

# Studying the Bible

Foundations for Life

# Introduction

- Common Basis for Truth
- How we know what we know...
- Ways we can know the truth of God
  - Creation
  - Jesus, the Living Word
  - Written Word

# Three Aspects to Study

- Observation
  - What, when , who and more
- Interpretation
  - Know enough about the topic to deduce facts
- Application
  - Life and purpose

# Three Basic Assumptions

- The Bible is Inspired! 2 Timothy 3:16
  - *Believing in Divine Inspiration of the Bible by one Divine author will require that we recognize that each passage only has one correct **interpretation**.*

# Three Basic Assumptions

- The Bible is clear and understandable
  - *We can know what it means! God intended to reveal Himself, not hide Himself!*
- *Three methods of reading that do not promote clarity of Scripture*
  - *Allegorization*
  - Culturalization
  - Spiritualization

# Three Common Methods that do not hold to the clarity of Scripture

- Allegorization
  - *Allegorizing is finding a mystical or symbolic meaning based on the use of one's imagination*
- *Good Samaritan. Traveler (Adam) from Jerusalem (Heaven) to Jericho (World) attacked by robbers (satan). Priest and Levites (law and prophets) pass but Samaritan (Christ) helped – took to inn (church) and promised to return (second coming)*

# Three Common Methods that do not hold to the clarity of Scripture

- Culturalization
  - *Culturalization says that the text has a different meaning today due to the fact that the culture has changed*
- *1 Timothy 2:12, which tells women not to teach or exercise authority over men, applied in Paul's day, but no longer applies today.*

# Three Common Methods that do not hold to the clarity of Scripture

- Spiritualization
  - *To spiritualize scripture is to give a spiritual meaning which is not intended within the context*
- *God knocked down the walls of Jericho and wants to knock down the walls of your life today. Moses lead the people out of Egypt, take a vacation. Jesus calmed the sea, He wants you to have a calm life.*

# Three Basic Assumptions

- The Bible is Harmonious and Consistent
  - *An interpretation of a passage cannot contradict the rest of the teaching of the scriptures.*
- Compare scripture with scripture

# Basic Principles of Interpretation

- All Scripture is to be taken in its Natural, Normal, and Customary Usage whenever Possible
- All Scripture is to be Interpreted Within the Context of the Passage
- All Scripture Is To Be Compared With Other Scripture
- Contradictions are only Apparent
- Prophecy is Recognizing The Near And Far Implications And Applications Of Scripture

# Practical Helps to Study Scripture

# Study Helps

- Other types of Bibles
  - Parallel Bible (Several languages or versions side-by-side)
  - Amplified Bible (multiple word meanings listed for all significant words)
  - Greek and Hebrew Bible
  - Interlineal Bible (integrated language and interpretation)

# Study Helps

- Concordance
  - Strongs or Vines is most comprehensive
  - List of words and where to find them in Scripture
- Bible Encyclopedia (ISBE – 10,000 entries)
- Bible Dictionary
- Commentary
  - Matthew Henry, John Calvin, John MacArthur, Barnes
- Internet (Bible Gateway)

# Study Helps

- Study Bibles
  - Combine many of the helps already discussed
  - Convenient
  - Many over-use the notes and don't study
  - Subject to bias

# Translations

- Different Bible versions represent the efforts of scholars to translate original manuscripts in a way that communicates effectively to a given audience or language group.
- Important to note: they are not all “basically the same” as significant differences can change the meaning or intent of the original Greek and Hebrew.

# King James (KJV)

- The KJV is the first version of Scripture authorized by the Protestant church and commissioned by England's King James I in 1611.
- Word for word
- Sometimes difficult to understand
  - Comfort means strengthen, suffer means let
  - Psalm 5:6, Ez 27:25

# New American Standard (NASB)

- The NASB is written in a formal style, but is more readable than the King James Version. It is highly respected as the most literal English translation of the Bible.
- Word for word
- Not best for reading out-loud
- Very accurate and excellent for study

# New International Version (NIV)

- The NIV offers a balance between a word-for-word and thought-for-thought translation and is considered by many as a highly accurate and smooth-reading version of the Bible in modern English.
- Combination of thought and word
- Some theological influences (premillennial)
- Easy to read

# English Standard Version (ESV)

- The ESV Bible is a relatively new Bible translation that combines word-for-word precision and accuracy with literary excellence, beauty, and readability.
- Word for word
- Published in 2008, still earning popularity

# New Living Translation (NLT)

- Using modern English, the translators of the NLT focused on producing clarity in the meaning of the text rather than creating a literal, word-for-word equivalence. Their goal was to create a clear, readable translation while remaining faithful to original texts.
- Thought for thought
- Better than other modern story Bibles (TLB) but still lots of interpretation included

# All Versions are NOT the Same

- Differences in Translations:
  - Luke 9:56
    - KJV, NASB - *For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.* And they went to another village.
    - NIV – and they went to another village.
  - Matt. 18:11
    - KJV, NASB - *For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.*
    - NIV – *missing*
  - John 6:47
    - KJV - Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth *on me* hath everlasting life
    - NIV - I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.

# Choosing a Bible

- Purpose
  - Study or Reading?
- Size
  - How likely are you to carry and use your Bible?
- What is your go-to Bible?
  - How do you use your Bible?
  - A Bible with notes and comments from years of study and use is valuable!

# Which is Best?

- Develop a Library of tools
- Select a version and stick with it (memorizing)
- A great choice – Thompson Chain Reference
  - 100,000 margin references for 8000 topics
  - Concordance
  - Index of topics
  - Outline studies of books and events of Bible
  - Character studies
  - Illustrated guides and charts
  - Extensive atlas and map section
  - Archaeological supplement

# How to Study - Read

- Read Aloud
- Read Carefully
  - Alert and Observant
- Read Repeatedly
- Read Peripherally
  - Context

# How to Study - Reflect

- Reflect Purposefully
- Reflect Imaginatively
  - Try to put yourself into the situation
- Reflect Humbly
  - Never take for granted
- Reflect Prayerfully
  - Communicate with God about what you learn
- Reflect Patiently – takes time

# How to Study - Record

- Write down your thoughts or applications for future reference

# How to Study - Respond

- Respond with Confession
- Respond with Faith
- Respond with Obedience
  - Put what you learn into action

# ABCD Method

- A – Read and record a selection of verses
- B – Select the “best verse” and write it down
- C – Write what the verse communicates to you
- D – Write a brief prayer of response

# Practical Exercise

- Break into groups and read and interpret the following passages of Scripture:
- 1 Timothy 4:6-10
- Philemon 1:10-16
- Revelation 7:11-14

- *What does Scripture say about the following questions:*
- Was Christ's Divinity challenged in the Bible?
- What powers was Peter given to further the Gospel?
- What are Satan's limitations to his power?
- Identify some prophecies that were fulfilled concerning Jesus.
- What spiritual weapons exist to combat evil?
- What is the overall perspective in the Bible about borrowing?
- What does it mean to say that the church is the bride of Christ?
- What would you share with a person from Scripture who needs comfort?
- What does God think of discontent and murmuring?
- What does the Bible teach about a devotional life and prayer?
- According to the Bible, is self-confidence a good or bad thing?
- What is the "Book of Life"?

- *Answers using a Thompson Chain Reference Bible:*
- Was Christ's Divinity challenged in the Bible? 4149
- What powers was Peter given to further the Gospel? 4191
- What are Satan's limitations to his power? 4198
- Identify some prophecies that were fulfilled concerning Jesus. 4306
- What spiritual weapons exist to combat evil? 361
- What is the overall perspective in the Bible about borrowing? 582
- What does it mean to say that the church is the bride of Christ? 737
- What would you share with a person from Scripture who needs comfort? 783-788
- What does God think of discontent and murmuring? 830-834
- What does the Bible teach about a devotional life and prayer? 1002-1003
- According to the Bible, is self-confidence a good or bad thing? 3188-3189
- What is the "Book of Life"? 526

# Homework

- Read and analyze the book of 2 John.
  - Author
  - Purpose
  - Main Theme
  - Teaching Points
  - Application
  - Questions or Issues

