

## General Helps for Understanding the Bible

Introduction: Assuming that the reader meets the spiritual qualifications for understanding the Bible, three general helps exist to help the reader understand the truths of Scripture.

God has made his main message clear to us in three ways:

1. God uses clear language.
  - a. God is not trying to hide His message from us. That's why we call the Bible "God's revelation." The emphatic point is that God is revealing His will to us, not concealing it. He has chosen to convey His message through the medium of language, and more specifically, through the written word. We must approach the Bible as literature to be understood.

Consider this statement: "GO TO WEGMANS AND BUY AN EXTRA-LARGE BOX OF LAUNDRY DETERGENT. DON'T FORGET TO USE A COUPON!" To a future reader, or even a foreign reader, there might be elements to this order not easily understood. The question is not, "Do I immediately understand the statement?" It is rather, "Can I understand the statement given the proper context, meanings, and historical data?" Obviously the answer is yes. No one could correctly infer from this statement that a command has been given to buy a suitcase at the department store.

Now consider this statement: "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." (John 14:6) One might have a question regarding to whom Jesus was speaking and in answer to what question. He might even inquire further as to the meaning of the words way, truth, and life. He could not, however, make the statement that "as long as we're sincere, any road will take us to Heaven."

- b. Language is not always immediately understandable, but it can be understandable to potentially everybody.

God has created man to understand language, and the ability to interpret is the innate ability of all men.

Language sometimes is unclear but need not remain unclear.

Language can be unclear due to any of the following factors:

- ▶ Foreign words
- ▶ Word definitions
- ▶ Context
- ▶ Grammar
- ▶ Idioms

2. God reiterates common themes.

- a. The Bible is a unit of seemingly disparate parts that reveals an incredible cohesion of ideas.

Effective child training centers on the repetition of key themes and the introduction of those themes into every area of life.

- b. God has made the human mind to distill information into main ideas.

What does the Declaration of Independence say?

What was the subject of the famous speech "I Have a Dream"?

What does the Bible say?

3. God gives us the Holy Spirit.

- a. The Holy Spirit indwells the life of every New Testament believer.

*1Co 6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*

*Ro 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

- b. When one struggles in a particular area of study, a plan for remediation might include the hiring of a tutor who is both an expert in that field and an excellent teacher (1 Cor. 2:12-14).

*2Ti 2:7 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.*

*Eph 3:16-19 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.*

See also Psalm 119:130; Psalm 18:28; John 14:26;  
John 16:13