

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Theme: Studying God's Word

Study!

Bill Brinkworth

One of the most important responsibilities Christians have is to study the Scriptures for themselves. Church is important, and one can learn quite a lot from the man of God in the pulpit, but it is up to us to study and understand what the Word of God says.

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” II Tim. 2:15

II Timothy 2:15 teaches us five things about studying the Word of God:

1. We get God's approval when we think it is important enough to explore what God has recorded for us in the Bible's preserved words.
2. Notice that the words God used are “study” and not “read.” We are to search its pages for His help so we can pass life's tests and its challenges and know God's mind. It is the main source that will help us get through life's difficulties and learn more about the Father.

Reading is a shallower, less urgent, and less purposeful approach to a subject. Studying takes time, rereading, comparing Scripture with Scripture, and much prayer. It takes “work,” commitment, and a great desire to get all one can out of God's Word, and that is how God expects every Christian to approach His Truth. Be a “workman”!

3. When we study the Bible, we will not be embarrassed by believing the wrong things. There are so many that have never read the Word of God for themselves. All they know about God's Word is what others have taught them. If the teachers are wrong, then they are wrong. If more studied the Word of God with an anxious desire to find what God has in store for them there, learn His teachings, and practice them, most liberal, unbiblical churches would be out of business within a month! Unscriptural denominations would be history! The greatest revival ever would sweep this planet!
4. In studying the Word of God, one must separate, or “divide,” some teachings. Some practices were for past dispensations. The priesthood, sacrifices, and signs from God were some practices for times past. Proper delving into God's Word will expose those facts, and one will not include them in their beliefs for the current church age.
5. God's Word is called the “word of truth.” It is not just a collection of accurate statements, but it is truth from our Creator. It is the only source of truth on Earth, and God has preserved it for all to read!

The reverse teaching of II Timothy 2:15 is, if one does not study God's truth, he is not approved of God! Gulp. That is a hard truth to swallow. Looking at it that way should put a higher priority on one's Bible learning.

Is knowing what God says important to you? Is it valuable enough for you to invest time in understanding what God wants you to know?

How to Study the Bible

Bill Brinkworth

“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” II Timothy 2:15

Many readers of the Word of God quickly encounter Timothy’s admonition on studying the Bible. Some faithfully read the Word of God every day. Many do not, and even fewer study the truths God has preserved within the pages of His Word.

Not only does it take extra time to study the Bible, but many do not know how to start. Reading a few verses each day will have less impact on one’s life than a scriptural diet of several chapters. Taking the time to study the Word of God will be a life-directing, life-changing, God-leading influence and will help more than reading a few pages.

Then the question arises, how do you study the Bible? How does one get the most out of their Bible? The answer varies from one person to another since each of our brains and learning methods are different. Here are a few study methods that may help you get more out of the Word of God so that you will learn more, that its content will help you with your life’s decisions, and that you will have a better relationship with the Lord:

- Be saved! The Word of God is for the people of God and will not mean as much to a person who is not saved! Bible studying, however, will point an unbeliever to God’s truths so he can become a born-again (John 3:3) child of God and get more understanding about God.
“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” I Cor. 2:14
- Pray and ask God to help you understand His Word before you even begin! It is His Book; you need His help to understand it!
- Consistently read the Bible. Schedule and make it a priority to expose yourself to God’s Word every day!
- Use the King James Bible. ALL the other versions, including the New King James Bible, alter what God’s Word says. One cannot build a spiritual life close to God if the foundation, God’s Word, is corrupt and not true to what God originally had preserved!
- Do not just read to fill a quota of verses or chapters. Read at a speed you get something out of it. Sometimes I have spent most of my devotional time on one verse. There have been times that I have read several pages.
- If you do not understand a word, stop and look it up in a dictionary. You will be surprised to find that you do not know all the meanings of words as well as you thought you did. Most do not need to know the Greek or Hebrew languages to get more out of their English Bible, they just need to understand the English language better!
- If you find you have read several verses and do not remember what you read, read them again. The goal should be to get a blessing from reading God’s Word.
- One method to slow one’s reading speed down and get more from the reading is to make notes on what you have just read. A notebook or a wide-margin Bible can be used for this.

- Since we are in the New Testament church-age, a believer should first understand Jesus, the early church, and the teachings for this time. First, read and study the New Testament. With its understanding, when the Old Testament is read, one will get a fuller, clearer picture of what God did then and how it pictures what would happen later.
- While reading a verse, read other verses that teach the same principle. Some study Bibles have references in the margin. Follow those references, and read those verses. Often you will get a clearer picture of what God has written by reading different, related passages.
- When reading a verse, understand the context first. To better comprehend a verse, first understand who the scripture was addressed to, why, and when. Many pluck out a verse and apply it to whatever they want to apply it to, forgetting what situation, time, or people it was originally speaking of.
- Read other Bible books that cover the same topic. For example, if you study The Revelation, it would be good to understand Old Testament prophecies in Ezekiel and Daniel. If trying to learn more about Jesus' life, it is important to read other aspects of His life in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
- Although not to be trusted as one can trust the Word of God, a Bible dictionary, such as Unger's Bible Dictionary, can give some insight into a subject, place, or person you are reading about. Be especially cautious of books from authors or publishers who condone other Bible translations or come from denominations or institutions that teach differently than what the Bible teaches.
- Look up, using a concordance (a book that has words listed and where they are used throughout the Bible), a word or name you want to learn more about. Some Bible computer programs are very useful for this purpose.
- The best commentary on the Bible is the Bible itself! Although many books on a subject or book you are studying can be helpful, they can also be wrong! I have far more commentaries on my bookshelves that I cannot trust what the author says than I have books that have been proven reliable to what the Word of God says. All authors are only men, and all make mistakes! God's Word, however, is from God and has His influential inspiration preserved and is trustworthy!
- Do not compare with other versions and translations of the Bible! They usually originate from sources that were not accurate in their conception, change doctrines that support the translator's beliefs, or change facts and doctrines. Comparing them with the real Bible (KJV) will only raise doubts and breed confusion!

These are just a few of the many ways to study God's Word. No matter what technique is used, the main goal is to get as much out of every precious word God has kept for us to glean. Are you diligently reading and studying God's Word?

“With God's help, we can get out of the Bible what we invest in it.”

Result of Reading the Bible

Oliver Green

A young believer was discouraged in his attempts to read and remember the Bible. He said, “It's no use. No matter how much I read, I always forget what I have just read.”

A wise pastor replied, “Take heart. When you pour water over a sieve, no matter how much you pour, you collect little. But at least you end up with a clean sieve.”

Some seem to expect the Word of God to hit them like a jolt of adrenaline each time they read or study it. Although the “jolt” may hit us periodically, the benefits of the Word of God act more like vitamins. People who regularly take vitamins do so because of their long-term benefits, not because every time they swallow one of the pills they feel new strength surging through their bodies. They have developed a habit of consistently taking vitamins because they have been told that, in the long haul, vitamin supplements are going to have a beneficial effect on their physical health, resistance to disease, and general well-being.

The same is true of reading the Bible. At times, it will have a sudden and intense impact on us. However, the real value lies in the cumulative effects that long-term exposure to God’s Word will bring to our lives.

“The Word of God is an armory of heavenly weapons, a laboratory of infallible medicines, a mine of exhaustless wealth. It is a guidebook for every road, a chart for every sea, a medicine for every malady, a balm for every wound.” — Guthrie