

How to Read the Bible

Let's start with some review:

- Can we trust the Bible's preservation and translation?
- Can we trust the canonicity of the Bible? In other words, did the right books get put in the Bible?
- Is the Bible actually God's Word? Is it inspired by God?
- What kind of translation should you get? What kind shouldn't you get?
- Tell me 2 things about your own Bible that you learned?
- What does the Bible say about itself?

The Real Reasons it's hard to understand:

1. Many make _____
 - They rarely read and study the Bible
 - They make no effort to understand when they do read it
2. Many study for the _____
 - To prove themselves right (reading only to justify their conduct of beliefs)
 - To prove others wrong (reading only to find arguments to support their position)
3. Many fail to apply their _____
 - Such as looking up words they don't understand
 - Such as defining words in their context
 - Such as taking into consideration all that God's Word says on a subject
 - Such as studying the Bible the way it was written: book by book, chapter by chapter, verse by verse

The problem is not with God's Word; the problem is with lazy and sloppy handling of God's Word.
"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth." ~2 Timothy 2:15

Examples of poor Bible reading:

1. Taking verses _____
 - Habakkuk 1:5
 - Root problem: self-centered reading
2. _____ parts you don't understand
 - 1 Corinthians 13
 - Root problem: laziness
3. _____ when you don't understand right away
 - Matthew 8:1-4
 - Root problem: laziness

Introducing Inductive Bible Study:

1. Observation: _____?

- Observation teaches you to see precisely what the passage says. It is the basis for accurate interpretation and correct application.

2. Interpretation: _____?

- While observation leads to an accurate understanding of what the Word of God says, interpretation goes a step further and helps you understand what it means. When you accurately interpret the Word of God, you will be able to confidently put its truths into practice in your daily life.

3. Application: _____? What truths can I put into practice? What changes should I make in my life?

- No matter how much you know about God's Word, if you don't apply what you learn, Scripture will never benefit your life. To be a hearer of the Word and not a doer is to deceive yourself (James 1:22-25). This is why application is so vital. Observation and interpretation are the "hearing" of God's Word. With application, you will be transformed into Christ's image. Application is the embracing of the truth, the "doing" of God's Word. It is this process which allows God to work in your life.