

# BIBLIOLOGY 24 – HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE PART 1

## **INTRODUCTION**

We have concluded that the 66 books of the Bible are the Word of God, and the Bible is the authoritative Word of God in all aspects of our lives: theological, metaphysical, ethical, and socio-political. In other words, the Bible is the single source for our worldview and principles of life.

We understand that the translations are good and useful for study, but how do we study?

2 Timothy 3:16-17 - All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

## **RE-OVERVIEW**

What we accomplished in the intensive is an overview of what will be studied. But in order to be thorough, we need to restart the lessons.

Our curriculum will include the following topics:

1. Structure of the Bible
2. Origins of the Bible – We believe that the original autographs are inspired text and that the Greek and Hebrew Texts (Some Aramaic) are a true representation of those original autographs in 98% of content, with nothing theological that is critically unknown.
3. Collection of the Bible – How we got to where we are today.
4. In Defense of Scripture
5. Hermeneutics

The goal of our study of Bibliology:

1. Value and Love the Bible
2. Understand the Basics of the Bible
  - a. Layout
  - b. Concepts
  - c. General Principles
3. Trust the Bible as the one true source of authority for life and godliness
4. Read the Bible
5. Know how to understand the Bible (Basics of Biblical Interpretation)
6. Establish, Develop, and Refine a Biblical Worldview

## **METHODS OF BIBLE STUDY**

The Bible can be used in various ways. The first is simply reading, not studying, just reading. The intention is to foster familiarity, especially with the narrative. But reading through any book is valuable.

The next method is various themed studies. Topics, Doctrine, or Person.

The most effective is an exegetical study.

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We are studying for our own personal growth in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ and the Father.

Too often, we take in information with the purpose of giving it to others, and we forget to first apply it to ourselves. Ezra provides us a beautiful example (Ezra 7:10): he sought to learn the Law of the Lord, to practice it, and to teach it. He got the order right: learn, do, and then if God provides opportunity, teach.

We need to understand the method of Biblical Understanding. Here are some methods of Biblical Interpretation.

**Allegorical** – There is a second level of understanding that goes beyond the people, events, and things that are mentioned in the text. The word “allegory” comes from two words in Greek “other” and “proclaim.” Hence, the word means “another proclamation” other than the obvious one.

There is no known originator for this method, but it was prominent in Alexandrian Judaism (Coptic Egypt). This was used primarily to bridge the gap between the Hebrew Scriptures and Greek Philosophy.

The belief is that Scripture both conceals and reveals hidden meaning within the text. They are looking for deeper meaning and secret truth. Much of the statements of allegorists look interesting and believable. It preaches well.

**Methodology:**

**Symbolic Interpretation:** Treat narrative elements (e.g., places, people) as symbols for theological truths (Jerusalem/Israel as the Church).

**Theological Framework:** Ground interpretations in established doctrines, often Christian or Jewish traditions.

**Layered Meanings:** Assume texts have multiple senses (literal, spiritual, moral), following patristic or medieval exegesis.

**Creative Links:** Draw connections between text and theology, prioritizing spiritual insight over historical context.

**Balance:** Anchor allegories in scriptural patterns to avoid arbitrary interpretations. Theologians or the Church authority control the interpretation.

Who is the authority?

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Moral (Tropological) Method – Derive ethical or practical lessons for personal or communal application.

Methodology:

Textual Basis: Extract explicit moral teachings or implications from stories (David's repentance as a model for confession).

Timeless Principles: Generalize specific commands or examples into universal ethical truths.

Audience Relevance: Apply insights to contemporary life, emphasizing virtues or behaviors.

Biblical Coherence: Cross-check with other scriptures to ensure consistency.

Practical Focus: Present actionable guidance, often used in preaching or devotionals.

Christological (Christocentric) Method – Interpret all scripture, especially the Old Testament, as pointing to or culminating in Jesus Christ.

Methodology:

Christ as Fulfillment: View Jesus as the ultimate fulfillment of biblical promises, laws, and prophecies.

New Testament Lens: Use Christ's teachings and apostolic writings to interpret Old Testament texts.

Theological Unity: Emphasize the Bible's overarching narrative of redemption through Christ.

Typological Overlap: Identify Christ in Old Testament types (The Ark, Conquest of Canaan).

Are there allegories, symbols, types, and anagoges in the Scripture? Yes. Does this mean that we also have the authority to take Scripture and speak on behalf of God's intent? Here are some examples:

The Song of Solomon is often interpreted allegorically as referring to the love that Christ has for the church or YHWH's love for Israel.

Scofield interprets Genesis 1:16 allegorically. "The stars are individual believers who are "lights" (Philippians 2:15, 16; John 1:5). The "greater light" is a type of Christ, the "Sun of righteousness" (Malachi 4:2). He will take this character at His second advent. Morally the world is now in the state between (Genesis 1:3-16); (Ephesians 6:12; Acts 26:18; 1 Peter 2:9). The sun is not seen, but there is light. Christ is that light (John 1:4, 5, 9) but "shineth in darkness," comprehended only by faith. As "Sun of righteousness" He will dispel all darkness. Dispensationally, the Church is in place as the "lesser light," the moon, reflecting the light of the unseen sun."

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M. R. DeHaan says that Adam is a type of Christ because Adam was put to sleep, his side was opened—he was wounded and his blood was shed—and from that wound his bride was taken. In the same way, Christ died, had His side pierced, and from that ordeal His Bride, the church, is produced. Just as Adam said that Eve was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh (Genesis 2:23), so the church is the body, flesh, and bone of Christ (see Ephesians 5:30).

Origen's Parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10 is one of the most well-known allegorical interpretations. The man who is robbed is Adam, Jerusalem is paradise, and Jericho is the world. The priest is the Law, and the Levites are the Prophets. The Samaritan is Christ. The donkey is Christ's physical body, which bears the burden of the wounded man (the wounds are his sins), and the inn is the Church. The Samaritan's promise to return is a promise of the second coming of Christ.

The problems with allegorical interpretations are.

No mandate for allegorical understanding

No formula, if it fits into the interpreter's theology, it is usually taught.

Unintended and Intended Consequences.

1. Israel is the Church
2. Amillennialism - Preterist
3. Kingdom Now
4. Reduction/Elimination of the Supernatural/Miracles

### **BIBLICAL MANDATED METHOD**

The method of interpreting the Bible is found within Scripture itself, so we don't need to be puzzled about how to interpret the text.

When God told Adam about the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:15), it was a deception from Satan that muddled the meaning (Genesis 3:1): "Did God say?". God held Adam and Eve accountable for literally violating His literal command (Genesis 3:11-13). When God told Noah to build a boat (Genesis 6:14), Noah didn't consider there to be some deep spiritual meaning – he built a boat (Genesis 6:22)! When God told Abraham to go (Genesis 12:1), Abraham went (Genesis 12:4). Like Adam, Noah, and Abraham, we need to take God's words at face value.

Jesus took the Hebrew Text literally: Matthew 19:4–5 – Jesus references Adam and Eve; Luke 17:26–27 – Jesus mentions the Flood as a literal event, Matthew 12:39–41 – Jesus refers to Jonah as a true account. Not once does Jesus refer to any account in the Hebrew text and then allegorize the meaning.

The process we use to understand Scripture is the Literal, Grammatical, Historical, Cultural method