

School of Life

How to Study the Bible

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How to Study the Bible

Lesson 1: Importance of the Word

I. Why do we need to study the Bible?

A. Reveals a true picture of the Father, Jesus and Holy Spirit.

- **John 1:1 (NKJV)**
- **John 1:14 (NKJV)**
- **John 8:31-32 (NKJV)**
- **John 14:6 (NKJV)**
- **John 14:21-23 (NKJV)**

B. Your Word is truth.

- **Psalms 138:2 (NKJV)**
- **John 17:17 (NKJV)**

C. Given by inspiration, and is inerrant.

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- **2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJV)**
- **2 Peter 1:19-21 (NKJV)**

II. Revelation of God's plan for our lives.

A. God's will unveiled for our lives.

- **2 Timothy 2:15 (NKJV)**
- **2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJV)**
- **Joshua 1:8 (NKJV)**

III. Our foundation.

A. Lack of knowledge.

- **Hosea 4:6 (NKJV)**
- **Isaiah 5:13-14 (NKJV)**

B. Knowledge is our key to victory.

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- **Luke 1:52 (NKJV)**
- **Proverbs 11:9 (NKJV)**
- **Psalms 17:4 (NKJV)**
- **John 8:31-32 (NKJV)**
- **John 8:36 (NKJV)**

C. We must be doers of the Word.

- **James 1:8-25 (NKJV)**
- **2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)**
- **Matthew 7:24-29 (NKJV)**
- **Luke 6:47-49 (NKJV)**

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Lesson 2: The Bible and Spiritual Growth

I. God's Word is spiritual food.

- New born babes. **1 Peter 2:1-3, 8 AMPC.**
- Grow through the Word. **Ephesians 4:11-16**

A. Feed on God's Word daily.

- **Matthew 4:4**
- **Job 23:12 (NKJV)**
- **Jeremiah 15:16 (NKJV)**
- **Hebrews 5:11-14 (NKJV)**
- **Hebrews 6:1-3 (NKJV)**

II. The Word will produce purity.

A. Produce power to overcome sin. **Psalms 119:1-11 (NKJV)**

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B. Revelation knowledge.

- **Romans 6:1-23 (NKJV)**
- **Romans 8:1-2 (NKJV)**

III. The Word is your weapon for spiritual warfare.

A. It is what Jesus used. **Luke 4:1-15 (NKJV)**

B. Offense and defense. **Ephesians 6:16-17 (NKJV)**

IV. Benefits of abiding in the Word.

A. Makes us strong. **1 John 2:14 (NKJV)**

B. Assures us of our salvation. **1 John 5:13 (NKJV)**

C. Gives you confidence in prayer.

- **John 15:7 (NKJV)**
- **1 John 5:14-15 (NKJV)**

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D. Cleansing from sin.

- **John 15:1-3 (NKJV)**
- **Ephesians 5:23-27 (NKJV)**
- **1 John 1:9 (NKJV)**

E. Produces joy.

- **John 15:11 (NKJV)**
- **1 John 1:3-4 (NKJV)**

F. Produces peace. **Isaiah 26:3 (NKJV)**

G. Guidance and wisdom.

- **Psalms 119:105 (NKJV)**
- **Psalms 119:130 (NKJV)**

H. Enables us to share to gospel. **1 Peter 3:15 (NKJV)**

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I. It guarantees success and prosperity.

- **Joshua 1:8 (NKJV)**
- **Psalms 1:1-3 (NKJV)**

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Lesson 3: Importance of Reading the Bible

I. You can understand God's Word

A. Bible was written for God's people.

- **Mark 4:11-12 (NKJV)**
- **Proverbs 2:1-7 (NKJV)**
- **Isaiah 55:6-13 (NKJV)**
- **1 Peter 2:2 (NKJV)**
- **1 John 2:12-13 (NKJV)**

B. We must be born again.

- **John 3:1-7 (NKJV)**
- **1 Corinthians 2:9-16 (NKJV)**

C. Ministry of Holy Spirit.

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- **John 14:15-20 (NKJV)**
- **John 14:25-26 (NKJV)**
- **John 16:12-15 (NKJV)**
- **1 Corinthians 2:12-16 (NKJV)**

D. Pay the price. **2 Timothy 2:15 (NKJV)**

II. Reading the Bible.

A. Is work (not works, but work). Study = to exert one's self, endeavour, give diligence.

- **2 Timothy 2:15 (NKJV)**
- **Proverbs 24:30-34 (NKJV)**

B. How to read.

C. Ways of reading.

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- D. Get it done in a year. Every day, read Two chapters from the Old, one from the New, five Psalms and One from the Proverb.

III. Overall look at the Bible.

- A. Anon of scripture. **2 Peter 1:19-21 (NKJV)**
- B. The Bible as a whole. (See handout sheet)
- C. Old Testament. (See handout sheet)
- D. New Testament. (See handout sheet)

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Lesson 3: Importance of Reading the Bible Handout Sheet - Information about God's Word

I. The Bible as a Whole.

- The Bible contains 66 books; 39 Old Testament books and 27 New Testament books.
- 40 authors covering approximately 1,600 years wrote it.
- There are 1,189 chapters in the Bible, 31,373 verses, and 775,693 words (in the King James Version).
- The longest chapter is Psalm 119. The shortest chapter is Psalm 117. The longest book in the Old Testament is Psalm. The longest book in the New Testament is Luke.

II. Old Testament.

- The Old Testament was written mostly in Hebrew (a few short passages are in Aramic). It contains 39 books. The first five books are called the Pentateuch, meaning "five." They were penned by Moses, and commonly called the law. They are redemptive and historical by nature.
- The next 12 books, Joshua through Esther, are called historical books. They cover about 1,100 years of Jewish history from entering the Promise Land to partial restoration back into the land after Babylonian captivity.

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- The middle five books, Job through Song of Solomon, are poetry books and are experiential in nature.
- The last 17 books are prophetic books. The first five are called major prophets.
- They had a great influence on their nation. The next 12 are called minor prophets raised up by God at strategic times to speak the Word of God to Israel. They are called minor because of the size of their books.

III. Silent Years.

- From the close of Malachi to the entrance of John the Baptist was approximately 400 years. They were called the Silent Years. We have no record of a prophet or a Message sent from God.

IV. New Testament.

- The New Testament was written in Greek. The first four books are called the Gospels. They are foundational books of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. The Book of Acts is a foundational book of the life and ministry of the Church. Next are the 21 Epistles, which are letters to the Church. Thirteen are the epistles of Paul, from Romans through Philemon. Hebrews' author is uncertain. Nine are called the Church Epistles (Romans through 2 Thessalonians). Four are pastoral personal epistles (1 Timothy through Philemon). Seven are general epistles (James through Jude). The last New Testament book is prophetic. It is called the Apocalypse, the Revelation of Jesus Christ, penned by the Apostle John.

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V. Why We Reject the Apocrypha

- The apocryphal books were not a part of the Old Testament of Jesus and the early Church.
- The Old Testament Law, the Prophets, and the Writings, still used in Hebrew Bibles and Jewish versions of the Old Testament does not and never did include the apocryphal books.
- Jesus and His disciples knew about the Apocrypha but never quoted from it as authoritative Scripture.
- Ancient Jewish writers, Philo and Josephus, who used the Greek Bible, knew about the Apocrypha but never quoted it as Scripture.
- Church Fathers, who were familiar with the Hebrew canon, clearly distinguish between canonical and apocryphal writings.
- The apocryphal books were never declared to be authoritative Scripture until the Council of Trent in A.D. 1546
- Most readers feel that the apocryphal books represent a lower level of writing than that of the canonical Scriptures. The Apocrypha contains numerous historical and geographical inaccuracies and anachronisms.

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Lesson 4: Importance of Studying the Bible

I. God's calling on you life.

A. Commandment of God to you. **2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV)**

B. What is study?

C. Why are we studying?

II. Ways of studying the Bible.

A. Preparing ourselves.

B. As a whole.

C. Book by book.

D. By chapters.

E. Subject or topic.

F. Character studies.

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G. Word studies.

III. Laws of scriptural interpretation. 2 Peter 1:20

A. Prayerfully and openly.

B. Hermenutics and exegesis.

C. Take the Bible literally when possible.

D. Observe and preserve context. (Ask questions)

E. Two or three witnesses.

F. Be teachable.

G. Law of first usage.

H. Study history and setting.

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Lesson 4: Bible Study Helps, Reference Books, Etc.

I. Cautions!

A. Not everyone who claims expertise is an expert.

B. Paul warned us about ravenous wolves. Wolves publish books too.

II. Bible translations: The work of language translators, who translated the ancient manuscripts and documents from their original languages in which they were written, to your language. These translations range from very accurate, to very poor. Translations can reflect the bias of the translators. Translations will also reflect the time and culture of the translators. Since language actually evolves, over time, words, terms and phrases will change in their meanings.

A. Translation methods.

1. Formal/complete equivalence: This is a word for word translation. While this seems to be a most accurate way to translate, it has its own set of challenges. There are not always word equivalents between languages, and sentence structures are often different. So even with this method, there will be some of the next method involved... translating a phrase or idea.
2. Dynamic/Functional Equivalence: This is phrase for phrase translation. Having preached in foreign countries through the use of interpreters, I know that usually those interpreters employ this method. When I first began to do missions work, when I would pause, my interpreters would often motion for me to continue. They needed to understand where the thought was going, in order to interpret it accurately.
3. The scriptures are given by inspiration of Holy Spirit, but translations are not, generally speaking. I do however, believe translators can be led by Holy Spirit, just like you can. **John 16:13** says, "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth?.." I believe God has supernaturally

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preserved the truth of His Word, but you still need to study. Just as a Bible translator could misunderstand and therefore mistranslate, you could misunderstand their translation. So study.

4. There are literally hundreds of translations of the Bible. You will have your “go to”, your favorite, but I recommend having several to compare with. I have listed several below that I use.

- a) New King James Version (NKJV). This is my “go to.” I chose this one at a time when most American Christians in my circles were using the King James Version (KJV), sometimes called the Authorized Version (AV) because the translation was commissioned, or authorized by King James, in 1611. The NKJV maintains the KJV style but replaces the outdated 1611 words with words more common to our time. It is close enough that those using KJV generally have no trouble following when I preach from it. It is also considered by many well respected and educated ministers and professors to be one of the more accurate translations available in the English language.

- b) New American Standard Version (NASV). Next to the NKJV, this is the translation I am most familiar with. It is also considered by many scholars and professors to be one of, if not the most accurate translation available.

- B. Study Bibles. These are Bibles that contain study helps, references, notes from scholars, calendars, dictionaries, maps, historical information, etc. Some have wide margins for you to add your own notes. I have listed some well known study bibles below. Most, if not all have some things they are better for than others, and most are available in various translations. The first three are quite old, the last two are relatively new

1. Thompson Chain Reference Bible - 1908
2. Scofield Reference Bible - 1909

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3. Dake Annotated Reference Bible - 1963
 4. The Open Bible - 1975
 5. Life Application Study Bible - 1988
 6. Spirit Filled Life Study Bible - 1997
- C. Bible Software or Aps. These are amazing because you can have an entire library available to you on your smartphone or laptop computer. Many Bible translations, reference books, commentaries, lexicons, dictionaries, etc. are available free of charge, and still more can be purchased. I searched my App Store for my iPad for Bible apps. It brought up 294 available apps. Below I list some that I have actually used.
1. Blue Letter Bible: this is my personal go to. I do the vast majority of my Bible study with this app on my iPad. It is also available for my iPhone, so it is easily available when I am waiting somewhere, or when I need to share a scripture with someone.
 - a) I have 16 translations, and more are available. Some transactions require an internet connection to use, but others can be downloaded to your device.
 - b) A couple of Hebrew, and a couple of Greek lexicons are available that work within the app.
 - c) Several commentaries are available within the app.
 - d) Word searches can be done either by the English word or by Strong's numbering system. Searches can be limited to New Testament, Old Testament, a single book or to the entire Bible.
 - e) Cut and paste is available, as well as highlighting and inserting notes.
 2. Many other apps will do these same functions, and provide the same resources. Choose one, or several, that work for you.

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3. Many apps are available in multiple languages.
4. Some other apps I have used.
 - a) Online Bible: I loved the windows computer version of this, and used it for years, but I don't like the iPad version as well. I have 38 Bible translations, and more available. Some require internet connection, but many can be downloaded. Many of the translations available are very old. This app also has many classic Christian writings and commentaries that can be downloaded. Two features that I love about this app is the phrase search, and the ability to insert Strong's numbers within the text. My go to translation, the NKJV was available for the computer version, but has not yet been made available for the iPad, otherwise, this would probably be my go to.
 - b) YouVersion: This is one of the most used Bible apps in the world. 2103 Bible text languages, 65 app interface languages, and 75 English translation available. Has many available Bible reading plans
 - c) Just1Word
 - d) e-Sword
 - e) Olive Tree

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Bible Study Helps

I. Helpful study aids

A. Concordance (Strong's Exhaustive Concordance - with Hebrew and Greek dictionaries).

1. Concordance Defined: an alphabetical index of the principal words in a book or the works of an author with their immediate contexts
2. Strong's numbering system: Used by other study books such as,
 - a) Vine's Expository Dictionary of the Old and New Testament Words, by W.E. Vine, Old Testament edited by F.F. Bruce
 - b) Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament, by Joseph H Thayer
 - c) Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures, translated by Samuel Prideaux Tregelles, LL. D.

B. Lexicon Defined: a book containing an alphabetical arrangement of the words in a language and their definitions : DICTIONARY

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- C. Commentaries: CAUTION— a commentary is simply a book of the author's Personal comments on certain Bible passages. Commentaries will be through the theologically tinted glasses of, and reflect the influences in the commentator's life and education, and should be used with that understanding... never taken or quoted on the same level as scripture.

II. Bible apps and software.