

HIGH SCHOOL CLASS

Principles of Effective Bible Study

Student Study Guide
and Workbook

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Importance of Bible Study

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

The scripture above summarizes why studying the bible is so important; so we can be a workman for the Lord and correctly understand the truth. When we study and “rightly divide” the truth, we will have nothing to be ashamed about, because we are doing what God expects us to do.

We live in a society today where there are more false religions than at any other point in history. There are literally thousands of religions around the world and they have all deviated from the original pattern of the New Testament in one way or another. When God sent his son Jesus into the world, it was to teach us his will. If we disregard his commands, we are guaranteed to be justly punished for rejecting him. Notice what Jesus said in John 12:48-50: “He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him--the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.”

DID YOU

KNOW?

The largest religions are:

Christianity 2.3 Billion

Islam 2.2 Billion

Hinduism 1 Billion

Understanding the Lord’s Words

There is only one way to properly understand the words that Jesus spoke and the words that were revealed through the Holy Spirit (John 14:26), and that is through a careful study of the bible. Even though we may have been baptized and are spiritually children of God, we can be lost if we do not put in the effort to understand God’s word. The Lord made this very point to the children of Israel in Hosea 4:6 when he said “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...”

Jesus prayed to the father in John 17:21, "that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me." Jesus here was speaking of his followers being united in the truth because he knew it was critical to their success as Christians. Unity can only be achieved if everyone studies and understands by the same standard, which is the word of God. In fact, notice what God said about unity in Amos 3:3: “Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?”

Questions: Answer the following questions and provide passages in support of your answer:

1. What are some reasons why we must be knowledgeable about God’s word?

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2. In John 1:1, 14, what term did John use to describe Jesus? _____
3. Who “searched the scriptures daily” to see if the things they were taught were true? _____
4. What are some consequences individually and as members of a local church if we are not knowledgeable about God’s word?

5. What are some consequences individually and as members of a local church if we are knowledgeable about God’s word?

6. Read Hebrews 5:12-14 and list three reasons why spiritual growth is important.

7. In 1 Corinthians 1:10 we are told (NKJV): “Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” Explain what Paul is pleading for them to do and why it is so important.

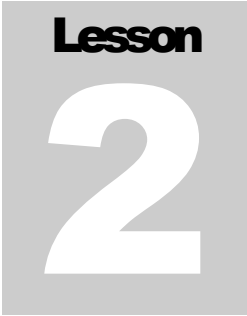
8. Read 2 Timothy 2:22-26 and list what we are to avoid, what we are to pursue and why.

9. What are some tools you can use along with the bible to enhance your study?

10. What are some precautions we should take when using manmade references (commentaries, dictionaries, etc.)?

11. Is it ok to use different translations when studying? What are the benefits or dangers in using different translations?

12. List two denominations and a false doctrine from each that can be proven wrong from the scriptures?



History of the Bible

2 Timothy 3:16-17 “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.”

The bible that we use today has a long and storied history and started to be presented in writing by the Lord around 1500 B.C. through Moses. The bibles that each of us use today did not exist in their current form until many years after the first century and are based on a translations assembled through the work of several men. In this lesson, we want to consider the origin of the bible from the time of Moses though the time when they were translated into the English versions we use today.

Assignment: Go to our web site (biblequestions.org) and read the article entitled “How the Bible Came to be” (by clicking on the letter “B” from the home page and then scrolling down to the section entitled “Bible Origins”) and then answer the following questions.

**DID YOU
KNOW?**

There are over 5,300 manuscripts that contain either a large portion or a fragment of scripture

1. Prior to the commands of the Lord being written, how did he communicate with man? _____

2. Who was the first author of scripture? List two passages that confirm him as the writer: _____

3. How long did it take to write the 27 books of the New Testament? _____

4. What was given to protect the early Christians from error until the New Testament was written?

5. How do we know that we have been given the fully revealed word of God? List two passages that prove this to be true _____

It is important to understand that the translations that we use today did not exist in the first century and were compiled by men from various manuscripts. It is also important to realize that these translations are not inspired. As a result, there have been some translations that have been purposely changed by men, such as the New World translation, which was changed by the Jehovah’s Witnesses to match their false doctrine and have led some astray. So how do we know if the translation we use has been reliably translated? Most of the common translations, such as the King James, English Standard Version, New American Standard, etc. are based on old manuscripts, which were compared and evaluated carefully so we can be sure that they contain the fully revealed word of God. The reliability of the New Testament has been proven through several old

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manuscripts such as the Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, the Dead Sea Scrolls, etc. which has allowed scholars to confirm that what we have today is accurate and reliable.

Assignment: Go to our web site (biblequestions.org) and read the article entitled “The Texts of the Bible” (by clicking on the letter “B” from the home page and then scrolling down to the section entitled “Bible Origins”) and then answer the following questions.

6. What are the three major languages involved originally in the translation of the text of the Bible?

7. Until the age of printing, how were the Hebrews scriptures handed down?

8. When was the Hebrew text translated into Greek? What was it called?

9. Thought question: Approximately 70 scholars took part in the translation of the Pentateuch (first five books of the Bible). What would be the advantages of having so many people work on the translation?

10. What language did Jesus speak? What language was the New Testament written in?

11. The English language today is constantly changing. Koine Greek is a frozen language. What does the term “frozen language” mean and what are the advantages of the bible being written in this language?

12. What other writings were used as a valuable source to confirm the accuracy of the manuscripts?

In 1382, John Wycliffe translated the entire Bible from Latin into English. While it was nice to have an English version of the bible, William Tyndale felt it was important to provide an English translation from the original Hebrew and Greek instead of Latin and he was able to complete a translation in 1525. Eventually the modern translations that we use today were completed, such as the King James-1611 (which was a revision of the Bishops Bible translation), American Standard Version-1901, New King James Version-1982, English Standard Version-2001, etc.). A careful study of any translation will often raise questions about whether all of the passages were translated correctly. The influence of the translators also becomes evident, such as the use of the word “Easter” in the KJV based on the influence of Catholicism and the Calvinistic influence in the NIV based on the beliefs of those translators. The key is that when you look at the complete bible as a whole, even with a few passages we may have a question about, the overall pattern of truth and plan of salvation is clear and ultimately these few passages have little effect on the fully revealed word.

For example, some translations omit Mark 16:9-20 because it is not included in all of the manuscripts. Based on what is being taught in these passages, the same principles can be found in many other passages and therefore the truth of God’s word still stands strong.

Bible Authority

Matthew 21:23 “Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, ‘By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?’”

The question in the passage above was asked to Jesus because the Jews understood the need for authority in spiritual matters. In John 12:49-50, Jesus explains that the source of his authority was from the Father in heaven, “*For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.*” The same applies to us today. We must also have authority for what we practice and teach because in Matthew 7:21, Jesus said only those who do “*the will of my Father in heaven*” will enter the kingdom of heaven. After the resurrection of Jesus and before he ascended into heaven, he told his disciples that he had been given all authority on heaven and on earth (Matthew 28:18). As a result, we all will stand before the judgment seat of Christ to be judged (2 Corinthians 5:10) in the last day.

Ultimately, when we are obedient to the Lord, we show our love for him. Notice what is said in these passages: John 14:15, Jesus said, “*If you love me, keep My commandments*” and in 1 John 5:3 we are told, “*For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.*” Read John 14:21, 23 to understand what we must do to be loved by the Father and by Jesus.

So, given the fact that we must have authority for all that we do in this life, how do we determine exactly what we should believe and practice? Some claim that everything we practice spiritually is authorized unless it is prohibited in scripture. Others believe that only what is specifically written in scripture is authorized. There are some problems with both of these beliefs. The problem with believing that everything is authorized unless it is prohibited in the bible is that it conflicts with what the scriptures teach about authority. For instance in Colossians 3:17 we are told, “*Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*” This tells us we can only do those things that we have authority for as outlined by scripture. Can you imagine how many volumes the Bible would have to be, to literally list everything we should not do? The Lord has always given man clear instruction regarding what he expects, so he does not have to tell us what we should not do (2 Timothy 3:16-17). If the second belief were true, “that only what is specifically written in scripture is authorized,” then we would not be able to determine things like how often we should partake of the Lord’s Supper, if we can use expedients such as song books, etc.

To properly establish authority, we must be able to follow the **express commands** given in scripture, look at the examples of what early Christians practiced (**approved example**) and draw conclusions based on what is taught in scripture (**necessary inference**). In the next few lessons, we will consider these sources of authority.

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1. Why must we have authority for all that we practice religiously?

2. Give some examples of what can happen to Christians and the church when there is no authority for what is practiced?

3. What was the source of the authority for Jesus? _____ What passages prove this? _____

4. How do we show our love for the Lord? _____

5. Under the Law of Moses, how did the children of Israel know what God expected them to do? Provide some passages that support your answer. _____

6. What is the source of authority for most people in the world today? How do you know?

7. What do we learn about authority from Colossians 2:8?

8. In John 14:21, 23 what are we told we must do to be loved by the Father and by Jesus?

9. What is wrong with the statement: “everything we practice spiritually is authorized unless it is prohibited in scripture”?

10. What is wrong with the statement: “only what is specifically written in scripture is authorized”?

11. What can we learn about authority from Galatians 6:6-9?

12. What do we learn from 2 John 9? “Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son”

13. Is its ok to do what we feel is right? Why or why not?

14. Read Acts 26:9 and comment on what the danger is when we use human reasoning? _____

15. Read the following passages and explain the terms that are used to compare the knowledge of God with the knowledge of man (Psalm 94:11, Isaiah 55:9, 1 Corinthians 3:18-20) _____

Express Command

Acts 22:16 “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord”

The command in the passage above was given to Saul of Tarsus by Ananias after he had gone to Damascus to wait for the Lord to tell him what to do. In Acts 2:38, Peter commanded those who were gathered on the Day of Pentecost *“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”* In Acts 10:48, Peter who was speaking to Cornelius and other Gentiles *“commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.”* These three passages make it clear that the Lord commanded men to be baptized for the remission of their sins in the name (by the authority) of the Lord. It is vitally important as human beings, that we understand what the Lord has commanded us to do. In this lesson, we want to consider the **express command** aspect of Bible authority.

Some commands in scripture were given to specific individuals and those commands only applied to them. Other commands, such as the one regarding baptism in the first paragraph, universally apply to all men. The key is if God commanded it, men are expected to follow it. In 1 John 5:3 we are told, *“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.”* The Lord gave us commands that we are able to follow and while they may not always be easy, they can always be accomplished if we decide to do so.

Sometimes it is difficult to understand which commands apply to specific people and which commands apply to all men, including us today. To help us to determine which commands apply to all men (us), a few important questions should be asked. For instance:

- **Was the command given to a specific individual and therefore only applicable to him?** Naaman was commanded by Elisha to wash in the Jordan seven times to cure his leprosy. That command was meant for him and would not apply to anyone else.
- **Does the command apply to all men?** For example, in Colossians 3:20 *“Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord”* and Colossians 3:16 *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”* These are examples of commands that were given to all men and apply in all ages.
- **Was a command that applied to all men fulfilled and therefore no longer applicable? Was an older command replaced by a newer command?** The Israelites were told in Exodus 20:8 to *“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.”* We know that when Jesus died on the cross, that covenant (Old Law) was fulfilled and a new covenant (New Law) replaced the older covenant (Hebrews 9). So, because we are no longer under that old covenant, those commands no longer apply to us or anyone else (Galatians 5:1-4). However, the commands that replaced it (Law of Christ), do apply to all men today.

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Often times, we will see a pattern in scripture that helps us to understand when a command is universal. Going back to the command we looked at where men were commanded to be baptized, we see in Acts 2:38 the people were told to, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized...” and in Acts 3:19 we see the same command was given to a different group of people. We also see in passages like 2 Peter 3:9 that the Lord “*is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.*” The pattern of these and other scriptures help us to reasonably conclude that all men should repent and be baptized. A careful examination of scripture will often help us to determine if the express command given applies to us today.

1. How would you define the term command? After you write your answer, look up a definition of command in the dictionary and document how it is defined there.

2. How can we tell if a given command applies to us today?

3. Give two examples of commands that were given that only applied to the people they were given to?

4. There were commands given regarding the use of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 14:26-33? Do those commands apply to us today? Why or why not? _____

5. Read John 13:34-35. Does this command apply to us today? If so, give some examples on how we can fulfill this command?

6. In Matthew 22:36 Jesus was asked “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” In verse 37 he answered “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind” How do we fulfill this command today? _____

7. Read Mark 7:1-13 and explain what the Pharisees were doing with the commandment of the Lord?

8. Do the Ten Commandments apply to us today? Why or why not? Give scripture to support your answer.

9. Give two examples of commands that were given in scripture that do apply to us today? _____

10. Thought question: Do you have to follow all of the commands of your parents? Are there any exceptions? Give passages to support your answers. _____

Approved Example

1 Corinthians 11:1 “Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ”

The Apostle Paul in the letter that he wrote to the church at Corinth, encouraged them to “imitate” or follow his example in serving the Lord. He made a similar statement to the saints in Philippi when he said in Philippians 4:9, *“The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.”* Another way that we establish Bible authority is by following the example of godly men like Paul. The practices of the Apostles and other Christians in the first century give us insight into how God expects us to conduct ourselves today. Does this mean that we should do everything that the Christians practiced in the first century? If not, how do we determine which examples to follow? We will answer these questions and examine the **approved example** aspect of Bible authority in this lesson.

Some examples in scripture were used to teach an important Bible principle and the example itself may not be one that we must we follow exactly. For instance, Jesus wanted to teach his disciples a lesson by washing their feet. Read John 13:3-17. In verse 12 Jesus asks his disciples, *“Do you know what I have done to you?”* He answers the question in verse 15, *“For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.”* In verse 14 he also tells them *“If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.”* So, does this example of washing the feet of others apply to us? It seems obvious that it does but there are some other important factors to consider. For example, if we lived in a culture where people always wore sandals and their feet routinely became dirty because of the environment, it may be customary to wash your visitor’s feet. In this case, it would certainly apply to us. We know in our culture today, we normally wear shoes and even when we wear sandals; it is not customary to wash someone’s feet when they visit us. Another question to ask is; was his lesson simply about washing feet? No, it was really about humility and service to others. How do we know this? A study of the customs practiced in that culture teach us that it was normal for the servants of someone’s household to wash the feet of visitors. It was not common for the homeowner to do so. Jesus was teaching them that as the homeowner they should wash the feet of the visitor to demonstrate humility and willingness to serve others. Jesus explains this in verse 16 when he says, “Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.” Here we have the Son of God washing the feet of the disciples! What an example! Peter could not imagine the Lord washing his feet and even said *“You shall never wash my feet!”*, but Jesus insisted on it and used the example to teach a great lesson. Read Matt 20:20-28 and Luke 22:24-27 for similar teaching.

Now let us consider another approved example with the subject of benevolence. Many in the religious world today have no problem using the treasury of the church to help anyone in society. This is often referred to as “general benevolence.” Without authority, they think “the end justifies the means” and under the misguided concept of showing love, they feel this practice is justified. Does the Lord want us to help non-Christian people? Are we demonstrating a lack of love by not helping them with money from the treasury? A close examination of the scriptures reveals that the Lord does want us to help all men but we only have authority to use the treasury to help needy saints. We learn that there are two types of benevolence, individual and church. Individually, the scriptures teach us that we are to help all men. This includes our family, brethren and anyone

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else in need. In 1 Timothy 5:3-4, we are taught to show honor for our grandparents or parents by taking care of them and in verse 8 we are also taught *“if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”* In Galatians 6:10 we are told *“let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”* These two sections of scripture teach us what we must do individually. As for the church, we see an example in Romans 15:25-27 of how the saints in Macedonia and Achaia financially helped the poor saints in Jerusalem. From this and other passages, we are given an approved example of saints helping other saints and so we should do the same today. We also learn that the church treasury was not used to help non-saints because it is an individual responsibility.

1. What do we learn from the example of Jesus when he washed the feet of his disciples? _____

2. In Matt 20:20-28, what was the principle Jesus was teaching the twelve Apostles? _____

3. Find at least two other passages not listed in the lesson where we have examples of Christians helping other Christians who were in need. What can we conclude from these passages? _____

4. What is the difference in individual benevolence and church benevolence? _____

5. Are the statements below True or False?

___ The church can help a non-Christian if no one else is able to help them.

___ We can follow an example if it is consistent with God’s word.

___ General benevolence is a work of the church.

___ We have authority to do anything if it ends in a good result.

___ All examples should be followed that are in the bible.

6. What two examples do we see in Galatians 2:11-12? Are these examples we should follow today? _____

7. Is it acceptable to follow the example of men? What scriptures would you use to support your answer? _____

8. What do we learn from the example of Christians in Acts 2:44-45? _____

9. What do we learn from the examples of conversion in Acts (Cornelius, Lydia, Philippian jailer, etc.)? _____

10. What three lessons do we learn from 1 Timothy 5:3-4, 5 and 16? _____

11. What poor example did Jesus condemn the Pharisees for in Matthew 15:1-9? What should they have done instead? _____

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12. In Philippians 4:15-16 and 2 Corinthians 11:9, what examples do we see from the churches at Philippi and at Macedonia? Should we follow their example today? _____

Necessary Inference

The last aspect of Bible authority we want to consider is that of **necessary inference**. Some people also use the term “forced conclusion” to describe the same principle. According to the American Heritage dictionary of the English Language, Inference is defined as: “The act or process of deriving logical conclusions from premises known or assumed to be true.” The idea of “necessary” means that we cannot reasonably come to any other conclusion based on the facts presented. Some like to say the facts result in a forced conclusion. In this lesson we will examine this third method for establishing Bible authority.

Based on the definitions above, it is important for us to realize that something inferred is not spelled out directly like a command. When something is inferred, we are drawing a conclusion based on a truth that is either stated or understood. For instance with the Lord’s Supper, we know that in Matthew 26:26-29 Jesus instituted it and taught his disciples that they should partake of bread and the fruit of the vine. In Acts 20:7, we are told that Christians came together on the first day of the week to “break bread.” Even though it is not specifically stated that they also partook of the fruit of the vine, we can infer that this was done because it was part of the command that he gave them. Sometimes we can make inferences from a command. For instance Paul commanded the churches of Corinth and Galatia in 1 Corinthians 16:2, “On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.” Because this command was given to the “churches,” we can infer that the same applies to us today. We can also conclude that they were to give on the first day of each week as every week has a first day (Sunday).

Another way that we can draw an inference or conclusion is based on the facts stated in scripture. In Acts 8:26-39, we are told about the conversion of the Ethiopian Eunuch. In verse 35, we are told that Philip “preached Jesus to him.” In verse 36 the Eunuch ask “See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?” This statement allows us to infer that “preaching Jesus” by Philip included the need to be baptized. We can also conclude this because the Eunuch by asking this question demonstrated that he understood the need to be baptized.

Putting it all Together

Sometimes, we will be able to use all three methods of establishing Bible authority for a given truth at the same time. The Lord’s Supper is one area where this is illustrated. In Matthew 26:26-29, Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper with his Apostles by giving them a **direct command**. In Acts 20:7 we see an **approved example** of the disciples coming together on the “*first day of the week*” to “*break bread*”. In 1 Corinthians 11:18 Paul says, “*when you come together as a church*” (which tells us why they came together) and when we match that up with verse 20, we see that he rebukes them because when they did come together “*it is not to eat the Lord’s Supper.*” The issue here was they were not waiting for one another (verse 33) to partake of the Lord’s Supper as a church. Their key point here is that we can infer or conclude by these passages that they came together as a church, it was on the first day of the week and it was for the purpose of the of partaking of the Lord’s Supper. Therefore, we must conclude that we as a church should do the same as the church in the first century. By using all three methods for establishing Bible authority, we can be positive that what we are doing is authorized.

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1. What is the definition of “inference” and what does the term “necessary” mean? _____

2. In Matthew 3:16 we are told that “Jesus came up immediately from the water.” What can we infer from this statement? _____

3. In John 20:1-2 what did Mary incorrectly infer about Jesus?

4. In Hebrews 10:25, we are told not to forsake the “assembling of ourselves together.” What can we infer from this statement? _____

5. Read Matthew 22:31-32. What can we infer from this point Jesus was making? _____

6. What two things can we infer from 1 Corinthians 16:1-2? _____

7. What inference or forced conclusion did people make when they saw miracles performed by Jesus? Can you site any examples in scripture where this conclusion was stated to Jesus (think of one who came to Jesus by night)? _____

8. What inference did Peter make when the Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles in Acts 10: 44-46? _____

9. In the examples below, list what type of Bible authority would apply: Express Command (EC) Approved Example (AE) or Necessary Inference (NI).
- a. ____ “Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need” Acts 2:44-45
 - b. ____ “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind” Matthew 22:37
 - c. ____ “For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you” Titus 1:5
 - d. ____ “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord” Acts 22:16
 - e. ____ “Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.” 1Corinthians 11:27
 - f. ____ “So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed” Acts 14:23
 - g. ____ “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” Colossians 3:16
10. Challenge question: In 1 Corinthians 15:27 what can we infer from what is “plain” (ESV) or “evident” (NKJV)? _____

Use of Study Aids

2 Timothy 2:15 “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”

The use of study aids can help the Bible student gain a better understanding of God’s word. There are no scriptural requirements that aids be used and we must always be careful when using material written by men, as they are fallible. Fortunately, there are many scholars who have produced a myriad of materials that can help us to properly divide the word of truth. In this lesson, we will survey the different types of aids that can be used and examine how they can assist our daily study.

Commentary

A simple definition of a commentary is “a series of comments, explanations, or annotations.” In this case, these would be by a scholar regarding the Bible. Over the course of time, there have been hundreds if not thousands of commentaries written by scholars from all walks of life. At a base level, these scholars are conveying their understanding of scripture and in the process of doing so, they often expound on the culture, people and life during the time the bible was written. As with all other study aids, we must be conscious that their comments and explanations are not inspired and they are often influenced by their religious background. For instance, a commentator who believes in the principles of Calvinism will often translate passages with those principles in mind and therefore be in error in their translation. As a result, we must always compare what they believe with God’s word to make sure it is accurate.

Concordance

A concordance allows the Bible student to locate all of the occurrences of different words that are used in the Bible. Unlike a dictionary, the concordance simply lists the passages of scripture where the word is used. Some concordances include comments from the author, which may not be consistent with scripture, so care must be taken. There are also “exhaustive” concordances that will give additional items like the language, the transliteration, a reference number to show where else the same Greek or Hebrew word is used, and even the total number of times a particular word is used in scripture.

Dictionary

A Bible dictionary has some similarities to a normal dictionary in that it provides definitions for different words used in scripture. Expository Bible dictionaries go beyond simple definitions and give more comprehensive definitions of all Hebrew and Greek words used in the Bible. In addition, they specify which words are nouns, verbs, adverbs, etc. and list a few passages where the words are used. There are also opinions from the authors on the usage and definition of words so we must make sure what they state is consistent with scripture.

Bible Atlas

A Bible atlas normally contains maps, pictures, geographic information, archeological information, historical information, and other relevant facts. This study aid can help the Bible student to gain a better understanding of the culture, region, people, and other facts, to give a better perspective of what is taught in scripture.

Interlinear

An interlinear provides a literal rendering of the scriptures in the original Greek text. The Bible student will be able to see the Greek words in the same order they were listed in the manuscripts, like the Textus Receptus and the English word is normally listed right below the Greek word. This can help the student to see which Greek word was used for a given passage of scripture and the English equivalent. Also, the interlinear will normally list the passages from the King James Version in the margins to allow a complete comparison.

Bible Translations

Referencing different translations of the Bible can be very helpful as a study aid. Translators used many sources of manuscripts when they were translating and also used wording that was relevant for the intended audience. As a result, the way scriptures were worded and the sentences were structured varied from translation to translation. When comparing scriptures across multiples translations, it helps the Bible student to gain a better understanding of what was being said and taught.

There are other sources that were not listed here such as handbooks, historical writings, encyclopedias, etc. These aids can also have value as long as the Bible student compares them to the scriptures to ensure accuracy.

For the following exercises, please consult the study aids listed above. If you do not have access to some of these aids, please go to www.biblestudytools.com where you can use them for free.

1. Consult two commentaries for an explanation of the statement “be baptized” in Acts 2:38 and summarize their beliefs. Is it consistent with scripture? _____

2. Using a concordance, list all of the passages where the word “justified” can be found? _____

3. Using an expository dictionary, list the different definitions for the word “love” and at least one passage where each usage can be found. _____

4. Consult a Bible atlas and list the locations of Mount Zion and the Mount of Olives. _____

5. Compare Hebrews 11:6 in the NKJV, RSV and ESV translations and document the main differences. Does it change the meaning of the scripture? _____

6. Using an expository dictionary, list the different Hebrew words for “Lord” and their meanings. _____

7. Consult a Bible Atlas and list three different facts you learned that you did not know before.

Classroom Exercises

1. If you wanted to prove that baptism means immersion, what study aid(s) would you use and why?

2. Complete a word study on the word “peace” and document not only the different meanings but also scriptures for each definition and the application for us today.

Definitions with Scripture

Application for Today

3. What resources would you use to find the names the seven churches of Asia and to locate their geographic location? Complete these exercises _____

4. Look at the following passages in three different translations. Document how they differ and what you learn from the renderings.

2 Peter 1:5 _____

Psalms 51:5 (use the NIV for one of the translations) _____

Acts 12:4 (use the KJV for one of the translations) _____

5. What study aids would you use to gain a better understanding of 1 Corinthians 14:34-35? Use those resources and document the meaning. What impression might someone get by taking the verse at face value? _____

6. List a noun and verb from the Greek for the following words and document the different meanings:

Hope

Noun: _____

Verb: _____

Instruct

Noun: _____

Verb: _____

Considering the Context

Definition of Context: “The part of a text or statement that surrounds a particular word or passage and determines its meaning”
(The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition)

One of the most critical elements to Bible study is understanding the context of a particular passage or section of scripture. Notice in the definition above, we are told that understanding the context is what “determines its meaning.” When we fail to take context into consideration, it can lead to all kinds of religious error. In this lesson, we will consider the importance of context in our daily study and specifically learn how to correctly interpret scripture by considering the context of what we read.

One of the most common mistakes made in the religious world today, is taking a passage out of context and trying to prove something spiritually. One example of this is the idea that all we must do to be saved is to believe in Jesus. People will turn to John 3:16, where the verse by itself seems to support exactly what they are saying, “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” What they fail to consider is the context of the verses around this passage. Read verses 1-21 in this chapter and ask yourself the following questions: Who is Jesus speaking to? What is the nature of his discussion with him? What question does he ask Nicodemus in verse 12? What does Jesus say about those who do and do not believe in Jesus? When we answer these questions from the context of verses 1-21, we see that Jesus is talking about belief as a foundational part of our faith. He is not saying that all we have to do is believe, but that salvation starts with belief. Also, we are taught that if we do not believe, then there is nothing else we can do to be saved because we are condemned (verse 18). The principle Jesus is teaching here goes along with what is said in Hebrews 11:6, “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” If we do not believe in Jesus, then repentance, baptism and being faithful is not possible because we are already condemned. This is why we must consider the context of passages around John 3:16 before we draw conclusions about what the verse is teaching.

Immediate Context and Remote Context

Sometimes you will hear the terms “Immediate context” and “Remote context” in connection with the principle of considering context. Immediate context are the passages surrounding a given verse like we considered in the example of John 3:16. Remote context is much broader and can include something like the entire New Testament. For instance, we know the immediate context of Mark 16:16 is about belief and baptism but the remote context of passages such as Acts 2:38 and Romans 10:10 teach us that repentance and confession are also key elements of salvation. Sometimes we need to consider both types of context in our study.

Other Types of Context (partial list from Bible.ca web site)

There are also a few other types of contexts in the Bible that we should consider:

1. The Historical context: this is the time factor, the dispensation and events that have some bearing on the passage.

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- 2. The Cultural context: there are certain words, expressions and sayings that are best understood in their cultural context. Many statements in the New Testament have a Jewish cultural context.
- 3. The Geographic context: this brings into your study any pertinent geographic facts.
- 4. The Personal context: the people mentioned in the context; their attitude; sins; qualities or circumstances that bear upon the passage.

We could certainly go more in-depth on this subject but the key point is that we must do everything we can to correctly interpret God's word. When we consider the context, it helps us to better understand the meaning of a specific passage or a group of passages.

Questions (Remember to consult your study aids)

- 1. Read 1 Corinthians 1:13 and answer the following questions: What other passages around this one should you read to determine why Paul makes this statement? _____
What is the main point that Paul is making here? _____

- 2. Why is it important to consider the context when studying the scriptures? _____

- 3. What can happen when we draw conclusions from one passage without considering the context of the passages around it? _____
- 4. What is the difference between "Immediate context" and "Remote context?" _____

- 5. What is the Personal and Geographic context of Romans 1:1-7? _____

- 6. What is the Cultural context of the book of Matthew? Why was the genealogy important to the people being addressed? _____

- 7. In 1 Corinthians 14:1 it says, "Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy." Does this apply to us today? How would you prove this from the context? _____

- 8. If someone told you "all you have to do to be saved is believe as we are taught in John 3:16." How would you respond? What could you teach them from the Immediate and Remote context? _____

- 9. What was the Cultural context of the statement made to Jesus by the woman at the well in John 4:9? List the source(s) for your answer. _____

- 10. What are at least three spiritual lessons we can we learn from the context of Acts 2:42-47? _____

Considering the Audience

“Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words” Acts 2:14

In the passage quoted above, Peter tells us who he was addressing (the audience) and the preaching that followed was designed for that audience. If you have taken a speech class in school, one of the first principles you were probably taught was to consider the audience whom you would be addressing.

According to the University Writing Center at Texas A&M, “knowing your audience—whether readers or listeners—will help you determine what information to include in a document or presentation, as well as how to convey it most effectively. You should consider your audience when choosing your tone, content, and language—or else your message may seem unfocused or inappropriate.” Not only is this important when writing a speech or preparing a document, it is also important when studying the Bible. Understanding the audience the writer is addressing, helps us to understand what the author is saying. In this lesson, we will examine the subject of Considering the Audience and learn why it is important in our daily bible study.

On the Day of Pentecost, when Peter addressed the “men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem,” he was addressing a group of people (Jews, Proselytes, etc.) that were knowledgeable about prophecy and who were responsible for crucifying the son of God. Therefore, he tailored his words (with the guidance of the Holy Spirit) to impact their minds and to convict them of their sin.

Read Acts 2:14-31. Notice in verses 16-21, Peter references the prophet Joel (who the Jews would have been familiar with) and tells them that what he prophesied is now coming to pass. In verse 22, he mentions Jesus and references the miracles that he performed (which some of the Jews would have witnessed) to confirm he was the promised Messiah. Beginning in verse 23, (to convict them of sin) he said “you have taken (Jesus) by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death.” He also clearly explains that this lawless deed was according to the “determined purpose and foreknowledge of God” as part of his plan for salvation. In verses 25 and 29 he quotes David (whom the Jews loved and respected), to once again illustrate that Jesus was the Christ who was unjustly crucified. At this point, Peter had their attention and he made sure that they knew that even though they crucified Jesus, God had raised him up and elevated him to his right hand (a position of authority), “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” We see from verse 37 that the Holy Spirit through Peter had effectively convicted the Jews of their sin and as a result they were “cut to the heart.” Being convicted of their sin, they asked what they should do next. Peter told them in verse 38, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” This section of scripture shows us how beneficial it can be to know the audience. It helps us to understand why Peter made references to prophecy and why his accusations about crucifying Jesus impacted the Jews and led them to repentance.

Many times we are not told who the audience is that is being addressed. As a result, we may have to use our study aids to help determine this fact. For instance, in the book of Matthew we are not given details about the audience but when we read the first chapter we see that Matthew starts with a listing of the genealogy of Christ. Who would this information appeal to? If we consult a commentary, we find out that he was writing to the

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Jews and this is why he started out by showing the lineage of Christ. Genealogy was important to the Jews and Matthew's goal was to prove that Jesus was the Messiah by tracing his lineage through the Old Law. He knew that the Jews were familiar with prophecy and the genealogy would help to prove that Jesus was the Christ. Throughout the rest of the book, we see Matthew makes several more references that the Jews would have understood and therefore it helped his message to be much more effective.

Taking the time to find out who the audience is will help us to better understand why an author presented a given message the way he did and more importantly it will help us to better learn the truth being taught.

Questions

1. In Acts 10:34-43, who is the audience that Peter is addressing? _____
Why was this particular event so important? Whom did it show that God accepted? _____

2. Read Acts 13:14-41. Who was the audience that was being addressed? Why were these people such an important audience for Paul to address? _____

3. Read Acts 13:42-49. Who was the new audience that Paul and Barnabas began to address? Why were these people such an important audience? _____

4. List at least four different audiences that Jesus addressed during his ministry. _____

5. What are some different audiences that we address today from a spiritual perspective? _____

6. Who was the audience that Peter addressed on the Day of Pentecost? What approach did he use to appeal to them? _____

7. Who was the audience Paul wrote to in 1 and 2 Corinthians? Using a study aid, locate an outline and list at least three issues he addressed with this audience. _____

8. Who was the audience for the serpent in the Garden of Eden? What approach did he take to convince her to eat the fruit of the tree which was in the midst of the garden? _____

9. Who was the audience that Jesus ate with in Matthew 9:10? What was the reason Jesus gave for associating with them? _____

10. Who is the intended audience for the plan of salvation? Give scriptures to support your answer. _____

Lesson 10

Considering Conditions and Circumstances

“And when the city clerk had quieted the crowd, he said: ‘Men of Ephesus, what man is there who does not know that the city of the Ephesians is temple guardian of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Zeus?’” Acts 19:35

In the passage quoted from the book of Acts above, the city clerk said that it was common knowledge (among the people of that time) that Ephesus was known for the temple of Diana. As we read this passage over 2,000 years later, it is definitely not common knowledge to us and we must study further to understand who Diana was and why she was so well known. The 19th chapter of Acts also goes into detail about how Paul disrupted a very profitable business of men who were selling silver shrines of Diana. This section of scripture illustrates why it is important to consider the conditions and circumstances of the time we are reading about in the Bible to better understand the truth being taught.

In many ways, day-to-day life during the period of time the Bible was written was much different than what we experience in our culture today. For instance, many people that we read about in the Old Testament lived in tents and were a very transient population. During the time when the New Testament was written, many people lived in cities and the homes they lived in were very different from the homes we live in today. Their homes often had dirt floors, no windows and certainly did not have luxuries such as running water or indoor bathrooms. When their food supplies were affected by famine, they were not able to quickly bring in new supplies by airplane or train. When we understand these facts, it helps us to see why it was critical that they needed to provide for each other’s needs and why there were spiritual laws that governed these responsibilities.

One of the major conditions Christians in the first century faced was the influence of the Jews. If there was any group of people who should have accepted Jesus, it would have been the Jews because Jesus was the promised Messiah. There were definitely some Jews who accepted Jesus; however, there were also many Jewish leaders (Scribes and Pharisee for example) who rejected him. They were envious of Jesus because he took the attention of their followers away from them and they loved the recognition of the people. They also became envious of the Apostles in the same way. Read the following passages in Acts to see what happened as a result of this envy (Acts 13:42-46, 14:1-2, 17:13, 21:27-36). This created a challenging environment for Paul and the Apostles and often led to their lives being threatened. Even in the face of this adversity, they boldly proclaimed the word of God (Acts 13:46, 14:3, 22:1-21). We can learn a lot from how they dealt with these difficult circumstances.

Another difficult situation that Christians had to deal with in the first century was persecution from people other than the Jews. The book of Revelation for instance was written to encourage Christians to remain strong in the face of persecution (Rev. 2:10). Peter also wrote about persecution when he encouraged Christians that were dispersed in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. Notice he said in Peter 4:12-14, “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ’s sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.” We are not told the cause of the persecution he is referring to but it is important to understand the effect these difficult circumstances had on Christians. In many cases it caused them to be scattered (Acts 8:1, 11:19) and

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discouraged (Gal. 6:9, 2 Thess. 3:13). It can be difficult for us to relate to what it must have been like to go through this type of persecution but it is important that we learn about it so we can appreciate the type of courage and trust they had in the Lord. We can also make application in our life when we suffer persecution.

Another difficult challenge during this time was idolatry. Idolatry was rampant in some parts of the world and it influenced many people to worship false gods. When the Apostle Paul was in Athens, “he saw that the city was given over to idols” (Acts 17:16) and it “stirred” or “provoked” him to reason with the people in the marketplaces and the philosophers on Mars’ hill. In Ephesus the worship of Diana led many astray. Paul had to deal an issue in Corinth regarding the eating of meat sacrificed to idols. These are just a few examples of how idolatry influenced and affected the lives of many Christians and made it a challenging environment to live in.

In this lesson we considered just a few examples of the conditions and the circumstances that Christians faced in the first century. Hopefully we can see how valuable this information is to our understanding of the truth.

Questions

1. Read Acts 19:22-41 and answer the following questions:

What was the merchandise being sold because of the temple of Diana? _____

What did Paul do that they were upset about? _____

What were the circumstances which caused the people to seize Paul's travel companions (Gaius and Aristarchus)? _____

What circumstance led the people to cry out “Great is Diana of the Ephesians!” for almost two hours and why would they do this? (consult a commentary if needed) _____

2. What affect did the living conditions have on people in the First Century and what was the result? _____

3. How did the influence of the Jews over the people affect Christians in the first century? _____

4. Why did the Jews persecute Jesus and Christians? _____

5. How did Paul and the Apostles handle these difficult circumstances? _____

6. Do we face persecution today? If so, how is it different from the first century? _____

7. What challenges did idolatry present to Christians? _____

8. What conditions and circumstances do we face today that can make it challenging as a Christian? _____

Do you think it is more challenging or less challenging than what they faced in the first century and why? _____

Lesson

11

Literal versus Figurative Language

“I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture” John 10:9

In the passage above, Jesus says he is “the door.” We know he is not saying that he is a literal door; he is simply using figurative language to illustrate that he is the way to salvation. The Bible contains both literal and figurative language and it is important to understand the difference between them. In this lesson, we will consider both types of language and learn how to determine if what we are reading is either literal or figurative.

A simple definition of the term “literal” is a word or statement that means what is says (e.g. “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned” Mark 16:16). A simple definition of the term “figurative” would be a word or statement used to represent something else, such as the passage referenced above where Jesus said he is the door. Figurative language often creates a picture or image in the mind of the reader to help them to understand what is being said.

Figurative language or figures of speech come in many different forms. Some of these you may have learned in an English class at school. Here are some figures of speech that we see in the Bible:

- **Simile:** A comparison where one thing is likened to another and often the words “as” or “like” are used. “All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass...” 1 Peter 1:24
- **Metaphor:** A word or phrase where an object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them. Jesus said of Herod, “Go, tell that fox...” (Luke 13:32) which was descriptive of the type of person he was, not that he was a literal fox.
- **Hyperbole:** An exaggerated statement to cause either an emotional response or give a clearer meaning of what is being said. “Rivers of water run down from my eyes, because men do not keep your law” Psalm 119:136.
- **Personification:** A figure that gives an inanimate object a human quality. “The mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing before you, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands” Isaiah 55:12.

These are just a few examples of figures of speech; there are several others (Allegory, Synecdoche, Paradox, etc.) which you can study on your own if you would like to learn more about them.

The next question we want to consider is; how do we know if a word or statement is literal or figurative? There are a few simple rules the student should follow to help make this determination:

1. Always assume what is being said is literal unless it is not possible to draw that conclusion.
2. Allow the immediate context of what is being said to dictate if the work or statement is literal or figurative, unless it cannot be determined.
3. If what is being said contains an impossibility (something that is not possible), then it should be considered figurative language.

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- 4. If the section of scripture tells us it is figurative then we must accept it as such (e.g. John 2:18-22).
- 5. If what is being said contains a figure of speech, it must be considered figurative (e.g. Matthew 26:26, “This is my body”).
- 6. A word or statement should be considered figurative if the literal interpretation would cause one passage or principle to contradict another.

Sometimes, even when we apply the rules mentioned above, it can still be difficult to determine with certainty whether or not what is being said is literal or figurative. Fortunately, those cases are rare as most of the time we can confidently make the correct determination. Using study aids can assist us but ultimately it is the student’s responsibility to draw his own conclusions. It is also critical to make sure the conclusions we reach, do not conflict with established truth in other sections of scripture.

Questions

- 1. Identify the figurative word(s) or statements in the following passages and describe what they mean:
Philippians 3:2 _____
John 1:36 _____
John 6:35 _____
John 8:12 _____
Matthew 23:27 _____
1 Corinthians 3:16 _____

2. Is Jesus making a literal or figurative statement in John 14:26? How can we determine this? What is he teaching? _____

3. What figure of speech is Paul using in Ephesians 6:11-17 and what is he teaching? _____

- 4. Read Daniel 2:31-44 and answer the following questions:
Are dreams literal or figurative? _____
Were the objects in King Nebuchadnezzar’s dream literal or figurative? _____
Was Daniel’s interpretation (from the Lord) something that literally was going to happen? _____
What was the truth being taught to King Nebuchadnezzar and to us? _____

5. Should we consider the “sword” that Jesus mentions in Luke 22:36 to be figurative because to take it literally appears to conflict with the principle Jesus is teaching in Matthew 26:52? Please explain. _____

6. For each of the seven churches of Asia listed in Revelation 2-3, list one example of literal or figurative language that Jesus uses. _____

7. List two of the rules we should follow to determine if a word or statement if literal or figurative: _____

Definition of Words

“And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord” Acts 22:16

Understanding the definition of words in the Bible is a critical part of effective Bible study. When translations were made from the Hebrew and Greek texts, the English words that were used were often capable of several different meanings. For instance, the word “baptize” in the original Greek means “to immerse, submerge; to make whelmed (i.e. fully wet)” (Vines). The English word in most dictionaries is defined as: “to immerse in water or sprinkle or pour water on” (Random House). Many denominations today feel that sprinkling and pouring are acceptable methods of baptism but as we can see from the original Greek word, only complete immersion qualifies as being baptized. In this lesson, we will consider why the definition of words is an important part of our Bible study.

When we first start examining the scriptures as Bible students, we will come across words that we do not understand. For instance the word “repent” is not one that we normally use in our English language. To properly understand the meaning of repent, we need to consult a study aid like a Greek dictionary. If we look up the definition of this word in Vine’s Expository Dictionary it is defined in part as: “to change one’s mind or purpose.” So, when read a passage like Acts 3:19 where it says, *“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out...”* we are able to understand that someone who is in sin needs to repent by changing their mind and turning from their sin. They can then be “converted” so their sins can be forgiven.

Another important consideration when studying different words in the Bible is to make sure we consider the context in which those words are used. For instance, the word “faith” has many different meanings. Therefore, when we look at the original Greek word, we may not get the full meaning unless we also consider the context of the passages where the word is used. An example of this can be found in Romans 3:25. In this passage it talks about Christ Jesus and says, *“whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed.”* The word “faith” in this passage is a general term that comes from the Greek word “pistis” and is capable of several different meanings. Vine’s defines it as “moral conviction (of religious truth, or the truthfulness of God or a religious teacher), the system of religious (Gospel) truth itself.” To better understand its meaning, we should also look at the context of what is being taught in the passages around this verse. In this case, it helps to consider what is said in verses 23-26. Notice it says in these passages: **Verse 23** *“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”* So, in verse 23, we see that all men have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. In verse 24, we are taught that we can have redemption in Christ Jesus and in verse 25 it tells us this redemption is “through faith.” In other words, this atonement is possible if we believe in Jesus. In verse 26, this point is further clarified when it says *“that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.”* If we do not have faith, then we cannot have salvation through Jesus. This is a foundational principle for Christians. This was just one example of where the definition of a word along with the context of the passages around a verse helps us to better understand what is being taught.

Questions

1. Define the word “abide” in John 15:4-7 and explain the principle being taught. _____

2. List the various definitions for the word “faith” and list one passage for each definition. _____

3. Look up the English and Greek definitions for the following words and compare their meanings. List one passage for each Greek definition.

Baptized

(English) _____

(Greek) _____

Fellowship

(English) _____

(Greek) _____

Church

(English) _____

(Greek) _____

Prayer

(English) _____

(Greek) _____

Pastor

(English) _____

(Greek) _____

Perfect

(English) _____

(Greek) _____

4. According to Vine’s Expository Dictionary, the word “turn” has 18 different definitions. List one definition that is associated with conversion and list a passage where that word is used. _____

5. One of the Greek words for “judge” is “krino” which is defined by Vine’s as “properly, to distinguish, i.e. decide (mentally or judicially); by implication, to try, condemn, punish:--avenge, conclude, condemn, damn, decree, determine, esteem, judge, go to (sue at the) law, ordain, call in question, sentence to, think.”

This word is used in Matthew 7:1 and in John 8:24. Look at the contexts for both passages and explain why these two passages are referring to two different types of judgments. _____

6. The meaning of words in various languages today often change. The New Testament was written in Koine Greek which is a frozen language. What does the term “frozen language” mean and what is the advantage of the Bible being written in this language? _____

7. Select any word used in the Bible and document the Hebrew or Greek definition. _____

Precautions and Proper Attitude for Study

“He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, But whoever walks wisely will be delivered” Proverbs 28:26

Before we formally engage in Bible study, it is vitally important that we approach it with the right attitude and with an awareness of what can hinder our study. For instance, if we were to approach a study strongly believing that musical instruments were acceptable in worship, there is a good chance that we would try to use the scriptures to prove what we already believe. This is known as a preconceived notion, which is simply an opinion that we form beforehand without adequate evidence. Another danger we must be conscious of, is allowing emotion to affect how we view the scriptures. In this lesson, we will consider precautions we should take and the proper attitude we should have when studying the Bible.

We have all probably heard the phrase “we should be open-minded.” What that means is we should be receptive to ideas or arguments. When we study the Bible, it is critical that we are open-minded. It is common for mankind to form opinions on a host of different things based on life experiences, thoughts expressed from others, or our intuition (“gut feeling”) about something. We must make sure that the opinions we have formed do not affect our objective study of the scriptures. Even if we believe something to be true, if we enter into Bible study with an open mind, we are more likely to accept what the scriptures teach and are more likely to change any opinions we had that may be proven false.

Another precaution we should take is to make sure that we do not let emotion affect our ability to study and accept the truth. Once common area where emotion has affected the Lord’s church over the past several years is in the area of divorce and remarriage. The scriptures clearly teach us that God’s pattern is for one man and one woman to be married for life and the only acceptable reason for divorce is adultery (Matthew 19:3-9). Yet, many will let their emotions influence them to the point where they start coming up with additional reasons for divorce. You may hear reasons such as “he abused her” or “he did not know the truth when he divorced his first wife so God will not hold him accountable to his law.” You will not find anywhere in the scriptures where these emotional arguments are proven to be true. As difficult as it may be for people that feel this way, especially if it means that they or a member of their family cannot divorce or be re-married, we must have enough respect for God’s law that we will put aside those emotions and do what is right. As Jesus taught in John 12:48: *“He who rejects me, and does not receive my words, has that which judges him,-the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.”*

As Bible students we have an important responsibility to prove what is true in the scriptures (1 Thess. 5:21). Our attitude must be like those in Berea who *“received the word with all readiness, and searched the scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so”* (Acts 17:11). Even if we have the utmost confidence in a preacher or another Christian, we still have the responsibility to verify if what they are teaching is consistent with the truth. This is one area, especially in the denominational world, that results in false doctrine. All too often, people will accept something that is taught or believe a convincing opinion from someone they respect without taking the time to see if it is consistent with scripture. This often leads to error and is one of the main reasons we need to study.

Questions

1. What is the proper attitude that the Bible student must have before engaging in Bible study?

2. Define the term “Preconceived Notion.” What is the danger in this with any given subject in the Bible?

3. What does it mean to be “open-minded” and why is that important when studying the Bible? _____

4. How can emotion affect our Bible study? What is the danger when emotion is involved? _____

5. Someone who was previously married and was not divorced because of adultery tells you that they feel it would be unfair if they could not marry again because they were not aware of God’s law when they divorced. How would you respond? What passages would you use to support your answer? _____

6. What responsibilities do we have as Christians when it comes to the truth? List passages to support your answer. _____

7. A woman feels strongly that she should be allowed to lead a worship service because she is “just as talented and scripturally sound as any man” and she cites as her authority 1 Corinthians 11:5. Is she right? Do you think emotions could affect her belief? How would you respond? _____

8. What kind of natural emotions do we learn about in Acts 2:37, 8:39 and 2 Corinthians 7:10? _____

9. What types of arguments do denominations make for using the Lord’s treasury to pay for basketball courts, church softball teams and other social programs? What Biblical principles might they incorrectly apply to justify what they do? What scriptures would you use to show the proper use of the treasury? _____

10. Why do some people continue to believe and practice error even when Bible study has proven to them that what they believe is false? Can you think of anyone we read about in the scriptures that had this problem?

11. What is something that you may have believed that through Bible study was proven to be false? _____

Proper Application of Scripture

‘Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven’
Matthew 7:21

The most important part of Bible Study is to properly apply what we have learned. It is one thing to learn and understand the truth; it is another to properly apply what we have learned. In this lesson we will consider why the proper application of scripture is so important in the life of a Christian.

All of the lessons up to this point have focused on different aspects of Bible study. Respecting the authority of the scriptures, considering the context and audience, using study aids, etc. are all important parts of correctly understanding the Bible. Once we have gained an understanding of a particular passage or section of scripture, it is time for us to make application.

When a sinner learns that he must hear, believe, repent, confess and be baptized, the next step is to do what the scriptures teach. Some people will hear and believe but will not do anything else. If we only partially apply what the scriptures teach, we cannot expect to be pleasing to the Lord and more importantly cannot expect to be saved in the end. We are obligated to completely follow and apply everything that we have learned.

Consider these important passages on the application of scripture:

James 1:22-25 *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a bearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”*

Luke 6:46 *“But why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do the things which I say?”*

Romans 2:13 *“...for not the bearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified”*

1 John 3:7 *“Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous”*

James 2:14 *“What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?”*

Sometimes scripture is not properly applied because we have not studied thoroughly enough to understand the truth. This frequently happens in denominations. Their interpretation and application of scripture often varies greatly from what is being taught because they have not closely examined the truth. The same danger exists for all Bible students and this is why we must take our time to carefully study the Bible. God has given us minds to comprehend what is taught if we are willing to put in the time to study it correctly.

Even when we do understand the truth, one of the most challenging parts of a Christian’s life can be to consistently apply what we learn in the Bible. Why is that? There can be many reasons. Maybe we are convicted or condemned by the truth and we do not like what is said so we ignore what God’s word says or change it to suit our needs. Sometimes it can be simply that we want to do what pleases us instead of what the Bible

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teaches. Whatever the reason may be, we must understand that we will all be held accountable to the truth and to properly apply what we learn.

Questions

1. Read the following passages and state the proper application:

James 1:26 _____

Matthew 7:24-27 _____

Matthew 5:13-16 _____

Matthew 23:9 _____

1 Peter 3:15 _____

2. What are some reasons why people do not properly apply the truth?

3. An argument that is made by many denominations to justify instrumental music in worship is that we read about instruments being played in the New Testament and they site Revelation 14:2. Are we applying this scripture correctly if we use it to justify instrumental music in worship? Why or why not? _____

4. How do the Mormons incorrectly apply 1 Corinthians 15:29? Why do we know that what they believe is false and what scriptures would you use to prove it? _____

5. Many Catholics use Matthew 16:18 to prove that Peter was given supreme authority and was the first pope. Are they applying this scripture correctly? If not, what is the proper application? _____

6. Many brethren use 1 Corinthians 15:33 to teach that bad people can have a negative effect on good people, yet most scholars agree the passage is referring to false teachers. Are brethren incorrectly applying this passage? _____

7. Some believe that Jesus turned water into intoxicating wine in John 2 and therefore they are justified in drinking intoxicating beverages today. Are they applying this section of scripture correctly? If not, what arguments would you use to refute their belief? _____

8. What is the danger to the church if brethren do not properly apply the truth? _____

Lesson
15

Exercise: Fellowship

Now that we have gone through several principles for effective Bible study, it is time to put those principles into practice. For the next five lessons, you will be asked to study various Bible subjects and to determine the truth on each of these subjects. You will also be presented with scenarios and questions that frequently come up with these subjects and will need to present the truth on each. Try to structure your answers in a way that would be understandable to someone you are studying with on the subject.

Resources

Read the article entitled “Fellowship” on the web site www.biblequestions.org. You can find it by clicking on the letter “F” from the home page and scrolling down to the section labeled “Fellowship.” You will also find other articles in that section that can be used as a resource as well. Make sure to use your study aids to assist in answering these questions.

Definitions in Greek

List the different applications of the term “fellowship” in the scriptures

Scenario: Many denominations believe and follow the practice of “fellowship meals.” In what way are they using this term and does the Bible support this definition?

False doctrine: What other ways is the principle of “fellowship” applied improperly?

Are there conditions to fellowship? (Explain in detail)

How does Romans 14 apply to fellowship?

Lesson
16**Exercise: Necessity of Baptism**

In this lesson we will go through an exercise to learn what the Bible teaches about the necessity of baptism. We could simply study the subject of baptism in general but the larger issue in the denominational world today is in understanding that baptism is required for salvation. Some religions view baptism as an outward demonstration to the world that one has already been saved. Other religions simply view it as a practice for becoming a member of the church. In fact, most denominations do not believe it is necessary to be baptized at all to be saved. So, in this lesson we do want to consider the fundamentals of baptism, but we also want to prove whether or not baptism is truly required for salvation.

Resources

There are many good articles and Bible questions that have been answered regarding Baptism on our web site (www.biblequestions.org). Use these articles and your study aids to assist you in answering these questions.

Definitions in Greek (Baptize, Baptist, Baptism)

List the different applications of the terms “Baptize, Baptist, Baptism” in the scriptures

Scenario: Someone tells you that baptism is an outward demonstration to the world that one has already been saved. How would you respond to that assertion?

Scenario: Someone you know who is a Baptist, tells you that baptism is simply the method which is used to join the church and they cite as their proof from the scriptures Acts 2:47. How would you respond?

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Scenarios: Someone you know is a Catholic and tells you that they plan to baptize their infant child for the forgiveness of sins that were inherited from Adam. How would you respond?

What would your response be if they told you they were baptizing the infant to dedicate him or her to the Lord?

Scenario: Let's say you have taught someone the truth on baptism and they have accepted it. They ask you at what age does the Bible teach their child becomes accountable for their sins and therefore should be baptized?

Read the article "What Does "For" in Acts 2: 38 Mean?" on our web site (www.biblequestions.org) and describe why this is important principle in our learning of why baptism is necessary for salvation.

Site all of the examples of conversion in Acts, confirm if baptism was involved and list who was baptized.

Scenario: You are teaching someone about the necessity of baptism. What would you teach them is necessary to do **before** we are baptized? What would you teach them needs to be done **after** baptism?

Scenarios: Someone tells you that belief in Jesus is all that is necessary to be saved. They site Mark 16:16 as proof and state that the end of the verse says "he who does not believe will be condemned" and does not say "he who does not believe and is not baptized will not be saved." How would you respond?

How would you respond if they sited Romans 10:9 as proof that believe and confession is all that is necessary to be saved?

What if they sited the thief on the cross as an example that baptism is not necessary? How would you respond?

Lesson
17**Exercise 3: Church Discipline**

In this lesson we will go through an exercise to learn what the Bible teaches about church discipline. The Bible teaches us that there are times when our brothers and sisters in Christ “walk disorderly” (are engaged in sin) and as a result, the church may need to practice what is commonly referred to as church discipline. We want to consider what the scriptures require us to do with erring Christians and more importantly what steps we must take prior to moving to the disciplinary process.

1. Prior to reaching the point of discipline, what do the following passages teach us we should do with those in sin? Your answers should include explaining the terms used in these passages.

1 Thess. 5:14

Gal. 6:1-2

2 Tim. 2:24-26

James 5:19-20

2. Define the following words in Greek that are related to discipline and explain what the Bible teaches us in the passage where the words are used. Make sure to look at the passages surrounding these verses to understand the context.

Withdraw:

2 Thess. 3:6

Mark:

Rom 16:17

Company (not to keep):

1 Cor. 5:9, 11

2 Thess. 3:14

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Turn Away:

2 Tim. 3:5

Reject:

Titus 3:10

Receive (not):

2 John 10

Put Away:

1 Cor. 5:13

3. Answer the following questions about church discipline. To assist you, read the article entitled “The Matter of Withdrawal” on our web site (www.biblequestions.org) by choosing the letter “F” and going to the section on “Fellowship.”
 - a. Who are the ones that we must withdraw from?
 - b. What are the purposes of withdrawing from a Christian in sin who refuses to repent?
 - c. What is the responsibility of those who withdraw?
 - d. What are the consequences if we fail to withdraw?
4. Read and study 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 and answer the following questions:
 - a. What was the issue Paul was addressing?
 - b. What did Paul mean in verse 5 when he said to “deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus”?
 - c. What were their responsibilities toward this brother once he was withdrawn from?
 - d. In 2 Cor. 2:6-8, it appears from Paul’s statement that this man whom they withdrew from had repented. How were they to treat this man and why was this important?
5. What can be some of the challenges with church discipline being administered collectively as a church and individually as a Christian?

Lesson
18**Exercise 4: Worship**

In this lesson we will consider what the Bible teaches about worship. With numerous religions in the world, there are also numerous types of worship. The worship of our great God is probably the most important part of our Christian walk. In John 4:23, we are told that God seeks our worship. As our creator and heavenly father, God is worthy of all glory, honor and praise. Worship allows us to express our love and devotion to him and gives us an opportunity to give him the glory he deserves.

To assist you in your study of this subject, read the following article, “What the Bible Teaches about Worship” and also read the response to the question, “Can you comment on public worship?” Both of these can be found on our web site, www.biblequestions.org under the section on “Worship.”

- Using a Bible dictionary, list the three nouns and five verbs translated “worship” in the Greek New Testament along with their definitions. List at least one passage where the words are used.

Noun 1:

Noun 2:

Noun 3:

Verb 1:

Verb 2:

Verb 3:

Verb 4:

Verb 5:

- List some of the differences in worship from the Old Law compared to the New Law (think of practices, day of worship, etc.).
- Read John 4:19-26 and list at least two things we learn about worship from the conversation Jesus had with the woman at the well.

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9. List the five acts of worship that we read about in the New Testament and list a passage for each.

10. What should be our focus in public worship? What should our attitude and conduct be like during worship?

11. List some different practices that can be seen in the worship services of different denominations today. How do we know if these practices are acceptable to God?

12. What type of worship does God reject? Read Acts 17:22-31 and comment on the problem with the type of worship being offered by the Athenians.

13. What are some reasons why our worship might not be acceptable to God even in a scripturally arranged worship service?

14. Many churches today are offering traditional and contemporary worship services. What are the differences in these two types of services? Is it acceptable to offer different types of worship services to appeal to different age groups?

15. Some churches are offering a “children’s worship service” during the assembly. Perform a search of this term and list some reasons why this is practiced. Do you see anything wrong with this practice? List some passages that support your answer.

16. What is the difference between private and public worship? List some passages that support the principle of private worship.

Lesson
19

Exercise 5: Authority

In this lesson we will consider what the Bible teaches about authority. This is one of the most important, foundational truths within the scriptures. In the religious world today, mankind has established many different sources of authority. Ultimately when we study with others about this subject, we want to help them understand why we practice what we practice from a spiritual perspective and also teach them what must guide us spiritually in our day-to-day lives.

To assist you in your study of this subject, read the article, “Bible Authority, a Closer Look” found on our web site, www.biblequestions.org under the section on “Authority-Articles.” Also, refer to Lessons 3-6 where this subject was covered in detail

- Using a Bible dictionary, list the four nouns and three verbs translated “authority” in the Greek New Testament along with their definitions. List at least one passage where the words are used.

Noun 1:

Noun 2:

Noun 3:

Noun 4:

Verb 1:

Verb 2:

Verb 3:

- In Matthew 21:23-27 Jesus was confronted by the chief priests and the elders of the people. Why was he confronted? What was he trying to teach them by his answer?

- Why must we have authority for all that we practice religiously? What are the dangers to us as Christians and to the church if we do not use the right source of authority?

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20. What are the three ways we establish Bible authority? Define each one and list at least one passage which illustrates each one.
21. Look at the following scriptures and list what you would be trying to teach someone about authority when you refer to these passages:
- John 14:21, 23-
- Colossians 2:8-
- Galatians 6:6-9-
- 2 John 9-
- Acts 26:9-15-
- Psalm 94:11, Isaiah 55:9, 1 Corinthians 3:18-20-
- Mark 7:1-13-
22. List the sources of authority for the religions listed below that are used in addition to or as a replacement for the Bible:
- Baptist-
- Catholic-
- Islam-
- Jehovah Witness-
- Mormon-
- Methodist-
23. For the religions listed in question 6, what is the source of their authority? If you were studying with someone who was in one of these religions, how would you approach the subject of authority?
24. What is the source of authority for non-religious people in the world today? What are the consequences of them using that source?
25. Jesus said in Matthew 28:18 “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.” What do we learn from his statement?
26. What do we learn about authority from Romans 13:1-7?
27. What do we learn about authority from 1 Timothy 2:12?

Lesson
20

Review

In this final lesson, we will review everything we have learned up to this point and remind ourselves of how these principles will help us to more effectively study the Bible. Two questions have been selected directly from each lesson (1-19). Instead of simply copying your answers from the previous lessons, use this as an opportunity to apply the knowledge you have learned to provide more complete answers to these questions.

13. Read Hebrews 5:12-14 and list three reasons why spiritual growth is important.

14. In 1 Corinthians 1:10 we are told (NKJV): “Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” Explain what Paul is pleading for them to do and why it is so important.

15. What was given to protect the early Christians from error until the New Testament was written?

16. How do we know that we have been given the fully revealed word of God? List two passages that prove this to be true _____

17. What is wrong with the statement: “everything we practice spiritually is authorized unless it is prohibited in scripture”?

18. Is its ok to do what we feel is right? Why or why not?

19. How can we tell if a given command applies to us today?

20. Do the Ten Commandments apply to us today? Why or why not? Give scripture to support your answer.

21. What do we learn from the example of Jesus when he washed the feet of his disciples? _____

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22. What is the difference in individual benevolence and church benevolence? _____

23. What is the definition of “inference” and what does the term “necessary” mean? _____

24. In Hebrews 10:25, we are told not to forsake the “assembling of ourselves together.” What can we infer from this statement? _____
25. Compare Hebrews 11:6 in the NKJV, RSV and ESV translations and document the main differences. Does it change the meaning of the scripture? _____

26. If you wanted to prove that baptism means immersion, what study aid(s) would you use and why? _____

27. Why is it important to consider the context when studying the scriptures? _____

28. If someone told you “all you have to do to be saved is believe as we are taught in John 3:16.” How would you respond? What could you teach them from the Immediate and Remote context? _____

29. Read Acts 13:14-41. Who was the audience that was being addressed? Why were these people such an important audience for Paul to address? _____

30. What are some different audiences that we address today from a spiritual perspective? _____

31. How did the influence of the Jews over the people affect Christians in the first century? _____

32. Do we face persecution today? If so, how is it different from the first century? _____

33. Should we consider the “sword” that Jesus mentions in Luke 22:36 to be figurative because to take it literally appears to conflict with the principle Jesus is teaching in Matthew 26:52? Please explain. _____

34. List two of the rules we should follow to determine if a word or statement if literal or figurative: _____

35. List the various definitions for the word “faith” and list one passage for each definition. _____

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36. The meaning of words in various languages today often change. The New Testament was written in Koine Greek which is a frozen language. What does the term “frozen language” mean and what is the advantage of the Bible being written in this language? _____

37. What is the proper attitude that the Bible student must have before engaging in Bible study? _____

38. A woman feels strongly that she should be allowed to lead a worship service because she is “just as talented and scripturally sound as any man” and she cites as her authority 1 Corinthians 11:5. Is she right? Do you think emotions could affect her belief? How would you respond? _____

39. An argument that is made by many denominations to justify instrumental music in worship is that we read about instruments being played in the New Testament and they cite Revelation 14:2. Are we applying this scripture correctly if we use it to justify instrumental music in worship? Why or why not? _____

40. Some believe that Jesus turned water into intoxicating wine in John 2 and therefore they are justified in drinking intoxicating beverages today. Are they applying this section of scripture correctly? If not, what arguments would you use to refute their belief? _____

41. Scenario: Many denominations believe and follow the practice of “fellowship meals.” In what way are they using this term and does the Bible support this definition? _____

42. Are there conditions to fellowship? (Explain in detail) _____

43. Someone you know who is a Baptist, tells you that baptism is simply the method which is used to join the church and they cite as their proof from the scriptures Acts 2:47. How would you respond? _____

44. Scenario: You are teaching someone about the necessity of baptism. What would you teach them is necessary to do **before** we are baptized? What would you teach them needs to be done **after** baptism? _____

45. Prior to reaching the point of discipline, what do the following passages teach us we should do with those in sin? Your answers should include explaining the terms used in these passages.
1 Thess. 5:14

Gal. 6:1-2

2 Tim. 2:24-26

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James 5:19-20

46. Read and study 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 and answer the following questions:

28. What was the issue Paul was addressing?

29. What did Paul mean in verse 5 when he said to “deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus”?

30. What were their responsibilities toward this brother once he was withdrawn from?

31. In 2 Cor. 2:6-8, it appears from Paul’s statement that this man whom they withdrew from had repented. How were they to treat this man and why was this important?

47. List the five acts of worship that we read about in the New Testament and list a passage for each. _____

48. What are some reasons why our worship might not be acceptable to God even in a scripturally arranged worship service? _____

49. Why must we have authority for all that we practice religiously? What are the dangers to us as Christians and to the church if we do not use the right source of authority? _____

50. What is the source of authority for non-religious people in the world today? What are the consequences of them using that source? _____

This concludes the Principles of Effective Bible Study series. The principles you have learned will enhance your study and will assist you in your service to our great God and his son Jesus Christ. Remember, the main purposes of Bible study is to help us understand what God expects from us as his creation, to assist us in building a strong spiritual foundation that can handle the storms of life, to give us the knowledge we need to teach others and to give us the knowledge we need to defend the truth. When we learn and are obedient to the will of God, we are in fellowship with him and Jesus (1 John 1:7) and we can be confident that God will hear our prayers (1 Peter 3:12). Be diligent in your study so you can be a worker that God is proud of and so you can correctly divide the word of God (2 Tim. 2:15). The truth will change our lives and the lives of the people we teach and will allow us to spend eternity in heaven with the Godhead and all faithful saints (1 Peter 1:3-4).