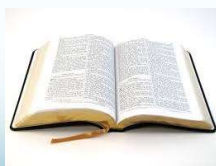


# HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

How to dig deeper in God's Word.



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Studying the Bible is one of the best ways to discover scriptural truth. There is no jewel more precious than that which you have mined yourself.



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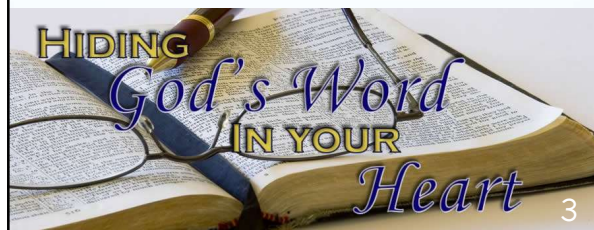
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An effective Bible study method allows you to directly interact with God's Word, and letting it speak for itself - in a way so personal and so memorable - that every insight you gain will be yours for life.



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**Studying** the Bible as opposed to just **reading** the Bible, draws you into personal interaction with the Scripture



and thus with the God of the Scriptures so that your beliefs are based on a prayerful understanding and legitimate interpretation of Scripture –

truth that transforms you when you live by it.

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### OBJECTIVES

- × Learn introductory tools to help you dig in the Bible for yourself without relying on another's interpretation.
- × Motivate you to treasure God's Word in order to grow in spiritual maturity.
- × Encourage and re-ignite your passion to study God's Word daily and experience life changing truths.

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Are you willing to slow down and really look at what Scripture is saying .... verse by verse?

Are you willing to explore God's Word in a deeper way so not just to *do* Bible study, but to meet with our Lord?



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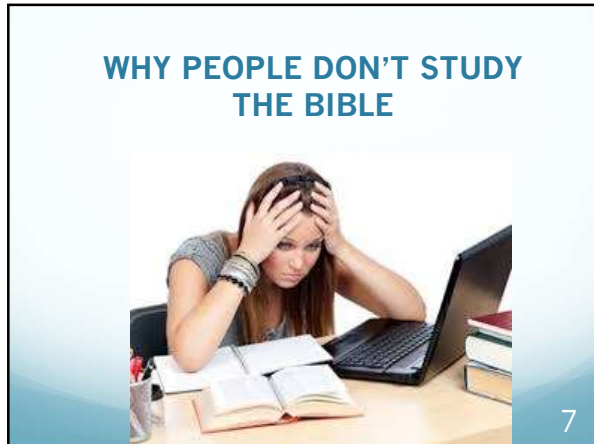
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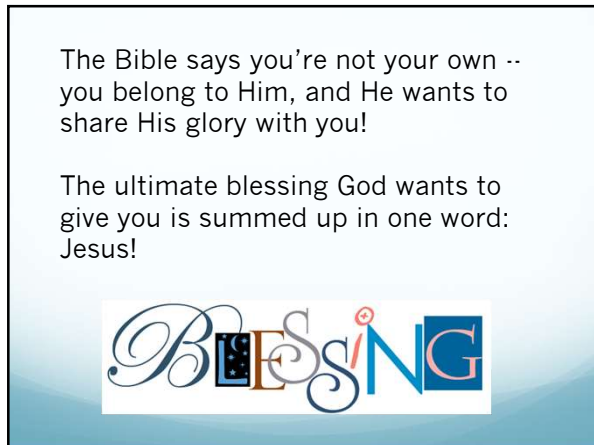
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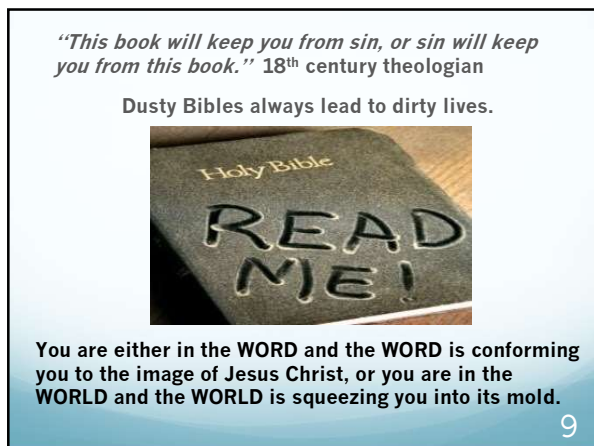
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Many times the Bible is owned, read on occasion, even taken to church—but not studied.

**Why is it – do you think -- that people do not get into Scripture for themselves, to understand it and see it make a difference in their lives?**



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**Reasons why people don't study the Bible.**

- Our technology culture doesn't help us learn how to properly study because we're losing our ability to read.
- A person thinks she is *only* a new Christian OR she has no theological training.
- I just don't have the time.

**Unfortunately, for many of us, Bible Study is number 20 on a list of 27 things to do.**

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**The study of the Word is not an option—it's an essential!**



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The only sure way to experience authentic Christianity is through firsthand experience and handling of the Word of God.

Don't just let a friend or a DVD or a blog or a Bible commentary tell you what the Bible says — read and study it for yourself!

If you do, you will gain your own personal ownership of Scripture that will stabilize and direct your life.

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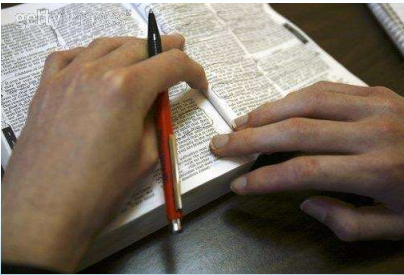
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**WHY STUDY THE BIBLE?**



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*“like newborn babies, **long** for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation”*

**1 Peter 2:2**



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In summary, to grow in your Bible studying, you should have the right **attitude**, an **appetite** for the Word, and an **understanding** of the purpose of Bible Study.



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“Concerning [Christ] **we have much to say**, and it is **hard to explain**, since you have become **dull of hearing**. For though **by this time** you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and **you have come to need milk and not solid food**. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But **solid food is for the mature**, who **because of** practice have their senses **trained to discern** good and evil.” **Hebrews 5:11-14**

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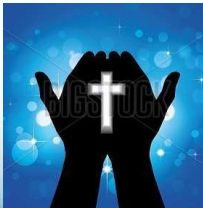
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According to the Hebrews passage, the mark of spiritual maturity is not how much you understand, but how much you use.

So who are the mature in Christ?



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**So what is the overall purpose?**



v. 17 *"In order that you might be equipped for every good work."*

**So the real question confronting you now is:  
How can you afford not to be in God's Word?**

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**Do you want to know Him intimately?  
Is that what you're after?**

**If so, He promises to honor your diligence in the Word.**



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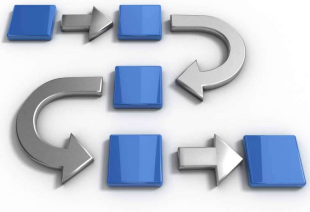
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**Effective Bible study requires a method.**

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**BIBLE STUDY METHOD**


This study method is a form of Biblical analysis.  
It involves 3 basic techniques:



**1. Observation:**  
What does it say?



**2. Interpretation:**  
What does it mean?



**3. Application:**  
How do I respond?

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Begin with prayer and continue with an attitude of prayer.




Rely on the Holy Spirit;  
He's our Teacher.

Prayer is our "conversation" with God.



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**Observation:**



**What do I see?**  
**What does it say?**

Observation is not just seeing but *perceiving*.

Accurate interpretation and correct application rest on the accuracy of our observations.

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**An interactive mindset with the text is foundational.** Why? Because we recall:

1. 10% of what we read
2. 20% of what we hear
3. 30% of what we see demonstrated
4. 50% combining #s 2 and 3
5. 70% combining #4 with writing what you read
6. 90% all of the above with practice

**I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.**

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**EXAMPLES OF INTERROGATORY Qs**

The **5Ws and H:**  
who, what, when, where, why and how.

**Who** is speaking? Who are the recipients?  
**What** is repeated? What is happening?  
**Where** is this taking place?  
**Why** is this mentioned now?  
**When** does or will this take place?  
**How** is the truth illustrated?  
**What** do I learn about God?

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**4 basic parts we need to look at during observation:**

1. Terms
2. Grammatical Structure
3. Literary form
4. Atmosphere




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**1. Terms.**

A key word or phrase that an author uses to make his point.

Terms **unlock** the author's meaning.

Note that some words have a meaning that lies beneath the surface, which will require a little more exploration.

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Words are the basic building blocks of language with which you construct meaning.

Concordance and Bible dictionaries are great tools for understanding key terms.



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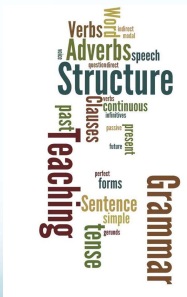
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**2. Structure.**

The Bible is a library of carefully constructed books that display two basic kinds of structure.

- ✕Grammatical structure
- ✕Literary structure



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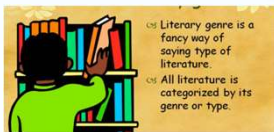
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### 3. GENRE OR LITERARY STYLE



The Bible is a work of literature, which comes in different genres, or categories based on style.

Some genres found in the Bible are:

- law
- history
- wisdom
- poetry
- narrative
- epistles
- Prophecy
- apocalyptic

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- The law gives the **foundation** for Christ.
- History shows the **preparation** for Him.
- In poetry there is an **aspiration** for Christ.
- In prophecy there is an **expectation** of Him.
- Gospels record the historical **manifestation** of Christ.
- Acts relate the **spread** of Christ's message.
- The Epistles give the **interpretation** of Him.
- In Revelation -- the **consummation** of all things in Christ.

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The Holy Spirit used each of these literary forms to communicate His message.

So if you want to grasp that message, you must read each kind according to its proper "rules."



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**4. ATMOSPHERE**

Reading for atmosphere involves picking up the setting and feelings from the biblical text.

What was it like to be in the author's shoes?



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**Place verses in context.**

Look at **what goes before** and **what follows.**

**LOOK BOTH WAYS**



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**Observe the History**

When was the book or passage written?  
Where was it originally written?  
Who is the author?  
What do you know about him?  
Who is the audience at the time?  
What was his original purpose for writing?

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We don't rush into interpretation without laying this foundation of observation



... otherwise our understanding becomes colored by our **own** presuppositions.

**Our primary goal:** to know Truth and *then* adjust our beliefs and our lives accordingly.

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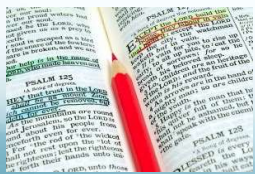
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## INTERPRETATION

Observation leads to Interpretation.

Here you ask and answer the question:

**What does it mean?**



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David prayed, "Give me understanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart" (Psalm 119:34).

**We are looking for meaning and understanding.**

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**There are at least 3 things that will help you get the meaning of a passage of Scripture.**

- 1. Questions.** In order to understand the text, you have to bombard it with questions: who, what, when, where, why and how – **5Ws & H**
- 2. Answers.** If you're going to ask questions, you've also got to look for the answers.
- 3. Integration.** Where you reconstruct the meaning of a passage after you've taken it apart to inspect the details.

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# FIGURES OF SPEECH

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**What are we to make of this biblical story?**



Are we to take what we read literally?  
If not, why not?

How do we know when Scripture is actually representing reality and when it merely describes reality?

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**Figurative Language**

Figures of speech -- we use them all the time

“I could have died of embarrassment.”  
 “I guess I’ll have to face the music.”  
 “John is as mad as a hornet.”  
 “He was bored to tears.”  
 “Don’t let the cat out of the bag.”  
 “She has a green thumb.”

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It may make for interesting reading, but what do they mean?

How are we to interpret them in our Bible study process?

How do we know when to read the Bible **literally** and when to read it **figuratively**?

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**Literal Interpretation**

It means taking the language in its normal sense, accepting it at face value as if the writer is communicating in ways that people normally communicate.

“When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense.”

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**What happens when the “plain sense” does not make common sense?**

**THIS MAKES NO SENSE!!!**



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1. Use the literal sense unless there is some good reason not to.
2. Use the figurative sense when the passage tells you to do so.
3. Use the figurative sense if a literal meaning is impossible or absurd or involves something immoral.
4. Use the figurative sense if the expression is an obvious figure of speech
5. Use the figurative sense if a literal interpretation involves a contradiction in doctrine or of other Scripture

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**While interpreting the text, consider these additional questions:**

- ✗ Are there any commands?
- ✗ Are there things repeated?
- ✗ Is there cause and effect?
- ✗ Is there a problem and solution?
- ✗ Are there any promises?
- ✗ Are there any connections to other parts of the Bible?

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"If you seek to change the Bible, it is not the Bible you believe in but rather yourself."



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Correct observation helps avoid faulty interpretation and common errors.

- **Misreading the text,**
- **Distorting the text,** and
- **Contradicting the text.**

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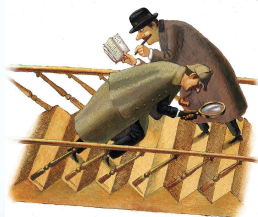
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**Putting it in Practice**

**Application**

**Seeing vs. Observing**

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**APPLICATION**

What the passage mean FOR me (or others) is ***application***.

Application is the process which allows God to work in our life

Application comes out of a changed life, which leads to a life transformed

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The Word of God does not bear fruit when it is understood, only when it is applied.

James exhorts us to let God's truth take root in your life. (1:21)

How do we do that? By proving yourself to be a doer of the word, not merely a hearer (v. 22).



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Although there is only one ultimate interpretation of a passage of Scripture, that passage can be applied in different ways to different situations.



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The Bible was not written to satisfy our curiosity; it was written to transform our lives.

The ultimate goal of Bible study, is not to do something to the Bible, but to allow the Bible to do something to you.

**trans'for·ma'tion,**  
 n.— the act, process, or instance of changing in character or condition.

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**FIVE SUBSTITUTES FOR APPLICATION**

**We substitute:**

1. interpretation for application.
2. superficial obedience for substantive life-change.
3. rationalization for repentance
4. an emotional experience rather than making a decision.
5. communication for transformation.

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**Scripture was written to train us in righteousness.**



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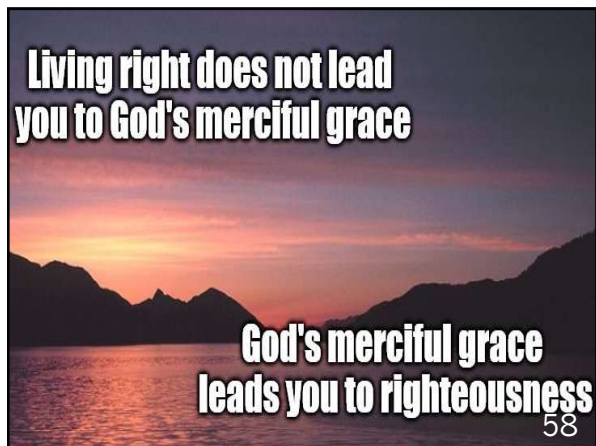
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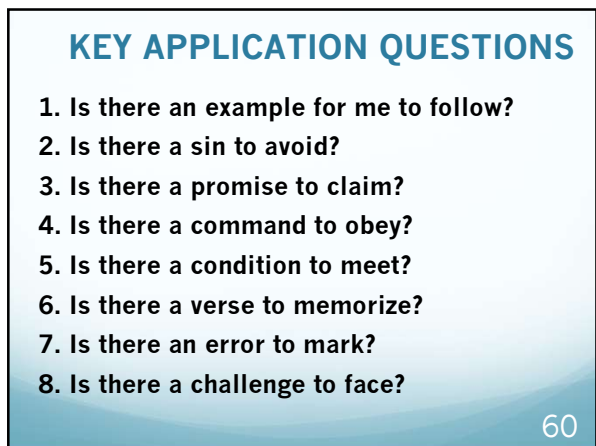
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