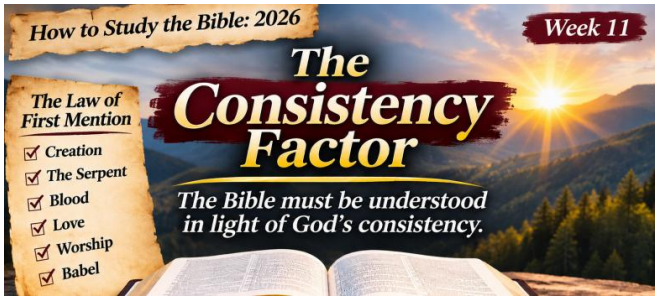


Series: How to Study the Bible in 2026

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**.*

INTRODUCTION

The Bible must be understood in light of God's consistency.

James 1:17 *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is **no variableness**, neither shadow of turning.*

What is true is always true. God does not and cannot contradict Himself, and His Word must be understood in light of His consistent nature, character, and revealed truth.

This does not contradict the Time Factor. God's methods and dealings with mankind may be different at separate and distinct times (Hebrews 1:1), but His truths are consistent.

1. The Consistency of God's Character

God's Word is consistent because God's character is consistent.

Hebrews 13:8 *Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*
Malachi 3:6 *For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye… are not consumed.*
Numbers 23:19 *God is not a man that he should lie… hath he said, and shall he not do it?...*

God will not contradict truth that He has already established in the Bible.

God does not become more holy, less truthful, or less righteous as the Bible progresses. His dealings may differ, but His nature does not.

Important truths:

- ✓ God's character is consistent.
- ✓ God's principles are consistent.
- ✓ God's promises and warnings are trustworthy.

Practical Application

If God condemns lying in one passage, we cannot deduct from another passage or suggest that lying becomes acceptable simply because circumstances or events change. Therefore, our study thoughts may go something like this, "Well, we know that lying goes against the Divine Moral Law (Exodus 20), so therefore, whatever is happening here, we know that lying is sin against God…"

2. The Importance of the Law of First Mention

The first mention of a subject often establishes a pattern or truth throughout the Bible.

This is sometimes called *the Law of First Mention*.

This is a valuable Bible study principle, but the first occurrence of a word or subject does not always define every later occurrence. Context and subsequent revelation must be studied.

Biblical examples

A. The first mention of CREATION and the GODHEAD (a.k.a. Trinity)

Genesis 1:1	*In the beginning* ***God*** *created the heaven and the earth.*	***The Father***
Genesis 1:2	*… And* ***the spirit of God*** *moved upon the face of the waters.*	***The Holy Spirit***
Genesis 1:3	*And* ***God said****, Let there be light: and there was light.*	***The Word***
John 1:1-3	*In the beginning was* ***the Word****… with God… was God.*	
Colossians 1:16-17	*For* ***by him*** *were all things created…* ***by him*** all things consist.	
1 John 5:7	*For there are three that bear record in heaven,* ***the Father****,* ***the Word****, and* ***the Holy Ghost****:* *and these three are one.*	
Revelation 4:11	*Thou art worthy, O Lord… for thou hast created all things…*	

Truths learned

- ✓ Creation originates with God who is Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- ✓ The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost are the one true God who is the Creator.
- ✓ The three persons of the Trinity are not competing explanations of creation.

B. The first mention of the SERPENT and the DEVIL ***(Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-18)***

Genesis 3:1	*Now* ***the serpent*** *was more* ***subtil*** *than any beast… God had made…*
Genesis 3:6	*… good for food… pleasant to the eyes… desired to make one wise…*
Matthew 4:1-11	*… tempted of* ***the devil****.. made bread… angels charge… glory of them…*
2 Cor 11:3-4, 13-14	*But I fear, lest by any means, as* ***the serpent*** *beguiled Eve…****subtilty****…*
1 John 2:16	*… lust of the flesh…lust of the eyes… pride of life… not of the Father…*
Revelation 12:9	***…****great dragon was cast out,* ***that old serpent****, called the Devil, and Satan…*
Revelation 20:2	***…****laid hold on the dragon,* ***that old serpent****, which is the Devil, and Satan…*

Truths learned

- ✓ The serpent is the Devil and Satan – and he is the deceiver opposed to God.
- ✓ Satan's attacks on God's words are the same – Questions, Contradicts, and Changes.
- ✓ Satan's temptation methods are the same – tempted Eve, Jesus, and you ***(3 plays!)***

C. The first mention of BLOOD and the LAMB ***(Genesis 4:10 "blood", Genesis 21:28 "lambs")***

Genesis 3:21	*… did the LORD God make* ***coats of skins****, and clothed them.*
Proverbs 27:26	*The* ***lambs*** *are for thy clothing…*
Genesis 4:4	*… Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of* ***his flock****… LORD had respect…*
Genesis 22:7	*… Behold the fire and the wood: but where is* ***the lamb*** *for a burnt offering?*
Hebrews 9:22	*… and without* ***shedding of blood*** *is no remission.*
John 1:29	*…Behold* ***the Lamb of God****, which taketh away the sin of the world.*
Revelation 5:6,12	*… in the midst of the throne… stood* ***a Lamb*** *as it had been slain…*

Truths learned

- ✓ Adam's efforts to cover their sin were not adequate – God provided the covering for sin.
- ✓ God shed the first blood with the sacrifice of lambs for their covering and clothing.
- ✓ As a result, Cain and Abel already knew that the lamb was God's acceptable sacrifice!

D. The first mention of LOVE and WORSHIP

Genesis 22:2 *… Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac,* ***whom thou lovest****…*
Genesis 22:5 *… I and the lad will go yonder and* ***worship****, and come again to you.*
John 3:16 *For* ***God so loved the world****, that he gave his only begotten Son…*
Hebrews 11:17-19 *By faith Abraham…* ***offered up Isaac****…* ***offered****… his only begotten son…*

Truths learned

- ✓ The first *love* is associated with a father offering his only son as a sacrifice to God.
- ✓ The first *worship* is associated with a personal sacrifice that leads to honor, glory to God.
- ✓ These are connected – willingness to surrender what was precious + trust God by faith.

E. The first mention of BABEL (Babylon) and JEZEBEL

Genesis 10:10 *And the beginning of this kingdom was* ***Babel****…*
Genesis 11:9 *Therefore is the name of it called* ***Babel****; because the LORD did…*
1 Kings 16:31; 18:4 *… he took to wife Jezebel… Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD…*
Revelation 2:20 *… that woman Jezebel… to seduce my servants to commit fornication…*
Revelation 17:5 *… MYSTERY,* ***BABYLON THE GREAT****, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS…*

Truths learned

- ✓ Babel introduces the pattern of organized human opposition to God and His purposes.
- ✓ In Church History, Jezezel is the blasphemous Roman Church marriage to paganism.
- ✓ Babylon is associated with the religious and political system of Antichrist in end times.

F. The first mention of DEATH and SIN *(Genesis 21:16 "death"; Genesis 5 "and he died")*

Genesis 2:17 *… for in the day that thou eatest thereof* ***thou shalt surely die****.*
Genesis 3:6 *… she took of the fruit… did eat… also unto her husband… he did eat.*
Genesis 3:23-24 *Therefore the LORD God* ***sent him forth*** *from the garden of Eden…*
Genesis 5:5-31 *… and he* ***died****… and he* ***died****… and he* ***died****… and he* ***died****…*
John 4:24 *God is a Spirit… they that worship him must worship him in spirit… in truth.*
Romans 6:23 *For the wages of sin is* ***death****; but the gift of God is eternal life…*
Romans 5:12 *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and* ***death*** *by sin; and so* ***death passed upon all men****, for that all have sinned;*
Ephesians 2:1 *And you hath he QUICKENED,* ***who were dead*** *in trespasses and sins;*

Truths learned

- ✓ The first *death* in Bible is spiritual death – Adam was separated from God because of sin!
- ✓ *Sin* ***and*** *death* were passed to ***all*** men – Jesus came to give life – ye must be ***born again!***

G. The first mention of MURDER *(Numbers 35:16 "murderer"; Genesis 4:11 "kill")*

Genesis 4:8 *… and Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and* ***slew him****.*
John 8:44 *… the devil… He was* ***a murderer*** *from the beginning…*
1 John 3:12 *Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and* ***slew his brother****…*
1 John 3:15 *Whosoever hateth his brother is* ***a murderer****…*

Truths learned

- ✓ The first recorded murder is rooted in jealousy, anger, and rejection of God's way.
- ✓ Murder is associated with Satan and his children – he comes to steal, kill, and destroy.
- ✓ The Bible equates hatred with murder – the sin of the heart is the same motivation to kill.

The Conclusion

Key points to remember related to the Consistency Factor…

"First Mentions" are not always in the form of the specific word itself (as we have seen.)

Be observant, they often come in different forms of the word or subject. For example, when searching for love, search for "love", "lovest", "loving" (lov* in Blue Letter Bible search) … or you can search subjects such as death, joy, etc.

When seeking understanding or clarification about an issue in the Bible, always check the first time the word or subject is mentioned.

This factor is a great key, but it does not unlock every door.

Tools needed to accomplish this study factor:

- A good exhaustive Concordance (or Bible study App, Bible software, website)
- Treasury of Scripture Knowledge (to clarify by comparing Scripture with Scripture)
- Thesaurus (for forms of words)