

BECOMING FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST



Christian Life Center, A Foursquare Church | 951-689-6785 | www.DiscipleshipDevelopment.org

PART 3B | BASIC RULES FOR UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

Understanding God's Word from God's point of view. Opening the Word of God is to step into a world where things are very unlike our own.



2 Peter 1:19-21 ... *knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*

Basic background of the Bible

1. The Bible was written in different lands over a period of 1,500 years by more than 40 authors from all walks of life. The Bible is unified because it was written by one Author. (2 Peter 1:19-21)
 - It is a library of 66 books which are not all categorized in chronological order but grouped according to type of writing: the Law, History, Poetry, Major and Minor Prophets, Gospels and Historical Book, Epistles (letters), and the NT Apocalyptic Book.
2. The Old Testament is the record of God's relationship with people *before and in the Law*. The New Testament is the record of God's relationship with people *after Jesus' Birth, Sacrifice and Resurrection*.
 - The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed; the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed. (Missler)
3. The Bible is the unfolding story of how God acted in human history to establish His Kingdom, to save mankind and glorify Himself. **Jesus Christ is the Center of it all** (John 5:39)!

Things to avoid when reading the Bible

1. The practice of reading our own preconceived notions, biases, and understanding *into* Bible text. This is called eisegesis.
2. The scientific method is the approach that there is a "cause and effect" to every miracle in the Bible.
3. We can be more committed to the religious/church beliefs taught us in our childhood than we are to the actual teachings of the Bible.
4. A fear of paradox, seeming discrepancies and the tension of two

Online

Click the QR code above to view the main Institute course. The code on the left takes you to the current lesson online. Put aside some time to read the information this week!

Memory verses

2 Peter 1:19-21

Answers

Selective literalism
Two categories

Next week

"It's All About Jesus!"

Main thought that the Holy Spirit revealed to me...

Additional thoughts...

apparent contradictions, may confuse us.

5. _____, obeying the commands or teachings we like and ignoring the ones we do not like, is a common practice.
6. We may be tempted to look for easy answers to complex problems, even at the expense of Truth.
7. Because of the flood of prophetic words online, YouTube, etc. we may believe people's interpretations of future events rather than taking the time to allow the Holy Spirit to reveal His Truth through Scripture.

Learn to read Scripture in context

1. _____ The Bible's Highest Ideals and Standards which have top priority such as the 10 Commandments in Exodus 20 and cultural regulations not necessarily meant to apply to all people under all circumstances.
2. Context (Type of writing, historical, cultural, etc.) is understood by the passages that precede and follow it.
 - Exegesis | Discovering the writer's original and intended meaning.
 - Hermeneutics | Bringing contemporary relevance to ancient texts, the Bible's meaning for today.
 - Interpret the Bible as a progressive revelation of God.
 - Bible interpretation is singular (one meaning), Bible application may be plural (several ways to apply it).
3. God's Word was expressed in the vocabulary and thought patterns of the people in Bible times and cultures. If they were going to hear God's message, it could only have come through events and in the language they would have understood.
 - *Therefore, Scripture can never mean what it did not first mean to the original hearers and readers.*

Basic steps to use in correct Bible interpretation and application

Determine what type of literature it is (history, poetry, prophecy) and describe the historical and cultural setting. Then answer these questions...

1. What does it **SAY**? Describe what is happening or what the writer is plainly saying. Outline the story plot, narrative, etc. What is the key verse or thought?
2. What does it **MEAN**? What is the writer saying to the original hearers?
3. How does it **RELATE** to other Scriptures? Link the message of the passage to major themes and teachings of Scripture.
4. How does it **APPLY** to me today? What are the important applicable truths for us today? What does this passage suggest I should be or do as a believer in Christ