

There is utterly no way I can take credit for all the material I will teach tonight. I went to several resources of pastors and theologians that I trust, admire, and respect; I have used much of their material. I am grateful for the work they have already done on reading and studying God's word that afforded me to prepare this material in a more efficient, structured, deep, teachable, and excellent manner.

Capitol Hill Core Seminars: *How to Study the Bible* (Dr. Mark Dever, Pastor)

Secret Church: *How to Study the Bible* Seminar by Dr. David Platt

Living By the Book by Howard G. & William D. Hendricks

How to Study the Bible by John MacArthur

On the Old Testament by Mark Driscoll

On the New Testament by Mark Driscoll

How to Study the Bible for Yourself by Tim Lahaye

And other various resources...

Session 1: THE BIBLE

The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the LORD are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is your servant warned in keeping them there is great reward. (Psalm 19:7-11)

- Perfect
- Relevant
- Good
- Clear
- Eternal
- True

"This book will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from this book. Dusty Bibles lead to dirty lives." –Howard Hendricks.

Reasons for why we don't read/study the Bible?

1. It doesn't really apply to my life.
2. I don't know how to read/study the Bible
3. I don't have time.
4. I'm not a pastor. I'm just a regular person.
5. I'm not convinced the Bible is all true.
6. The Bible puts me to sleep.

Who can study the Bible?

Anyone can study the Bible, but only those who have the Holy Spirit can understand the Bible

- We need the Spirit of God to understand the Scriptures of God

Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Corinthians 2:12-14)

Why must study the Bible?

1. It's the source of Truth.

a. *"The truth is there. The truth about God/man/life/death/you and me/men, women, children, husbands, wives/dads, mothers/friends and enemies/how you ought to be at work & home/how you ought to eat and drink/ how you ought to think. What a resource. Cherish it." John MacArthur*

b. ***Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. (John 17:17)***

c. ***"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31b-32)***

i. *Like the man who works on a math problem and finds the answer—he's free. Just like the scientist in the lab pouring the different solutions into test tubes, he stays with it until he says, "At last! I found it!"—the he's free. Humanity will search and struggle and grapple and grope for the truth until it finds it—then people are genuinely free. – John MacArthur*

2. It's the source of happiness

- Many know their Bible but don't obey it, forfeiting their happiness.
- It's about heart attitude, not legalism.

The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart... (Ps 19:8a)

But he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" (Luke 11:28)

And we are writing these things so that our joy may be complete. (1 John 1:4)

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near. (Rev 1:3)

These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

(John 15:11)

3. It's the source of victory

I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. (Ps 119:11)

- a. Victory over Satan (**Matt 4:1-11**)
- b. Victory over demons (**Luke 4:33-36**)
- c. Victory over temptation

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (Ephesians 6:17)

4. It's essential for spiritual growth

Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation (1 Peter 2:2)

- a. We want it
- b. We need it
- c. We can't grow without it

5. It's essential for spiritual maturity (Hebrews 5:11-14)

- a. Time
- b. Training
- c. Application
- d. Obedience

6. It's essential for spiritual effectiveness

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. (2 Tim 3:16-17)

- a. All Scripture
- b. Doctrine /Teaching
- c. Rebuke
- d. Correction
- e. Training

"If you didn't know any more about your business or profession than you know about Christianity after the same number of years, what would happen?" Howard Hendricks

How do I read the Bible?

1. Prayerfully

- a. Divine interaction with the Holy Spirit

2. Humbly

- a. Come on His terms
- b. Come in surrender
- c. Submit under His authority to speak into my life , sin , and mess

3. Carefully

- a. Context , Context , Context
- 4. Joyfully
I will run in the way or your commandments when you enlarge my heart. (Psalm 119:32)
- 5. Simply
- 6. Confidently
- 7. Consistently
 - a. Don't dodge the hard or confusing texts.
- 8. Diligently
- 9. intentionally
 - a. Bible
 - b. Pen
 - c. Journal/Notebook
- 10. Personally
 - a. Fall in love with the Author – God the Holy Spirit

Session 2: What is the BIBLE?

*Many people want **A** word from God, but don't want **THE** Word of God. But the Bible is **THE** Word of God handed down to us. You own a Bible, but does the Bible own you?*

- **The Bible is a unit**
 - 66 Books
 - Written over a period of 1400 years
 - 40 Authors
- **The Bible is a divine book**
 - A revelation about God and us
 - God is the direct and ultimate author of Scripture
 - *"The Bible is the Word of God in such a way that when the Bible speaks, God speaks." – B.B. Warfield*
 - What God wants communicated
All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness (2 Tim 3:16)

He answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"? (Matt 19: 4-5)

"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me,

for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.” (John 16:12-14)

○ Five Implications of Divine Inspiration

- The Bible is alive

For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (Heb 4:12)

- The Bible is true

The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever. (Psalm 119:160)

- The Bible is without error

The words of the LORD are pure words, like silver refined in a furnace on the ground, purified seven times. (Psalm 12:6)

- The Bible can only be understood through the Holy Spirit

The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor 2:14)

- The Bible is authoritative

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” (John 10:27)

● The Bible is a human book

- The Bible was written by particular people, at a particular time, in a particular place, for a particular reason.

“The Words of the Preacher, Son of David, king of Jerusalem...” (Ecc 1:1)

“When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments” (2 Tim 4:13)

- Verbal - Plenary Inspiration

- ***“God superintended the human authors so that, using their own individual personalities, they composed and recorded, without error, His revelation to man in the words of the original manuscripts.” -Charles Ryrie***

- Dual authorship

- ***For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along (moved) by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:21)***

- ***...who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit... (Acts 4:25a)***

- *Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the LORD said to me, "Behold, I have put my words in your mouth." (Jeremiah 1:9)*
- **The Bible is inerrant**
 - Without error
 - Jesus testifies to the Bible's inerrancy
Matt 4:-11, Matt 5:17-18
 - Texts questioned by "authorities" that Jesus deemed accurate, reliable and true
 - *And Jesus said to him, "See that you say nothing to anyone, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a proof to them." (Matt 8:4)*
 - *Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the day of judgment for the lad of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town (Matt 10:15)*
 - *This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah...(Matt 12:17)*
 - *For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (Matt 12:40)*
 - *Matt 19:3-5, Matt 24:38-39*
- **The Bible is authentic**
 - Science
 - *"Sun stood still"*
 - Rainfall
 - *For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth the sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater... (Isaiah 55:10)*
 - Fixed orbits of heavenly bodies
 - *Jeremiah 31:35-36*
 - Balance (Isostasy)
 - *Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand and marked off the heavens with a span, enclosed the dust of the earth in a measure and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance? (Isa 40:12)*

- **Herbert Spencer 1820-1903**
 - Time- *In the beginning*
 - Force- *God*
 - Action - *Created*
 - Space- *the heavens*
 - Matter- *and earth*
- Explanations (contradictions)
 - Read the full context
 - Go back to original languages
 - Scribal error
 - **Examples:**
 - **WHO WAS SEEN AT THE TOMB?**
 - (NIV) **Contradiction 1:** *An angel of the Lord came down from heaven to the tomb... Matthew 28:2*
 - (NIV) **Contradiction 2:** *As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe... Mark 16:5*
 - (NIV) **Contradiction 3:** *Suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. Luke 24:4*
 - (NIV) **Contradiction 4:** *Two angels in white, seated where Jesus' body had been... John 20:12*
 - **Conflicting Creation Accounts**
 - Genesis 1 – Chronological Order
 - Genesis 2 – Topical Order
 - **Who Killed King Saul?**
 - *Saul said to his armor-bearer, Draw your sword and run me through, or these uncircumcised fellows will come and run me through and abuse me. But his armor-bearer was terrified and would not do it. So Saul took his own sword and fell on it...(1 Samuel 31:4)*
 - *[Saul] then said to me, "Stand over me and kill me! I am in the throes of death but still alive.' So I stood over him and killed him...(2 Samuel 1:9-10)*
 - **What about 2 Samuel 21:12?**
 - *Saul slain/struck down by Philistines?*

- *Slay = harag (v) and chalal (n)*
- *Nakah = to conquer, destroy, defeat*

- Prophecy

- **The Bible is Complete**

- *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. (2 Tim 3:16-17)*
- *...if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.*

(Rev 22:18b-19)

- **The Bible is Sufficient**

- **For SALVATION**

- *...and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

(2 Tim 3:15)

- **For PERFECTION**

- *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. (2 Tim 3:16, 17)*

- **For HOPE**

- *For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. (Rom 15:4)*

- **For BLESSING**

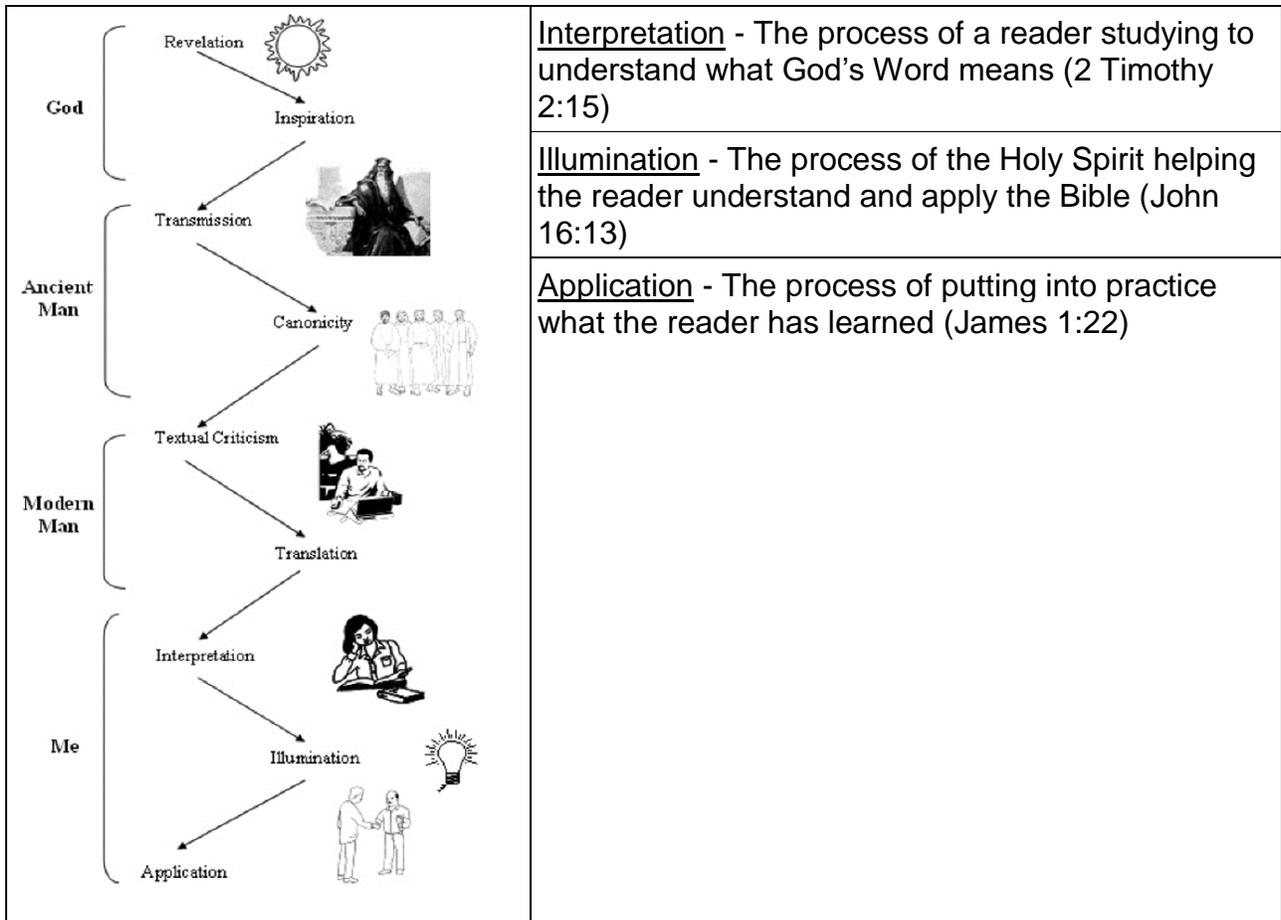
- *Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing (James 1:21,25)*

- **The Bible is the Grand-Story-Teller**

Session 3: How was the Bible put together?

- Written over a period of 1600 years
- 40 Authors, including:
 - Moses - An Egyptian-trained scholar
 - Joshua – A general
 - David & Solomon – Kings
 - Amos – A farmer
 - Peter –A fisherman
 - Matthew – A tax- collector
 - Paul – A Rabbi
- 3 Languages
 - **Old Testament**
 - Hebrew
 - Aramaic (Ezra & Daniel)
 - **New Testament**
 - Greek

| | |
|--|--|
| | <u>Revelation</u> - God communicating to man what He wants us to know (Hebrews 1:1) |
| | <u>Inspiration</u> - God superintending human writers to compose and record His revelation to mankind (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21) |
| | <u>Transmission</u> - The ancient process of accurately copying Hebrew and Greek scriptures for successive generations |
| | <u>Canonicity</u> - God guiding the early church to recognize what books are inspired |
| | <u>Textual Criticism</u> -The modern process of comparing existing Hebrew and Greek manuscripts to determine what is original |
| | <u>Translation</u> - The process of translating the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek into a modern language |



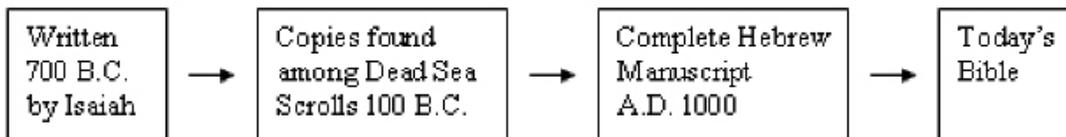
- **Writing Materials**

- Stone (Exodus 24:12, Deuteronomy 5:2, Joshua 8:31,32)
- Papyrus (2 John 12, Revelation 5:1)
 - Two layers of split papyrus reeds pressed and glued together
- Animal Skins (2 Timothy 4:13)
 - Vellum – Calf or Antelope
 - Parchment – Sheep or Goat
 - Leather – Cow or Bull
- Writing tools
 - Stylus
 - Chisel
 - Pen and Ink

- **Copying Process**

- OT era only the first 5 books—The Law—were kept in the temple
- Copies of the Law were lost, then found during reign of King Josiah (2 Kings 22:8 – 23:3)
- Books added
 - History
 - Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther

- Poetry
 - Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon
 - Prophets
 - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi
- The Masoretes (A.D. 500-1000)
 - Used meticulous system of transcription
 - Deep reverence for the text
 - Specific rules regarding ink, the quality and size of parchment sheets
 - Could not write God's name with newly dipped pen
 - Counted all paragraphs, words and letters to ensure perfection
- **Existing OT manuscripts**
 - Masoretes
 - 4 - 5 significant manuscripts
 - Copies made around A.D. 900 and A.D. 1000
 - **The Septuagint Evidence**
 - Hebrew OT translated into Greek in the 2nd or 3rd century B.C.
 - 300 copies in existence
 - Common Hebrew Bible
 - Quoted by Jesus and the apostles
 - **The Dead Sea Scrolls**
 - Discovered in caves in 1947
 - Date back to 100 B.C.
 - Agreement between scrolls and Hebrew texts dated 1,100 years later



- **The copying process of the NT**
 - Originally written in Greek
 - Uncial – All capital letters, no punctuation or separation between words
 - Small letters, punctuation, word and paragraph division used between 7th and 8th centuries
- **Reliability of Greek manuscripts**
 - More reliable than OT texts
 - Written between A.D. 45 – A.D. 90
 - 35-100 years after originals were written
 - 4,000 – 5,000 NT Greek manuscripts (partial or complete) exist
- **NT manuscript evidence compared to other Greek literature**

| Manuscript | Date of Oldest Manuscript Existing | Copies |
|------------|------------------------------------|--------|
|------------|------------------------------------|--------|

| | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Plato | 1,200 years later | <u>7</u> |
| Caesar | <u>900</u> years later | <u>10</u> |
| Herodotus | <u>1,300</u> years later | <u>8</u> |
| Aristotle | <u>1,400</u> years later | <u>5</u> |
| New Testament | Only <u>35-100</u> years later | <u>4,000-5,000</u> |
| | | |

- **Differences in English translations**
 - Omitted phrases or verses
 - John 5:3-4, 7:53-8:11; Mark 16:9-20
- **Two theories**
 - Critical Text – believes oldest manuscripts are the most accurate
 - NIV, NASV, RSV, etc.
 - Majority Text – believes the manuscripts that survived in the greatest number are the most accurate
 - King James
 - New King James
- **Canonicity**
 - Who decided which books were inspired by God?
 - The Apocrypha
 - Canon – Measuring Rod
- **Summary**
 - 66 Books were properly recognized by the early church as the complete authoritative Scriptures, not to be added to or subtracted from.
- **Tests of Canonicity**
 - Is it authoritative (“Thus saith the Lord”)?
 - Is it prophetic (“a man of God”)?
 - ***...knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. (2 Peter 1:20)***
 - Under the authority of a spiritual leader of Israel
 - OT prophet, king, judge, scribe
 - NT apostle of the church based on testimony of an original apostle
 - Is it authentic?
 - Is it dynamic?
 - ***For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12)***
 - Is it received (accepted by believers)?

- ***And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers. (1 Thessalonians 2:13)***
- **The History of Canonization**
 - **Old Testament Canon**
 - Christ refers to OT books as Scripture
Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures: “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; this was the Lord’s doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes’? (Matthew 21:42)
 - The Council of Jamnia (A.D. 90) officially recognized our 39 OT books
 - Josephus, Jewish historian (A.D. 95) indicated 39 books of OT recognized as authoritative.
 - **New Testament Canon**
 - Accepted based upon eyewitness testimony to life, death and resurrection of Jesus
 - Apostles claimed authority for their writings
 - ***Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. (Colossians 3:16)***
 - ***I put you under oath before the Lord to have this letter read to all the brothers. (1 Thessalonians 5:27)***
 - ***If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed. (2 Thessalonians 3:14)***
 - The Apostles’ writings were equated with OT Scriptures
 - ***This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder, that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles...And count patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as the do the other Scriptures. (2 Peter 3:1,2,15,16)***
 - Books received by God’s people and showed God’s power to change lives.
 - The Council of Athanasius (A.D. 367) and the Council of Carthage (A.D. 397) recognized the 27 books in our NT as inspired
- **The Disputed but non-canonical books**
 - The Apocrypha is not scripture

- 15 books written in the 400 years between Malachi and Matthew
- Record some history and other religious stories and teachings
- The Catholic Bible (Douay Version) regards them as scripture
 - Officially recognized by the Catholic Church in A.D 1546. Twenty-nine years after Martin Luther criticized them as unbiblical
- OT quoted 300 times in NT, never quoted or alluded to in the Apocrypha
- Reasons Apocrypha is rejected as inspired:
 - The Jews never accepted the Apocrypha as Scripture
 - The Apocrypha never claims to be inspired
 - The Apocrypha is never quoted as authoritative in Scripture
 - Hebrews 11:35-38 alludes to historical events recorded in 2 Maccabees 6:18-7:42
 - Jesus implied that the close of the NT historical Scripture was the death of Zechariah (400 B.C). Any books after Malachi and before the NT are excluded.

So that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the alter. (Matthew 23:35)

Session 4: HOW SHOULD I APPROACH THE BIBLE?

- Read Daily
- Read Regularly
 - Regular Time
 - Regular Place
- Read Prayerfully
 - The Holy Spirit
 - Pray Scripture
- Read Broadly
 - A diet of OT, NT, Proverbs and Psalms
For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of God. (Acts 20:27)
- Read Thoughtfully
 - Probe!
- Read Expectantly
 - Attitude
 - Patience
- Read Devotionally
 - A command to keep? (***Col 3:1, 2,5,8,12-13***)
Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say Rejoice. (Phil 4:4)

- A promise to treasure? (**Matt 6:25-27, 31-33**)
I can do all things through him who strengthens me.(Phil 4:13)
- A Timeless principle?
Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. (Gal 6:7)
Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you. (1 Peter 5:6)
- Read Meditatively
This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful 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. (Joshua 1:8)

Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day. (Psalm 119:97)

The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer. (Psalm 19: 7-8, 14)

- “Chew the cud”
- Pen and notebook

“This book will keep you from sin, or sin will keep you from this book. Dusty Bibles lead to dirty lives.” –Howard Hendricks.

Translations

What is needed?

7. Divine Author
8. Human author
9. Original Text
10. Copies of Original Text
11. Critical Text
12. Translator/Translation Team
13. The Reader
 - a. Word for word Translation – NASB, ESV
 - b. Paraphrase Translation – The Message Bible, The Living Bible

Dangerous Approaches to Bible Reading/Study

“What does the Bible say, and what does it mean by what it says?”

- The Self -Centered Approach
 - “What works for me?”
- The Spiritual Approach

- “What’s the deep, hidden meaning no one has discovered yet?”
- The Emotional Approach
 - “What FEELS right to me?”
- The Superficial Approach
 - “What does the verse mean TO ME?”

The Dependable Approach to Studying the Bible

- **Inductive vs. Deductive**
 - Inductive – Begins with observations from the text to form a conclusion.
 - Deductive – Begins with personal assumptions imposed on the text to get a conclusion

And I tell you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.
(Luke 11:9-10)
- **Hermeneutics** – Scientific method

The BASIC RULES OF HERMENEUTICS

1. Context, Context, Context

2. Interpret literally

*i. “When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense, but take every word at its primary literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context clearly indicate otherwise.” – David L. Cooper
 (The Golden Rule of Interpretation)*

3. Look out for Idioms

4. Take note of figures of speech

- a. Metaphors – Comparing two things, one that is easily understood with another not as easily understood, to reveal a truth
- b. Simile – Comparison of two things usually linked with “like”, or “so”, or “as”
- c. Analogy – Comparing two things where one explains the other
- d. Hyperbole – Exaggeration to grab attention
- e. Anthropomorphisms – Ascribing human characteristic to God
- f. Irony

5. Handle parables specially

Earthly pictures of heavenly realities

Session 5: HOW SHOULD I STUDY THE BIBLE?

TWO KEY QUESTIONS FOR EVERY TEXT

- 1) Why did the author write this? (Purpose)
- 2) How does this passage fit into the whole? (Context)

The Author's Purpose

- *Specific Intentions*
- *Specific Message*

Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in the book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:30-31)

Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write and orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught. (Luke 1:1-4)

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of god that you

may know that you have eternal life. (1 John 5:13)

- Examine the text for clues
 - Who is writing TO whom?
 - What is the situation?
 - Are there problems or issues identified?
 - Are there repeated themes _ or a single idea throughout the book?

Context

- Read the Bible
 - Like a Love Letter
 - Like a Novel

Taking the Journey

- Explore the culture of the text through
 - Observation
 - Put yourself in the passage
 - What do you see?
 - What do you feel?
 - What sticks out to you?
 - Interpretation (Understand their home)
 - Context
 - What did it mean for the culture at that time?
 - Implication (Bring it back to your home)
 - How does it travel to you?
 - What's the Connection?
 - Application (Apply it to your home)
 - How does the text apply to you?
 - What will you do with it?
 - No longer about Content, or Connection
 - It's about Conduct

Session 6: HOW TO STUDY YOUR BIBLE (Con't)

The key to reading your Bible is to: Look and Listen.

I OBSERVATION

- Curiosity
- Bombard the Bible with questions
 - Who wrote this?
 - Who originally read this?
 - What is happening?
 - What's wrong with this picture?
 - What's the author saying
 - Where is the author when he's writing this
 - Where are the original readers
 - When was it written?
 - When did the events actually happen?
 - Why is the author writing this?
 - Why did the author say it THAT way?
 - Why did it happen that way?
 - Why is this in the Bible?
- Read the text over and over
 - Don't start in the middle
 - Get the whole picture

- Be Patient
 - Don't jump to application
 - Look curiously
 - Listen patiently
 - Enjoy the ride
- Imagine
 - See the sights
 - Smell the smells
 - Feel the emotions
- Reflect
 - Ponder what the Lord is revealing
- Be Purposeful
 - Not a "To Do" list item
 - Read and study to be Transformed
 - Approach the Bible this way EVERYTIME
- What is being emphasized?
 - Space
 - Genesis
 - The 4 Gospels
 - Ephesians
 - Romans
 - Stated Purpose
 - Order
 - Genesis

The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it. Genesis 2:15
 - Movement from lesser to greater
 - 2 Samuel 1-11 to 2 Samuel 12
 - Acts 2
 - Action of the verbs
 - Past, present or future

In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will. Ephesians 1:11
 - Imperative (Command)

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19
 - Active
 - What someone is doing
 - Passive
 - What is being done to someone
- What is repeated?
 - Words/Phrases

- Characters
(*Acts 4:36, 9:27, 11:22; Mark 15:36-39; Luke 21:25*)
- Incidents or Circumstances
- Patterns/Parallels
- NT use of OT passages *Luke 4:18-19/ Is 61:1-2*
- What is **related**?
 - Move from general information to specific direction
Matt 6:1 –General/ Matt 6:2-4 –Giving; Matt 5-15 –Praying / Matt 16-18 – Fasting
 - Cause and effect *Acts 8:1/ Acts 8:4.*
- What things are **alike** and **unlike**?
 - Alike = THEREFORE *Romans 12:1/ Hebrews 12:1/ Romans 5:1-2*
 - Unlike = BUT *Galatians 5:19, 22/ Ephesians 2:4*
 - Connections *Galatians 2:20*
 - And
 - For
 - Since
 - Because
 - By
 - With
 - From
 - In
 - On
 - Upon
 - Through
 - To
- What is **True to Life**?
- What is the **Mood** and **Tone**?
 - Author's demeanor *Philippians 4:4.*
 - Author's tone *Lamentations 3:1-6*

II INTERPRETATION

Further Considerations:

- Pride
- Agendas
- Familiarity
- Influences

But I say to you, do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. Give to the one who begs from you, and do not refuse the one who would borrow from you. Matthew 5:39-40, 42

- Languages
- Customs

III IMPLICATION

- Goal: IDENTIFY TIMELESS TRUTH (S)
 - Guidelines for Timeless Truths
 - Biblical
 - Compatible
But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. Acts 1:8

And the daughter of Zion is left like a booth in a vineyard, like a lodge in a cucumber field, like a besieged city. Isaiah 1:8
 - Eternal
 - Cross-cultural
 - Applicable

IV APPLICATION

- The Difference between Interpretation and Application
 - Interpretation = **Meaning**
 - Application = **Action**
- 3 steps to **responsible** Biblical application
 - Meditate on the Timeless Truths
 - Relate the Timeless Truths to today
Philippians 4:13/ Philippians 4:10-13
 - Practice the Timeless Truth (2 Timothy 3:14-4:2)
 - Who should I be
 - How should I think?
 - What should I do?
 - Where should I go?
 - Who will I teach?

Session 6.5: BIBLE RESOURCES

Bible Commentaries

- The wrong way to use Commentaries
 - Reading the commentary before you read the Bible
 - Depending upon someone else's interpretation before reaching your own
- The right way to use Commentaries
 - After you have done ALL of your part
 - To check for any insights you might have missed

Other Resources (Physical and Digital)

- Bible Encyclopedias
- Bible Dictionaries
- Book on Systematic Theology
- 2 one-volume commentaries
- A Concordance

Recommendations:

The ESV Study Bible (Contains commentaries, and in the back of the Bible a host of articles on a range of issues)

Matthew Henry Commentary

The Wycliffe Bible Commentary
Systematic Theology by Wayne Grudem
Strong's Exhaustive Concordance
The New Bible Dictionary by I. Howard Marshall (one-volume)

Honorable Mentions:

The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge (How Scripture interprets Scripture. Takes every verse of the Bible and cross-references it with all the other verses in the Bible that relate to that verse)

Christian Theology by Millard Erickson

When Critics Ask by Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe (Arguably the best book on Bible difficulties)

Hard Sayings in the Bible by Walter C. Kaiser Jr. et al.

New International Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties by Gleason Archer Jr.

The New Unger's Bible Dictionary (One volume)

The Holman Bible Atlas (Helps you see where places are located that are mentioned in Scripture and how they relate to each other geographically)

Software Programs:

www.logos.com

www.biblesoft.com

www.bibleworks.com

FREE on-line Bible Resources

www.bible.org (Click on "Net Bible")

www.bible.crosswalk.com

www.biblegateway.com

www.bibleplaces.com

www.carm.org (Huge library of articles on a wide variety of Christian issues)

www.ccel.org (The online study bible is one of best ways to see what the best theologians in the church have said about a particular text of the Bible)

www.christianitytoday.com/bible

www.equip.org (Articles on cults, theology, and a host of other issues)

www.esv.org (Online collection of Bible study tools associated with the English Standard Version Bible)

Also, to aid in your Bible reading/studying I recommend these resources:

What is the Bible All About by Henrietta C. Mears

How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth by Gordon D. Fee & Douglas Stuart

Getting the Message by Daniel M. Doriani (Teaches how to study different types of books in the Bible and includes practical assignments)

The ESV Study Bible

Halley's Bible Handbook

Many Infallible Proofs by Dr. Henry M. Morris

The Indestructible Book by W. Kenneth Connolly (A fascinating look at how the Scriptures have been opposed and adored over the ages)

New International Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties by Gleason Archer Jr.

The Canon of Scripture by F.F. Bruce (A thorough explanation of why some books are in the Bible and others are not)

Session 7: Reading/Studying the Old Testament

The OT layout:

- **The Pentateuch** (Books of the Law)
 - Genesis
 - Exodus
 - Leviticus
 - Numbers
 - Deuteronomy
- **The Narrative / History Books**
 - Joshua
 - Judges
 - Ruth
 - 1 & 2 Samuel
 - 1 & 2 Kings
 - 1 & 2 Chronicles
 - Ezra & Nehemiah
 - Esther
 - *Genesis, Exodus and Numbers could also be included here*
- **The Poetry / Wisdom Books**
 - **Poetry**

- Psalms (*and parts of Proverbs*)
 - Lamentations
 - Song of Solomon
- **Wisdom**
 - Job
 - Psalms
 - Proverbs
 - Ecclesiastes
 - Song of Solomon
- **Major and Minor Prophet Books**
 - Major (older and longer in content)
 - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel
 - Minor (shorter in content)
 - Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

THE PENTATEUCH

- **One book in five parts**
 - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy
 - Written by Moses 1400 years before Jesus
Deuteronomy 31:24-25
 - Jesus believed the miracles recorded
 - Adam & Eve
Matthew 19:4-5
 - Noah & the flood
Matthew 24:37-39/ Luke 17:26-27
 - Sodom & Gomorrah
Matthew 10:15/ Matthew 11:23-24/ Luke 10:12/ Luke 17:29
 - Points to Jesus as promised seed of Abraham
Acts 3:25-26/ Romans 1:2/ Galatians 3:16
- **General Guidelines for OT Laws**
 - It is God's gift to His People
 - God revealing Himself ***Deuteronomy 4:8/1 John 5:3***
 - Covenant
 - The OT Law is NOT our NT Law
 - OT = Old Covenant
 - NT = New Covenant

General Rule: *Unless the OT law is somehow restated or reinforced in the New Testament, it is no longer directly binding on God's people.*

- Some laws are NOT reinforced
 - Civil laws
 - Ceremonial laws
- Some laws ARE reinforced
 - Moral law

On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.

Matthew 22:40

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. Deuteronomy 6:5

OT LAW IS STILL GOD'S WORD

So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. Galatians 3:24

When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, that you may not bring the guilt of blood upon your house, if anyone should fall from it. Deuteronomy 22:8

THE NARRATIVE/HISTORY BOOKS

- Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra & Nehemiah, Esther
 - Written over a 1000 year period (1400 BC to 450 BC)
 - 40% of OT

Guidelines

- No hidden meanings (allegories)
- Not intended to teach moral lessons
- Not intended to teach doctrine
- Not man - centered
- Have specific purpose
 - Written to a specific people
 - Written at a specific time
- Not all are good examples to follow
- They are selected and complete

Observation

- ***Seven parts to observation***
 - The plot
 - Time and place
 - Characters
 - Comparison & Contrast
 - Dialogue
 - Narrator
 - Irony

So Solomon did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and did not wholly follow the LORD, as David his father had done. 1 Kings 11:16

And in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its parts, and according to all its specifications. He was seven years in building it 1 Kings 6:38

Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, and he finished his entire house 1 Kings 7:1

Interpretation

- **Told and heard on three levels**
 - Individual History
 - National History
 - Redemptive History (The WHOLE picture)

THE POETRY/WISDOM BOOKS

- **Poetry** (Psalms, parts of Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Lamentations)
 - Bi-directional
 - Incredibly honest
O LORD, why do you cast my soul away? Why do you hide your face from me? Psalm 88:14
 - Emotional
 - Metaphorical
 - Variable
- **Wisdom Literature** (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs)
 - The Goal – Apply God’s word to practical living
 - NOT a collection of universal PROMISES
Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed. Proverbs 15:22
A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold. Proverbs 22:1
Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6
It is better to live in a corner of the housetop than in a house shared with a quarrelsome wife. Proverbs 25:24
- **Major and Minor Prophets**

Guidelines

- Re-Proclaiming
- Confrontational
- Complete
- Direct Representatives
When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the word does not come to pass or

come true, that is a word that the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him. Deuteronomy 18:22

OT Prophecies should be viewed

- Individually
- Historically
- As Figures of Speech
- As Enactment Prophecies

Key:

- **Three movements of prophecies**
 - Broken Covenant
 - Call to Repent
 - Future Restoration

Session 8: READING/STUDYING THE NEW TESTAMENT

Central point of the NT – The Gospel

THE GOSPEL

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

- The man Jesus is God (or Christ)
- Died on the cross in our place
- Paid for penalty of sin
- Rose from the dead
- Conquered sin and death
- Gift of Salvation and Eternal Life
- Given only to those who believe in Jesus alone for eternal life
- Ephesians 2:1-10

THE NEW TESTAMENT

- The Four Gospels
 - Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
- History (Acts)
- The Epistles (Letters)

- Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1, 2, 3 John, Jude, Revelation

HOW CAN WE TRUST THE GOSPELS?

- Bibliographical _ test
- Internal test
Isaiah 7:14/Matthew 1:18-23; Micah 5:2/Luke 2:1-7; Hosea 11:1/Matthew 2:13-15; Malachi 3:1/Luke 2:25-27; Zechariah 11:12-13/ Matthew 26:14-15
- External test

HOW SHOULD WE READ/STUDY THE GOSPELS?

Guidelines

- Written about Jesus alone
 - Written with a purpose
 - Written to a specific audience
 - Matthew – Jews
 - Mark – Romans
 - Luke – Greeks
 - John – The World
- Two Components
 - Teachings of Jesus
 - Stories about Jesus
- Two Settings
 - Historical (1st Century with Jesus)
 - Historical setting of authors
- Written by different authors
 - Why four gospels?
 - Four men
 - Four audiences
- Written for different audiences
 - Three principles at work in gospels
 - Selectivity
 - Arrangement
 - Exaggeration
- Think Vertically AND Horizontally
 - How does the gospel portray Jesus
 - Why is this gospel account different from the other
- Timeless Truths in larger context
 - Mark 4:35-41

HISTORY (Acts)

- Descriptive or Prescriptive
- The birth of the Church

Guidelines

- It's a sequel
- Central Themes
 - The Gospel
 - The Holy Spirit
 - The Church
 - The World
- The Structure
 - Chapters 1-7—Geographic
 - Chapters 8-9—The Gospel in Judea & Samaria
 - Chapters 10-28—The Gospel to the ends of the earth
- A model

Other thoughts on reading through Acts:

- Characters
- Speeches
- "This was intended to show"
- Look for repeated patterns and themes
 - Filling of the Holy Spirit
- What's the main point?
Acts 6:1-7

The EPISTLES

- Written to people and churches to:
 - Instruct
 - Correct
 - Warn
 - Encourage

Guidelines

- Easy to read
- Purpose of the letter
- Context

The book of REVELATION

- Difficult
- Lots of imagery

Guidelines

- Humility
- Message to original readers
- Take it seriously, but not literally
- Note the images identified
- Note consistent images throughout the book

- Don't press every detail
- Big picture

CONCLUSION

- Learn Scripture to Give it away
- Teach it
- Master what you teach
- Dig in!

Your ultimate purpose is not how much knowledge you gain from your reading and study, but how much you know GOD.

The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law. Deuteronomy 29:29