

# Living by the Book

Study to understand!

## Why some people don't study the Bible (ch. 1)

- “I need something that works.” Problem of relevance
- “I don't know how.” Problem of understanding
- “I'm not a 'Bible-major.'” Problem of training
- “I just don't have time.” Problem of priorities
- “I have my doubts about the Bible.” Problem of unbelief
- “I can't seem to make it interesting.” Problem of interest
- “Nobody ever told me what I would gain by it.” Problem of results

## Why should we study the Bible? (ch. 2)

- Bible study is essential to spiritual growth. (1 Peter 2:2)
  - Attitude- You must come with a humble, teachable mindset.
  - Appetite- You should passionately crave the Word of God!
  - Aim- The goal of Bible study is spiritual growth.
- Bible study is essential to spiritual maturity. (Hebrews 5:11-14)
  - Mature Christians know how to decide right from wrong because of their constant use of the Bible.
  - The mark of true spiritual maturity is not how much you understand, but how much you use.
- Bible study is essential to spiritual effectiveness (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
  - The bible tells you what is right (doctrine) and what is wrong (rebuke).
  - It also tells you how to make things right (correction) and how to keep it right (training in righteousness).
  - Bible study equips you to be an effective instrument/tool in God's hands.

## How this Material can help (ch. 3)

- What you can expect from this material
  - You will find a simple, proven process
    - No matter who you are, you should be able to study the Bible!
    - “As long as you can read, you can study the Bible.”—page 30
  - You will gain a valuable sense of self confidence in your ability to handle Scripture.
    - Firsthand knowledge of the Bible gives you confidence to think for yourself.
    - You will learn what the Bible says, where it says it, what it means, and how to use it.
    - Firsthand knowledge also enables you to evaluate what others say is true.
  - You will experience the joy of personal discovery.
  - You will deepen your relationship with God.
    - As you read the book, you'll fall in love with the author.
    - As we study Scripture, we should be learning more about the God of the Scriptures!

- There is a Cost
  - Bible study requires effort.
    - Like any other discipline in life, Bible Study pays in proportion to how much of an investment you make.
    - The greater the investment, the greater the reward.
  - 1. Openness to God
    - The ultimate aim of Bible Study is to know God. Do you want to know Him intimately? Prov. 8:34-35
  - 2. Openness to Change
    - The Bible was written not to be studied, but to change our lives.
    - Spiritual growth is a commitment to change. (Rom. 8:29)

## An Overview of the Process (ch. 4)

- There's method to the madness
  - It is a method: We take specific steps in order to get specific results.
  - Personal Bible Study has a very specific aim: life-change.
  - 1. Observation- What do I see? You are a biblical detective.
  - 2. Interpretation- What does it mean? The more you observe, the less interpretation is needed.
  - 3. Application- How does it work? (How can I use it?) For those who read and heed the Bible, it changes their lives.
- It take firsthand knowledge.
- A. Begin with observation- what do I see?
  - Look for:
    - Terms (crucial key words)
    - Structure
      - Grammatical structure- what is the subject, verb, object
      - Literary structure- question and answer, climax, and resolution, cause and effect
    - Literary form: poetry, narrative, arguments (Paul), poignant stories (parables), allegory, satire, apocalyptic, comedy, tragedy, etc.
    - Atmosphere- the setting and feeling
      - What was it like to be in the author's shoes?
      - Transport your senses into the passage. This part is an exercise for the imagination, not just the intellect.
- B. Move on to Interpretation- what does it mean?
  - These will help you get the meaning:
    - Questions- bombard the text with questions
    - Answers- look for the answers to your questions
    - Integration- put the answers together into a meaningful whole
- C. Move on to application- How does it work? (How can I use this?)
  - How does it work for me?
  - How does it work for others?
  - Application is the answer to the question: "So what?"