

## New Year, New You “#1 Best Disciple Tool of All Time” II Timothy 2:15

FBC Canton, Sunday AM, February 27, 2022 – Bro. Mike Roberson

**Introduction:** We have been studying becoming a new you in this new year. God desires you to be transformed into the image of His son. Romans 8:30

This process is the process of learning how to follow Jesus...becoming a disciple. Romans 12:1-2

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.  
2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

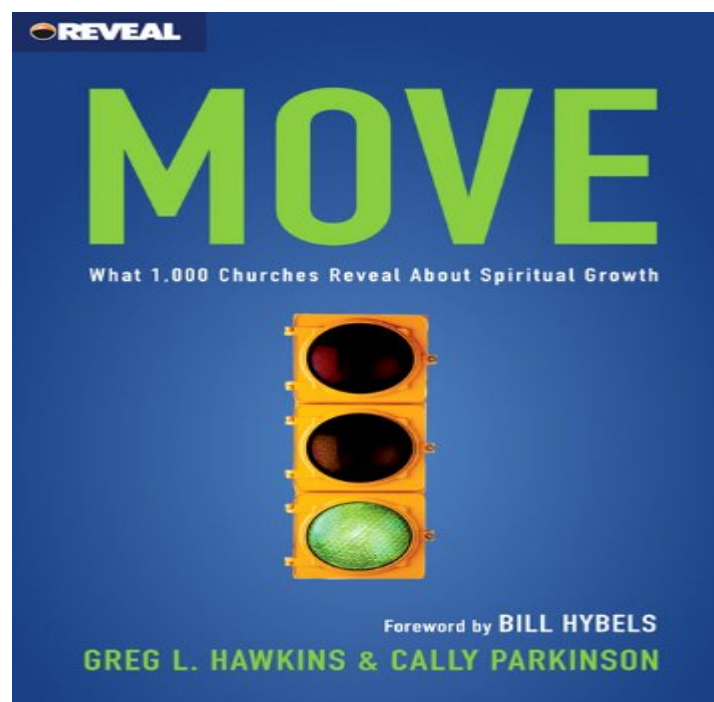
We have studied 3 foundational truths that every disciple needs in order to grow:

1. Authority of the Word of God. You won't follow what you don't trust.
2. Salvation by grace. You cannot serve from guilt. Grace got you.
3. God is personally involved in my life. You won't surrender to someone you don't know.

Today, we begin with the 3 foundational personal practices that every person needs to grow:

1. Personal time in the word of God.

**The more time you spend, the more transformation you speed.**

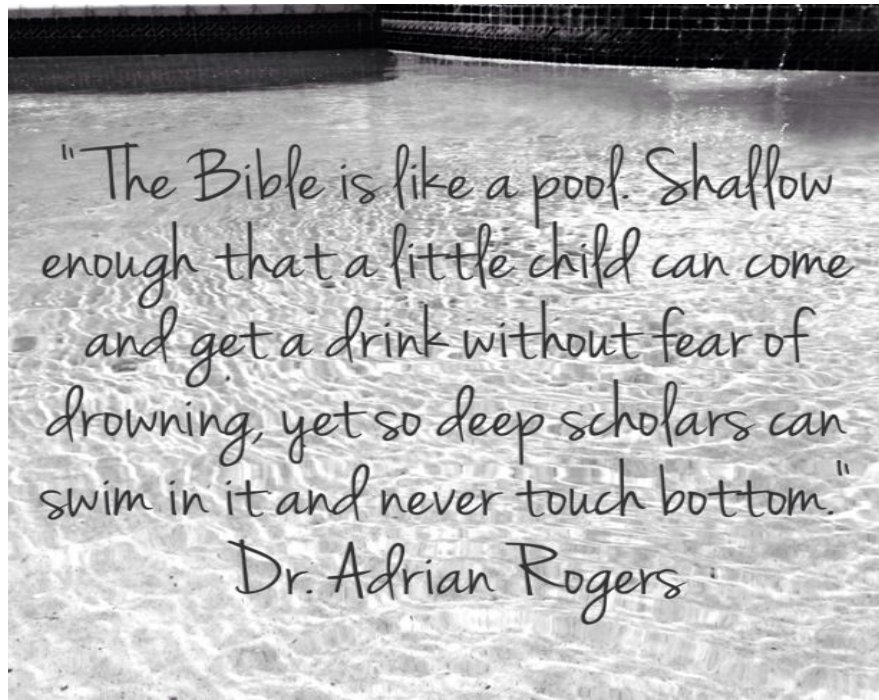


**You may read 1000s of books in your life, but the Bible is the only book that reads you. Hebrews 4:12**

II Timothy 2:15

<sup>15</sup> Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

- I. **What you are commanded to do, no one else is responsible to do. v. 15**  
What you can do, no one else should do for you.
  - a. **Reading the Bible is commanded throughout the Bible. Psalm 119**  
meditate, seek, learn, remember, keep, cherish, delight in.
    - i. Time with the Word and the God of the Word is demonstrated throughout the Bible. Because Jesus was the Word, (John 1:1) He had the Word with Him when He withdrew often to pray. Luke 5:15-16  
<sup>15</sup> However, the report went around concerning Him all the more; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. <sup>16</sup> So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.
  - b. **Give your best time for your time in the Word.**
    - i. Psalms 63:1-2: O God, you are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water. <sup>2</sup> So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory.
- II. **Failure to keep God's Word will produce failure in your growth in God. I Corinthians 3:1-4**
  - a. **Personal growth in God produces humility and love, not pride.**
    - i. And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. <sup>2</sup> I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; <sup>3</sup> for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? <sup>4</sup> For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not carnal?
    - ii. Hebrews 5:12-14 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. <sup>13</sup> For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. <sup>14</sup> But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.



iii.

- III. Studying The Word begins with reading the Word. v. 15...**rightly dividing the Word of truth. You can never know what the Bible means until you read what it says: read the Bible through in a year.

# R.E.A.P.

## *bible study method*

### READ

Read and reread the passage with an open heart, asking the Holy Spirit to speak to you. As you read ask:

- What is happening in this passage? What things are emphasized, repeated, related?
- What do you see about God? What is God doing in this passage?
- What do you see about man?

### EXAMINE

Spend some time reflecting. Ask yourself these questions, and write down your thoughts:

- What is going on in the passage?
- Who is writing and who is he writing to?
- When was the author writing?
- What are the circumstances the author is addressing?
- Does the writer mention anything that might indicate his purpose or intent?
- How do you think the author wants his audience to respond?

### APPLY

Meditate on what God is saying to you and how it affects your life. Ask yourself these questions:

- Is there a truth to believe? Sin to repent of? A promise to claim? A command to follow?
- What things need to change in light of this text?
- How will I live differently and be different because of what I just read?

### PRAY

Pray through the passage and your application, asking God to change your heart and to change your life based on the time you've spent in God's Word.

# SOAP

## BIBLE STUDY METHOD

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Pray, asking God for guidance through His Word and to get rid of other distractions.

Read the passage / chapter and find the one thing that you ponder on or jumps off the page as you read.

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**S: SCRIPTURE:** Which scripture(s) stuck out to you most? Write it down. Feel free to make it a work of art.

**O: OBSERVATION:** What you think about the verse? What does God seem to be revealing through it? Do any words stand out? Look them up in original Greek or Hebrew. Cross reference scriptures of similar topic to get an overview of the passage. Who is the author addressing? What is the cultural context? Who is the passage about?

**A: APPLICATION:** How do you apply this little truth to your life? Are there any areas in your life that do not align with the scripture and need to change? Have you seen growth in any areas?

**P: PRAYER:** Write a prayer asking how to implement this verse in your life. Pray for others who may be dealing with a similar issue. Praise God for his blessings and opening your eyes to his truths.

**Conclusion: The greatest discipleship tool of all time is in your hand. Will it be in your heart?**

### 3 Simple Steps to Becoming an Expert in Anything

Up your value to your organization--and yourself--by becoming an expert in the subject of your choice

BY [PETER ECONOMY](#), THE LEADERSHIP GUY@[BIZZWRITER](#)

A great way to become more valuable in your current job--or to make a major career change--is to become an expert. The good news is that it is never too late to become an expert by either developing a base of knowledge within your current field of work, or in an entirely new one.

How does becoming an expert at something you love--and earning more money as a result--sound?

Try these three steps to becoming an expert and you, too, can revitalize your current position, or begin an exciting journey toward a new you.

#### **1. Figure out what you're interested in**

First you need to evaluate your current position. What do you know right now that you are close to being an expert in? You are probably already an expert, or close to one, at what you are currently doing, so you can easily build upon that expertise and take it to the next level. This is a much easier, less time-intensive route to take than learning something entirely new.

However, if what you are currently doing no longer interests you, you'll need to figure out what does. Make this your first priority. Whatever route you take, what you choose to be an expert in has to be inspiring so that the necessary reading and

learning seem effortless to you because it resonates with every fiber of your being.

Everyone has one--some have more than one--you just need to find it.

## **2. Focus on one subject at a time**

Get rid of your cluttered mind and focus on one subject at a time. Overwhelming yourself by trying to learn too many things at one time will only set you up for failure. Focus. If you want to become a website designer, begin learning how to build one form of website--say, WordPress--before you take on all the others. Once you feel comfortable with one, move to another. Before you know it, you will begin to feel like and be an expert website designer.

## **3. Remember that practice makes perfect**

Becoming an expert overnight just isn't going to happen. You are going to have to put a lot of work and dedication into becoming an expert at anything. In his book *Outliers*, Malcolm Gladwell says that it takes about 10,000 hours of practice to achieve mastery in a particular field. While you may not have to devote that much time to become an expert, depending on the subject you select, you are looking at hundreds to thousands of hours of some or all of the following:

- **Studying**--reading books, online courses, attending college, watching videos, attending seminars and training programs, learning from other experts within the field.

- **Practicing**--actually *doing* what you are learning. As in the above example of a website designer, you can apply what you have learned by creating websites on your own. By practicing what you learn, you are going much deeper into what it takes to be an expert in that field--working out the kinks, investigating and solving problems not covered through studying and instruction alone.
- **Presenting**--finding ways to document your findings. Create a blog or journal of the steps you are taking to understand the many facets of your newfound expertise. Write or speak at a conference about the trials and the resolutions so that others can learn from you. Teaching what you have learned to others will push you even further toward your goal of mastering your new field.

The upside is that if you have truly found your passion--*your thing*--in life, learning and becoming an expert will be fun and exciting. If this is not the case, you have made the wrong choice and you need to go back Step 1.

## How to Study the Bible

### Excerpt

*by Dr. Chuck Missler • December 1, 2017*

### **The Bible is the Word of God.**

That's quite a statement. If we really believe that, it should change everything. We realize that the Bible is not the random jottings of ancient Hebrew sages, but a portal — a portal into the heart of our Creator. The Word of God is given to instruct and correct and guide us,<sup>[1]</sup> but it is also a weapon to protect us from the enemy of our souls.<sup>[2]</sup>

*And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

— 2 Timothy 3:15

*For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

— Hebrews 4:12

The Bible is by far the best-selling book of all time, yet thousands of Bibles sit on shelves year after year gathering dust. When we come to realize the true nature of the Bible, we understand what a terrible waste that is. We live in a world filled with deception, and the best way to recognize a lie is to already know the truth. We need to *know* this book that God breathed through His prophets and disciples. We need to know what it says and how to wield it in our own lives. I often say that the Bible is a message by one Author from outside our time domain, but it's vital to know why I say that and how it's true.

How should we study the Bible? I'm going to make some personal remarks in this book. I've been studying the Bible for more than sixty years, so I've developed my own viewpoints on matters. However, nobody should accept anything just because I've said it or because some other Bible teacher has said it. You have a much better tutor than me readily available to you through the person of the Holy Spirit. Research and study the Bible for yourself to determine what it says — from front to back. My foundational verse on Bible study is Acts 17:11, which tells us about the people of Berea, who:

*...were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."*

— Acts 17:11

We are in a predicament as human beings. We are plagued by a general spiritual blindness. Most of us cannot see past the atoms of this world into the dimensions beyond us, the dimensions of angels and demons, or of the spiritual warfare that takes place on our behalf. We get a peek in [2 Kings 6](#) and [Daniel 10](#), but we cannot see the full reality ourselves.

Too many of us think of Jesus Christ as that broken carpenter hanging on a cross. We do not fully appreciate that the man who rose again on Resurrection Sunday is the King of the universe, through whom all things were made. ([John 1:3](#)) As we study the Bible, our greatest discovery will be a growing appreciation for the person and identity of Jesus, the Messiah of Israel and Creator and Lord of all things.

## The Age of Deceit

It has become increasingly politically incorrect to be a Bible believer. It's strange to realize that many church congregations are embarrassed by people who take the Bible seriously. Our culture is apathetic to the very idea of truth. It used to be the dream of American mothers and fathers for their children to go off to college and learn, to become good thinkers and moral people able to distinguish right from wrong. Today, students go to college to be told there is no right and wrong. They are told, "You have your truth and I have mine." The value of relativism has had tragic consequences.

Satan was a liar and a murderer from the beginning ([John 8:44](#)), and his goal is to deceive us. The only remedy, the only inoculation we can get to protect us from deceit is for us to do our homework. Benjamin Franklin is often misquoted as saying, “a jack of all trades and a master of none.” It’s actually, “a jack of all trades and a master of one.” In other words, an educated person should know a little about everything, but know everything about one thing. If we are Christians, we should be a master of the Bible. We should know it inside and out. As Christians, we don’t just represent ourselves. We are ambassadors for Jesus Christ, and it’s vital that we represent Him faithfully. We cannot do that well if we do not know the Bible — and not just parts of the Bible taken out of context, but the Bible as a whole.

It’s my premise that we cannot understand God’s Word by spending 45 minutes at it once a week listening to a sermon (which may or may not dig into the Bible at all). We need to be involved in dedicated personal study.

## Prerequisites to Study

I’m going to suggest there are a couple of preconditions you should have in place before you start your study of God’s Word. These are important. We want to get all we can out of our Bible study. We don’t want it to be a dry lump of wordy onion-skin papers that hit us in the face but don’t dig deep into our hearts and souls.

First, ask Jesus Christ to be Lord of your life. This is vital, because when the Holy Spirit comes and dwells in us, He is the one who leads us into all truth. In John 3, Jesus told Nicodemus that he had to be born again, and that applies to all of us. People who aren’t saved can read the Bible and learn from it, but it’s the Holy Spirit who brings the Bible to life in our minds and hearts:

*Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.*

— *John 14:17*

*But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:*

— *John 15:26*

*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*

— *John 16:13*

Many people don’t realize that God wants to give us the Holy Spirit, just as a father wants to give his children good things. We need His Spirit, and He is more than willing to fill us. We just have to ask.

*For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?*

— *Luke 11:10–13*

We might have a big experience when the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us — we might feel His love and power fill us. Or, we might not feel anything at all — yet the Holy Spirit is there, ready to do His work in us. Either way, we know that His presence is one request God will absolutely honor when we ask, because it is always good.

A second precondition is that we should always open our Bible study with prayer. It's important to remember that Bible study is a spiritual issue as well as an intellectual one. God gave us brains, and He wants us to use the minds He gave us, but we are also on a spiritual battlefield. We should always open with prayer.

A third part of preparation is obedience. We want to be under the tutorship of the Author of the Bible. God will reward our obedience with further insights. Obedience is a prerequisite, and we want to be pre-committed and surrendered to Jesus Christ as we embark on this study.

## No Shadow of Turning

Scientific explanations are always changing. That's the reality of science. As more information comes in, the stories change. Nothing is ever 100% proven in science, and all scientists know this. It was once thought that the speed of light was infinite, until the 17th century Danish astronomer Ole Rømer discovered from his observations of Jupiter's moon Io that light had a finite speed. If we compare a physics course using 1950s textbooks to a physics course today, the differences would surprise us. Neanderthals have long been regarded as hulking, stupid cave dwellers, but archeological finds have demonstrated that Neanderthals were as intelligent as modern humans (if not more so).<sup>[3]</sup>

Unlike scientific "facts," the truth never changes. That might seem an odd thing to say, but scientific facts are based on our limited observations and knowledge about the world, and truth is based on reality itself. Our understanding might change, but the truth never does. What's more important, God never changes. There is no variableness in Him — no "shadow of turning."<sup>[4]</sup> Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.<sup>[5]</sup>

What does that mean for us? It means that God is dependable. It means He doesn't stop being who He is. His love is everlasting, and so is His Word. His promises three thousand years ago still stand today. Our circumstances change. Our culture changes. The world changes, but God doesn't. In the 8th century B.C., Isaiah declared that God's Word lasts forever, and nearly 900 years later, the apostle Peter affirmed that truth:

*The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.*

— *Isaiah 40:8*

*For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*

— *1 Peter 1:24–25*

God accomplishes His purposes in His time — in "the fullness of time" — but He accomplishes them. When Jesus fulfilled a multitude of Old Testament prophecies, He was fulfilling promises that God had given 400–4000 years earlier. When we consider that 2000 years have passed since Christ's birth, remember that God gave a ram in Isaac's place on Mt. Moriah as a type of Christ nearly 2100

years before Jesus was born.[6] God exists outside of time. A thousand years are as a day in the eyes of God.[7]

The Bible is filled with end-times prophecies about Israel, yet 200 years ago there was no nation of Israel. Scholars habitually allegorized those prophecies, because Israel hadn't existed as a nation since the early years of the Roman Empire. Then in 1948, Israel declared its independence. Within a century, Jerusalem went from being a dingy backwash part of the Ottoman Empire to a cup of trembling for all the nations of the world. Suddenly, the ancient prophecies about end-times Israel came to life again.

Yet, the purposes in God's heart never changed. He never changed. Our limited perspectives got a step up in 1948, but the God of the universe, the King of eternity knew during all those intervening centuries exactly what He had in store for Israel and for the salvation of the whole world.

As we read the Bible, we need to remember that God doesn't change. His power, His love, His goodness and truth have everything to do with His unchanging character and very little to do with physical appearances. We live in a broken world doomed for ultimate destruction. We are faced daily with spiritual warfare that can hide its face behind the physical bodies that cry out in front of us. Yet, the Bible blazes the constant light of salvation to our dying world. We need to know it. We need to study it and understand it as our source of spiritual food.

During the middle of World War II, two Dutch sisters managed to smuggle a Bible into the Nazi's Ravensbruck concentration camp. Corrie ten Boom relates that time in her 1971 book *The Hiding Place*, saying:

*From morning until lights-out, whenever we were not in ranks for roll call, our Bible was the center of an ever-widening circle of help and hope. Like waifs clustered around a blazing fire, we gathered about it, holding out our hearts to its warmth and light. The blacker the night around us grew, the brighter and truer and more beautiful burned the word of God.*

When we grasp the truth of the Bible and then obey it, it always leads to more truth. Most people are spiritually starved, and they don't even know what the Bible says. They believe the propaganda campaign against it. They believe the lie that God is a violent, cruel, capricious being — or they believe the lie that He is a big soft, Santa Claus character in the clouds. A love for the Bible requires knowing the Bible — and knowing the Bible leads us to a fuller, truer and greater knowledge of God. Ultimately, knowing God leads to loving and adoring Him. When we discover how truly good and wise God is — when we discover His incredible strength and love — we can hardly help but grab hold of Him with all our hearts.

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*This excerpt is from Dr. Chuck Missler's book [How to Study the Bible](#), available from the [K-House Resource Center](#).*

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1. [2 Timothy 3:16](#) 
2. [Ephesians 6:17](#) 

3. Villa, P., Roebroeks, W. (2014) Neandertal Demise: An Archaeological Analysis of the Modern Human Superiority Complex. PLOS ONE 9(4): e96424 [↗](#)
4. [James 1:17](#) [↗](#)
5. [Hebrews 13:8](#) [↗](#)
6. Scholars offer many drawn-out dating schemes for the Old Testament. To find the date of Isaac's near-sacrifice, we can do simple Bible math. Adding king reigns from the destruction of the Temple in 586 B.C. to Solomon's reign puts Solomon's 4th year in 1015 B.C. Solomon's 4th year was 480 years after the Exodus ([1 Kings 6:1](#)). The Exodus took place 430 years after Jacob's family went down into Egypt ([Exodus 12:40–41](#)). Jacob moved to Egypt at age 130, living there 17 years until he died at 147 ([Genesis 47:28](#)). Isaac was sixty when Jacob and Esau were born ([Genesis 25:26](#)). According to Josephus in The Antiquities of the Jews (1.13.2), Isaac was almost-sacrificed by Abraham when he was 25 (35 years before the twins were born). This basic math places the Akedah, the near-sacrifice of Isaac, in 2090 B.C. [↗](#)
7. [Psalm 90:4](#); [2 Peter 3:8](#) [↗](#)

## Why Study The Bible

As a Christian, you must understand that the Bible, which is commonly called the Word Of God, is a gift from God. It was written by man under the direct inspiration from God.

2 Timothy 3:16 (NKJV) says; 16All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

We should study the Bible:

- a) Because it is profitable, from the Greek, helpful or serviceable, that is, advantageous, for us to do so.
- b) It teaches us about the God we serve and how to live a "righteous" life before Him.
- c) It guides and directs us through the important decisions of our lives.
- d) It helps us to get back on the right path after we mess up.
- e) It prepares us for the work of the ministry (to serve); specifically that which God has called us to do.

As you can see there are many reasons why we should study the Bible, however; the most important reason why we should study the Bible is because God commands us to:

Joshua 1:8 (NKJV) 8This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

2 Tim. 2:15 (KJV) 15Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

The word Study from the Greek means, to use speed, that is, to make effort, be prompt or earnest:—do (give) diligence, be diligent (forward), endeavour, labour.

It is God's desire that we get to know Him by spending time diligently studying the gift he left for us, the Bible, His word, that we may live a perfect and complete (accomplish, thoroughly furnish) life on this earth.

### Understanding The Bible

As previously stated, the Bible was written by men under the inspiration of God. It is God's written revelation of His will to men. Its central theme is salvation through Jesus Christ; and Jesus Christ can be seen in every book of the Bible. Here are some interesting facts about the Bible:

- The Bible contains 66 books: 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament.
- The Bible was written by 40 authors, covering a period of approximately 1600 years.
- The word Bible comes from the Greek word biblos which simply means Book.
- The word testament means "covenant," or agreement. The Old Testament is the covenant God made with man about his salvation before Christ came. The New Testament is the agreement God made with man about his salvation after Christ came.
- In the Old Testament we find the covenant of the law. In the New Testament we find the covenant of grace through Jesus Christ.
- The Old Testament is associated with Moses – The New Testament with Christ.
- The Old Testament begins with God, Genesis 1:1 (NKJV): 1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

The New Testament begins with Christ. Matthew 1: (NKJV): 1 The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:

- From Adam to Abraham we have the history of the human race.
- From Abraham to Christ we have the history of the chosen race.
- From Christ to present we have the history of the church.
- The Old Testament was written mostly in Hebrew.
- The New Testament was written mostly in Greek.
- Number of verses – 31, 102
- Number of words – 775, 693
- Longest chapter – Psalms 119
- Shortest chapter – Psalms 117
- Longest verse – Esther 8:9
- Shortest verse – John 11:35
- Longest Book of the Old Testament – Psalms
- Longest Book in the New Testament - Luke

## Let's Talk About Bibles

At the heart of any effective Bible study is a good study Bible. Study Bibles are Bibles which have study notes either in the margin (or elsewhere), or inserted into the text. Many study Bibles are available in several popular versions. The following is a list of good study Bibles that are readily available:

- The Open Bible

Available in King James, New King James, and New American Standard Versions, The Open Bible has alternate renderings and cross references at the end of selected verses. It also offers good footnotes that correspond to and outline at the beginning of the Bible, which is suitable for new believers and basic foundations.

- Thompson Chain Reference

Available in King James and New International Versions, the Thompson Chain Reference Bible has extensive chain references found in the margin, which are keyed to a listing in the back. The Bible has more helps than any other Bible.

- Ryrie Study Bible

This Bible is available in King James, New King James, New American Standard Versions, and New International Versions. It contains many good footnotes, but leans heavily toward the Baptist doctrine.

- NIV Study Bible

Available in the New International Version only, the New International Version Study Bible has extensive notes. It is a good study Bible.

- Scofield Reference Bible

Scofield's Bible is available in King James Version only. It has a good chain reference, as well as extensive footnotes.

- The New Scofield Reference Bible

The New Scofield Reference Bible is available in King James, New King James, New American Standard Versions, and New International Versions of the Bible. It has the best system for chain reference, better than the earlier Scofield and even better than the Thompson's chain reference, although it does not have as many listings. It has extensive footnotes (notes vary from earlier edition), and alternate renderings to update the King James (King James Version only).

- Dake's Annotated Reference Bible

Available in King James Version only, this Bible has very extensive notes with some very good notes on healing.

As you choose your study Bible, you want to pay close attention to the type of Bible translation. Bible translations can be quite helpful to your Bible study in that they can simplify difficult passages in the Bible and make them easier to understand. When choosing a Bible translation, keep in mind that there are several types of translations, each with a different purpose. The following is a list of the different type of Bible translations available:

### 1) Ultra Literal Translations

These are translations that attempt to provide an English word for every Greek or Hebrew word in the original text, in other words, a word for word translation of the original text. These are usually very difficult to read but can be very helpful for finding exact word meanings. An example of this translation is the exeGeses Bible.

### 2) Literal Translations

These translations provide, in a readable format, the English word or phrase equivalent for each word or phrase used in the original text. Examples of these translations are:

- King James Version (KJV)
- New King James Version (NKJV)
- American Standard Version (ASB)
- Revised Standard Version (RSV)

### 3) Modern Literal Translations

These translations substitute modern words for archaic words, bringing the Bible into a modern language while yet still retaining the literal form. Examples of these translations are:

- New American Standard Version (NASB)
- New International Version (NIV)

### 4) Modern English Translations

These translations present a rendering of the text in present-day English and contemporary style. Examples of these translations are:

- New Jerusalem Bible (NJB)
- New English Bible (NEB)

### 5) Paraphrases

Paraphrases are expanded translations, attempting to provide the meaning of the original, not word for word but rather thought for thought, bringing out the rich shades of meaning in the original words. Examples of these translations are:

- The Living Bible (TLB)
- The Message Bible (TMB)

## Methods of Bible Study

As you prepare to study your Bible, realize that there is no “right” way to do it. You should prepare your heart and determine what your overall objective is going to be for the study session. Once this is completed, you can use one of the following methods to help you achieve your objectives:

## THE DEVOTIONAL METHOD

This method alone can be used to study the Bible. The term “method” may be misleading here since it isn’t a mechanical method like the others. Rather it is one by which you actually feed your spirit man. This method feeds your spirit so you need to earnestly seek the mind of God for some direction.

- 1) Begin with prayer. This will help you to center your thoughts upon things of the Lord.
- 2) Read slowly and take brief notes.
- 3) Look for the true meaning of the passage your are reading:
  - a. What is the main subject?
  - b. Who are the persons revealed in the passage? Who is speaking? About whom are they speaking? Who is acting?
  - c. What is the key verse?
  - d. What does this passage teach about Jesus?
  - e. Does this passage portray any sin for me to confess or forsake?
  - f. Does this passage contain any commands for me to obey?
  - g. Is their any promise for me to claim?
  - h. Is there any instruction for me to follow?
- 4) Keep a spiritual diary.
- 5) Memorize passages of the Word of God.
- 6) Obey the Word of God.

## THE SYNTHETIC METHOD

The synthetic method of Bible study allows you to get the overall picture of a book or subject. The word “synthetic” here is taken from the Greek. It takes the preposition syn, which means “together,” and the verbal root the, which means, “to put,” so that we come up with the meaning a putting, or placing together. This method is designed to give us a bird’s eye view of the Bible. To use the synthetic method approach to studying, start by reading a chapter or verse through several times. Look for the main theme or the book or passage first.

For example:

- The book of Colossians speaks of Christ and the Church
- The book of Ephesians speaks of the believer and the Church
- The book of Galatians speaks of the believers’ freedom found in Christ

The synthetic method pays no attention to details, but looks at the book or passage as a whole. When using the synthetic method to study the Bible, 1) look for distinct themes that run through the book or passage. 2) Watch how these themes develop. 3) Is there any one verse or passage that states this theme clearly than any other?

## THE BIOGRAPHICAL METHOD

The biographical method of Bible study is simply studying the history of a person who is mentioned in the Bible. It should include all events recorded in the person's life. It should also include any text that may give us some clue as to who the person was. Be careful however not to confuse individuals with the same name. A good example of this can be seen using the name of Noah. There are two different people in the Bible with this name. The first one we are all aware of was the man called by God to repopulate the earth after the flood. The second one; however, is quite a different person and not even a man but in this case it's a woman so be careful when using this method to study the Bible.

### THE ANALYTICAL METHOD

The analytical method of Bible study consists of pulling apart sections of Scripture, words or phrases, then analyzing them in detail. This method involves the use of study tools such as:

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, Bible dictionaries and other study aids. This method generally involves the study of words and sometimes phrases, commonly called doing a word study, in whole or in part. It may also involve noting the occurrences of words, and often deals with the word meanings.

### THE TOPICAL METHOD

The topical method of Bible study consists of selecting a subject or "topic" from the Bible. The topic may consist of a theme or concept; it may be a word or a phrase. For example, you may select a topic of healing as a theme and do a word search on heal or healing. A topical Bible, like the Nave's Topical Bible, is an excellent study tool for this method of Bible study.

### THE PRACTICAL METHOD

The practical method of Bible study involves looking at the way the book or passage applies to you in a "practical" way. You should try to answer some of the following questions:

- a) How does this verse or passage affect my daily life?
- b) How can I apply it for everyday living?
- c) How does it apply to my Christian walk?

Entire books or short passages may be studied in this way. Some good examples for this type of study include the book of Proverbs, Psalms, the book of James, and the Sermon on the Mount. This method lends toward personal application.

While there are many other good methods for Bible study, these six methods will help guide you and allow you to meet your overall Bible study objectives. Certain subjects tend to lend themselves more readily to one method over another. Let the above

information help you determine which approach will be suitable to meet your specific Bible Study needs.

## BIBLE STUDY APPROACHES:

1. By the Book. Read the book at least a dozen times, then answer the following basic questions:

- a. Who is the author?
- b. What were the circumstances of the author when writing?
- c. To whom was the book written?
- d. Where was the book written?
- e. When was the book written?
- f. Why was the book written?
- g. What were the major problems being addressed?
- h. What solutions were given?
- i. What was the central meaning in that day?
- j. What is the central meaning today?

2. By the Chapter - How to analyze a Chapter. Read the chapter through at least ten times. Then ask the following questions:

- a. Who is the main subject?
- b. Who are the main people?
- c. What does it say about Christ?
- d. What is the key or main verse?
- e. What is the central lesson?
- f. What are the main promises?
- g. What are the main commands?
- h. What error should I avoid?
- i. What example is here?
- j. What do I need most in this chapter to apply to my life today?

3. By the Verse. There are many ways you can study a single Bible verse:

- a. Study it by the verbs in the verse.
- b. Study the verse through the personalities revealed.
- c. Study a verse by looking for the great ideas revealed in it.
- d. Sometimes a combination of these various ideas applied to a verse will bring

the correct results.

Approaches to Bible Study.

Rules of Interpretation

II Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJ) states, all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Because the Bible is God's Word, it has eternal relevance; it speaks to all mankind, in every age and in every culture. Since God chose to speak his Word through human words in history, every book in the Bible also has historical particularity. Each document is conditioned by the language, time and culture in which it was originally written (and in some cases also by the oral history it had before it was written down). There is a tension that exists between its eternal relevance and its historical particularity. As you begin to study to show yourself approved unto God, always seek the Holy Spirit for guidance and understanding. Biblical hermeneutics is a scientific method of interpreting God's Word.

The hermeneutical method will help to ensure that you accurately understand the message God intended to communicate.

The following rules are widely accepted and should be used as general guidelines when attempting to better understand or interpret a scripture passage.

1. Always observe the context.
2. Learn to allow the Bible to interpret itself.
3. Do not over spiritualize everything.
4. Assert an unassuming attitude.
5. Study parallel passages.

Also, Observation, Investigation, Correlation and Application will aid in your pursuit of understanding the Word of God.

- Observation, what do I see?
- Investigation, Who, What, When, Where, Why and So What?
- Correlation, how does the information fit together?
- Application, how can I apply to my life?

### Questions to Ask

Questions always open a passage for greater depth of understanding. The following are some basic questions every student of the Word should consider.

#### Why

- ...Was the book written?
- ...Should anyone listen to this passage?
- ...Are the people saying these things?

#### When

- ...Does the episode take place?
- ...Was the book written?

#### Who

- ...Wrote the book?
- ...Are the characters involved?

...Is doing the talking?

What

...Are the political, social and cultural circumstances?

...Does the language structure (verbs, tenses, etc.) tell you?

...Did it mean to you?

Where

...Does the episode take place?

...In scripture is the same idea stated and/or illustrated?

...Does this passage fit with the total theme of the book?

So What

...What areas of my life does this speak to?

...What areas of the audience's life does this speak to?

...What experience of God in my life best expresses and explains what this passage is teaching?

...Which experience is appropriate to publicly share?

Helpful Definitions

General Hermeneutics – the art and science of interpretation. It is a science because it can reduce interpretation, within limits, to a set of rules. It is an art in that the application of the rules remains complex, requiring a skilled interpreter.

Biblical Hermeneutics – the science of interpreting the communication of God to man. This divine communication has come to man in the form of sacred literature, the Holy Bible.

Exegesis – the careful, systematic study of the scripture to discover the original, intended meaning. It is the attempt to hear the Word, as the original recipients were to have heard it, to find out what was the original intent of the scriptures.

Historical Context – has to do with several things such as time and culture of the author and its readers, that is, the geographical, topographical, and political factors that are relevant to the author's setting; and the occasion and purpose of the book, letter, psalms, prophetic oracle, or other genre.

Literary Context – essentially, words only have meaning in sentences, and for the most part biblical sentences only have meaning in relation to preceding and succeeding sentences.

Content– has to do with the meanings of words, the grammatical relationships in sentences, and the choice of the original text where the manuscripts have variant readings.

The key to good exegesis, and therefore to a more intelligent reading and understanding of the Bible, is to learn to read the text carefully and to ask the

right questions. Remember the goal in exegesis is to find out what the original author intended.

## Study Tools

Bible study tools are used as aids to help you obtain a better understanding of the Word of God. Being able to rightly divide the Word of truth is essential for an effective Bible study. While the following list of study tools is by no means exhaustive, they have been chosen because they are relatively easy to obtain, to use, and understand. You may wish to refer back to this section when deciding which study tools you want to add to your library.

### A. Good Study Bible (see Let's Talk About Bibles section)

### B. Concordance

A Bible concordance lists all or many of the words of the Bible in alphabetical order and indicates the chapter and verse where they occur. Some words will have many listings, while others will have only a few. Some concordances are exhaustive listing every word in the Bible, while others are not.

1. Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible
2. Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible

### C. Bible Handbook

A Bible handbook is, in essence, a concise Bible commentary, a Bible dictionary, and a Bible atlas in a single volume. Bible handbooks give quick and easy information, which makes them very useful for personal devotions.

1. The New Unger's Bible Handbook
2. Hayford's Bible Handbook
3. Wycliffe's Bible Handbook
4. Halley's Bible Handbook
5. What the Bible is All About, Henrietta C. Mears

### D. Bible Dictionary

A Bible dictionary defines and clarifies unfamiliar names, places and objects, and is an indispensable tool for the Bible student. It contains a thorough listing of all Bible subjects and was compiled or authored by someone specifically trained in the Bible and its customs, places and teachings.

1. The New Unger's Bible Dictionary
2. The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary
3. Vine's Bible Dictionary
4. Holman's Bible Dictionary

### E. Topical Bible

Scripture verses are analyzed and grouped under related subjects by topics.

## Nave's Topical Bible

### F. Word Study Aids

Word study aids are reference tools used to find the meaning of a word or phrase. They are generally available in either New Testament only or Old Testament only.

1. Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words: Vine's sometimes shows the precise historical meaning of a word, and other times show the spiritual significance of a word. It is good for bringing out subtle nuances that a word can have.
2. The Complete Word Study of the New Testament
3. The New Treasure of Scripture Knowledge

### G. Bible Commentary

A Bible commentary is a reference book devoted to the explanation, illustration, and sometimes the homiletic (art of preaching) expansion of the text of some portion of Scripture. They can be one volume or many volumes. They may contain the original Greek or Hebrew text, or English text.

1. Matthew Henry's Commentary In One Volume
2. The Bible Knowledge Commentary Old & New Testament (separate volumes), Walvoord & Zuck
3. The Teacher's Commentary, Lawrence O. Richards

### H. Theology Books

Theology books are designed to aid the Bible student understand sound Biblical doctrine. Doctrine, meaning teaching, received, believed and practiced determines a person's character, behavior and destiny. Therefore, Theology books are valuable in solidifying Biblical foundational beliefs.

1. The Foundations of Christian Doctrine, Kevin J. Conner
2. The Willmington's Guide to the Bible

### I. Miscellaneous

1. The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times, Ralph Gower
2. How to Study the Bible For Yourself, Tim LaHaye
3. How to Study the Word, Terry Lawson
4. How to Apply the Bible, Dave Veerman