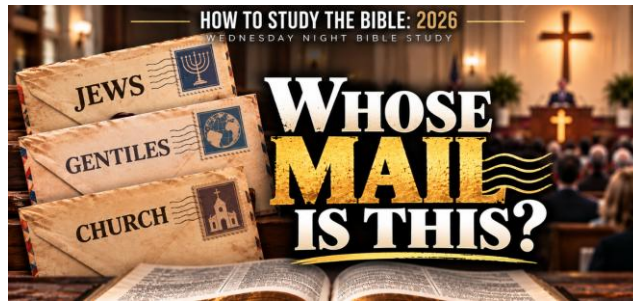




Series: How to Study the Bible in 2026

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.*

We live in a world where context matters more than ever.

What if you received a text message from an unknown number saying, “Come get me.”

You immediately ask:

Who sent this? Do I know the author?

Who was it written to? Was it intended for me?

Where are they? What is happening?

Words can mean completely different things depending upon who is speaking and who is being addressed. We understand this in everyday life. Yet we sometimes open the Bible, read a verse and assume it applies directly to us. But, does it?

Consider the mail delivery illustration ...

1. Every word in the Bible is written to a particular audience.

There is no correct understanding of the Bible without understanding that the Bible is written to **THREE** types of people. This is often called the “ethnic division principle.”

Scripture with Scripture

1 Corinth 10:32 – ...*neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:*”

When God deals with mankind, He sees 3 different, unique divisions of people.

Ephesians 2:11 – ...*ye being in time past Gentiles... by... the Circumcision” [Jews]*

The entire Bible is broken down, directly and indirectly, into 1 of these 3 people groups.

God identifies 3 distinct people groups:

1. The **JEWS** – the physical descendants of Abraham through Isaac and Jacob
2. The **GENTILES** – non-Jews – the nations outside of Israel
3. The **CHURCH** of God – those saved and placed into the body of Christ (*Eph 2:14-18*)

These 3 people groups break down into 2 types of people we understand:

1. The **SAVED** – the Church of God – those born again in Christ (Church Age saints)
2. The **LOST** – Jews and Gentiles who have rejected Jesus Christ (different but lost)

KEY PRINCIPLE

The entire Bible is written **FOR** you...
but not all the Bible is written **TO** you.

2. NOT EVERY PROMISE HAS YOUR NAME ON IT

This is where Bible study can become dangerous if the Bible is **WRONGLY** divided!

Someone reads a verse containing a wonderful promise and immediately claims it personally without asking: “Who is this promise given to?”

An old song goes... “All the promises in the Bible are mine... every chapter, verse, line...”

No, they are not. Why?

Because the Bible contains promises made to Israel, promises made to individuals, promises associated with specific circumstances and promises concerning future prophetic events.

It does not make the passages unimportant. It means we must understand their context!

Scripture with Scripture

2 Timothy 3:16 – All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is **PROFITABLE**...

All Scripture is profitable for you – but **profitable** does not mean it is directly applicable to you.

Romans 15:4 – ... things were written aforetime were **written for our learning**...

Paul says the Old Testament Scriptures were written so that we might learn and obey God.

1 Corinth 10:6 – Now **these things were our examples**, to the intent... we should not...

Paul again says the Scriptures were written so that we would heed warnings and obey God.

Key Truths

- ✓ **DIRECT application** God is addressing people in our time (Church Age) and the principle or instruction applies directly to us *in Christ*.
- ✓ **INDIRECT application** The passage was addressed to someone else, but because all Scripture is profitable, we can learn doctrine, principles, warnings, examples, and truth from it.

3. THE BIBLE DEFINES THE AUDIENCE

We must begin by asking, “Who is the author?” and “Who is the audience?”

Example #1 – James 1:1

James,
a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,
to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad,
greeting.

Who is the author?

James

Who is the audience?

Twelve Tribes: Jews (Acts 8:1)

Example #2 – 1 Peter 1:1

Peter,
an apostle of Jesus Christ,
to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus,
Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

Who is the author?

Peter

Who is the audience?

Strangers: saved Jews, not Israel

Example #3 – 2 Peter 3:1

This second epistle,
beloved, I now write unto you...

Who is the author?

Same = Peter

Who is the audience?

Same = saved Jews

Example #4 – Ephesians 1:1

Paul,
An apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,
to the saints which are at Ephesus,
and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

Who is the author?

Paul

Who is the audience?

Church (*not to an individual believer*)

Paul is not writing to Israel, the twelve tribes, Gentiles, or an individual pastor or believer. He is writing to a New Testament Church in the Church Age. He is writing to **a local church**. Calvinists teach false doctrine from this book (chapter 1) saying it relates to individual believers.

Example #5 – Isaiah 1:1; 13:1, 19; 15:1; 17:1; 18:1; 19:1; 34:1, 16 (Pay close attention!)

Starts with the Jews...

Then to Babylon... to Moab... to Damascus... to the rivers beyond Ethiopia... to Egypt... to **nations**...

Example #6 – Hebrews

Written to Jews! The title gives it away.

Example #7 – 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus

Written to individuals – church leaders – people who are saved!

Example #8 – Matthew The theme: *The King and His Kingdom*

Matthew is the Gospel with a uniquely **Jewish** nature:

Chapter 1 – the genealogy of the King (1:1, 6)

Chapter 2 – the birth of the King (2:2)

Chapter 3 – John the Baptist announces the King (John is the last OT prophet; Isa 40)

Chapter 4 – the testing and preparation of the King

Chapter 5-7 – the constitution of the Kingdom (A Jewish kingdom in Jerusalem)

Chapter 8-9 – Christ presents His credentials as the King (1 Cor 10:22; Isa 28)

Chapter 10 – the 12 apostles are sent for the preach the gospel of the Kingdom to Israel

Chapter 11-12 – the rejection of the King and His Kingdom by the leaders of Israel

Chapter 13-25 – the Kingdom enters a state of parables because of Israel's unbelief

Matthew 24:13 – But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

NOTE This is often misapplied to the Church, but Jesus is speaking to 12 Jewish converts. It is still considered the *OT* as Jesus had not died yet! He is teaching them about last days prophecies and specifically there is a Tribulation Period context (like **Heb 3:14**).

Chapter 26 – the final night of the King

Chapter 27 – the crucifixion and burial of the King (Isa 53)

Chapter 28 – the resurrection of the King

4. THE DANGER OF NOT UNDERSTANDING THIS TRUTH

Read the entire Bible! Believe the entire Bible! Love the entire Bible! And **be careful**...

Scripture with Scripture

Revelation 2:9 – ... say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

Revelation 3:9 – ... synagogue of Satan...say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie...

Question:	Who, by their loud and clear doctrines, “ say they are Jews and are not? ”
Answer:	Charismatic/Pentecostals (Tongues & Healing), Catholics (Replacement Theology), Church of Christ (Baptism salvation, Acts 2:38), Mormons (take Jewish promises out of context), and anyone else who <i>steals</i> mail from others!

PEOPLE FACTOR ILLUSTRATION

Question: When was the last time that you received the wrong mail?



Consider this ...

What would you do if in your mailbox was mail that belonged to your neighbor?
What would you do if it had something inside that could benefit you?
What if it had helpful health information or warnings of dangers coming soon?
It is ILLEGAL to open someone else's mail – a federal law makes it a CRIME!
You are responsible to OPEN ONLY YOUR MAIL!

Now... **the Bible is a collection of mail** – that God has given to us. He wants us to read, believe and love ALL of it! Amen. **However, it is not all your mail!**

* How to Study the Bible *

WEEK 3

* Key
POINT *

The PEOPLE factor
The entire Bible is
written **FOR** you; not all
the Bible is written **TO** you.

(For dramatic results)
try...the

"Silver
Bullet"

1. Read it!

2. Write it!

Gentiles



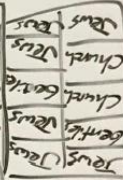
* The Bible is a group
of letters written to
different groups of people.



Church

"Group"

Mailboxes



Basic

RULES:

1. Anything with MY NAME

on it is mine!!! (only my mail is applied to me.)

2. If my neighbor's mail is in

my mailbox, I do NOT

take it for my own!!

(that is called stealing!!)