. Even if you are doing things that are not representative of Him, He is still with and in you.

WHAT IT IS TEACHING:

Settling disputes between brethren – like-mindedness.

Example #3 – John 6:56

WHAT IT IS NOT TEACHING:

That Jesus somehow wants us to eat His literal flesh and drink His literal blood! Jesus had just fed 5,000 people. Many were still following Him because they wanted a free lunch. Verse 6:66!

WHAT IT IS TEACHING:

A spiritual principle – His words are life. Amen.

Example #4 – Acts 2:38

WHAT IT IS NOT TEACHING:

How Gentiles in the New Testament Church Age are to get saved.

How Gentiles in the New Testament Church Age should speak babble.

WHAT IT IS TEACHING:

What happened as a matter of historical significance after Jesus ascended into Heaven to be with God the Father and answers the question for Jews that had killed their Messiah – what shall we do?? It was a special “dispensation” of God’s Spirit for Jews that had rejected/killed Jesus Christ.

Example #5 – Revelation 3:20

WHAT IT IS NOT TEACHING:

Jesus is happy and at home in the Laodicean church today with its lukewarm, watered down, entertaining, Bible denying, ear tickling, people pleasing, Satan directed church services.

WHAT IT IS TEACHING:

Jesus is on the outside of the church – and would like to come in! Amen.

B. REMOTE CONTEXT – consider the book of the Bible

The theme of the book of the Bible in which the verse is located.

Consider how the book fits into the theme of the Bible.

Example #1 – Ecclesiastes

There are strange things said in this book. It was written by a man who is “under the sun” and not walking with God. In contrast, Proverbs was written when Solomon walked with God.

Example #2 – Matthew

A transitional book – from Old Testament to New Testament. A primarily Jewish Gospel!

Example #3 – Acts

A transitional book – from Jew to Gentile, from Peter to Paul, from Jerusalem to Antioch.

Example #4 – 1 Corinthians

A reproof – a rebuke...it is more about what not to do rather than what to do – be careful!

Example #5 – Hebrews

A transitional book – some hard passages regarding eternal security at first glance out of context. It was written to Hebrews – this is prophetically a Tribulation Period context!

Example #6 – Doctrinal Context for 1st six books of the Bible! (Big Picture)

Genesis	The book of beginnings...ends with God’s man dead in a coffin in Egypt...
Exodus	God’s people are redeemed by the blood of the lamb...
Leviticus	God’s people are joined to God and the priesthood is established...
Numbers	God’s people wander in the wilderness of unbelief...
Deuteronomy	God gave the law a second time...this time serve out of love not duty...
Joshua	Joshua (Jesus) leads God’s people to conquer the Promised Land...

Example #7 – Doctrinal Context for these books of the Bible! (Big Picture)

Ezra	The Jews return to their land, and the temple is rebuilt in Jerusalem...
Nehemiah	The Jews continue to return to their land, and the defense network is rebuilt...
Esther	A Gentile bride is replaced with a Jewish bride...
Job	There is a time of great tribulation...
Psalms	King David takes the throne from Saul (antichrist) and is on throne in Jerusalem...
Proverbs	The reign of the wisdom of God – Jesus Christ – the living Word ...

C. OBSERVATION – consider the other important rules of Bible study

We will be looking at these and more in detail during the rest of our study:

- ✓ Historical framework (Time Factor, etc.)
- ✓ Ethnic division (People Factor, etc.)
- ✓ Comparing things spiritual with things spiritual (Comparison Factor, etc.)
- ✓ Other critical details, etc.

CONCLUSION

Never use a verse to say or teach something the passage does not actually say or teach.

It does not matter what you think the Bible says. What matters is what God clearly says in the proper context of the passage, the chapter, the book, and the Bible.

God has His own interpretation of Scripture. We must find out what that is and believe it. Amen.

This is just the beginning of *How to Study the Bible*.

These things will need to marinate in your brain... some time to sink into your thinking.

Review the notes and message as many times as it takes to help the truths settle in.

Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you into all truth. He is your teacher. Amen.

Then, prepare to be excited and to experience life change as you study the holy Bible for yourself until Jesus comes!

Amen. Amen.

NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS

Reference Summary — 27 Books at a Glance

Matthew	Jesus the King — Messiah, King, kingdom, teaching, death, resurrection, Great Commission.
Mark	Jesus the Servant — Christ's works, service, suffering, death, and resurrection.
Luke	Jesus the Son of Man — Christ's humanity, compassion, prayer, salvation, and ministry.
John	Jesus the Son of God — Christ's deity and the call to believe on Him for eternal life.
Acts	The Church's Witness — Holy Ghost, church growth, gospel expansion, and Paul's missionary ministry.
Romans	The Gospel Explained — Sin, justification, sanctification, Israel, and Christian living.
1 Corinthians	A Church Needing Correction — Division, carnality, worship, spiritual gifts, and resurrection.
2 Corinthians	Ministry Through Weakness — Paul's ministry, suffering, stewardship, separation, and God's strength.
Galatians	Liberty in Christ — Justification by faith and freedom from dependence on the law for salvation.
Ephesians	Our Wealth, Walk & Warfare — Position in Christ, Christian walk, relationships, and spiritual warfare.
Philippians	Joy in Christ — Joy, humility, unity, contentment, and pressing forward in Christ.
Colossians	Christ Preeminent — The person and work of Christ and the believer's completeness in Him.
1 Thessalonians	Hope of Christ's Coming — Faithfulness, holiness, love, and hope concerning Christ's return.
2 Thessalonians	The Day of the Lord — Christ's coming, steadfastness, and responsible Christian living.
1 Timothy	Order in the Church — Leadership, worship, doctrine, conduct, and church responsibilities.
2 Timothy	Finish the Course — Faithfulness, sound doctrine, Scripture, endurance, and finishing well.
Titus	Sound Doctrine & Good Works — Church leadership, godly living, and good works produced by sound doctrine.
Philemon	Forgiveness & Reconciliation — Onesimus, Christian brotherhood, forgiveness, and reconciliation.
Hebrews	Christ Is Better — Christ's superiority, priesthood, sacrifice, and the new covenant.
James	Faith That Works — Practical faith, godly conduct, speech, wisdom, patience, and obedience.
1 Peter	Hope in Suffering — Holy living and steadfastness through trials because of living hope in Christ.
2 Peter	Stand Against Error — Spiritual growth, warning against false teachers, and Christ's certain return.
1 John	Assurance of Eternal Life — Truth, obedience, love, fellowship, and assurance of genuine faith.
2 John	Truth & Love — Walk in truth and love while rejecting false doctrine about Christ.
3 John	Faithful Christian Service — Faithful hospitality and service contrasted with selfish leadership.
Jude	Contend for the Faith — Stand for the faith and beware of ungodly teachers.
Revelation	Jesus Christ Revealed — Christ's victory, judgment, kingdom, and eternal state.

Big Picture: Christ revealed • Gospel proclaimed • Church established • Believers instructed • Christ returning