

Profiting From Your Bible

(1TI 4:15) Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

- I. This series assumes Scripture to be God's inspired revelation in written form. **2TI 3:16-17.**
 - A. This also assumes that Scripture is preserved. **PSA 12:6-7.**
 - B. This also assumes that Scripture is pure. **PRO 30:5.**
- II. Profiting from Scripture depends upon:
 - A. having the true Scripture. **2CO 2:17.**
 - B. believing it is the true Scripture. **1TH 2:13.**
 - C. having necessary spiritual qualifications. **JOH 8:42-44; 1CO 2:14.**
 - D. having necessary personal qualifications. **PRO 9:10 c/w PRO 8:13; 2TH 2:10.**
 - E. reading/studying it. **2TI 2:15.**
 - F. following its rules for study.
 - G. submitting to it. **PSA 111:10; 19:7-11.**
 - H. retaining it in memory. **JAM 1:25.**
 - I. distinguishing its words from lies. **JER 7:8; PSA 119:128.**
- III. Here is a brief treatment of why the KJV Bible is God's preserved word in the English language.
 - A. The inspired Scripture was predominantly first written in Hebrew (O.T.) and Greek (N.T.).
 - B. The inspiration was not limited to the original manuscripts or languages.
 - 1. If God is omnipotent, He can certainly preserve His word in copies or translations.
 - 2. Examples of copying being employed in the preservation and transmission of scriptures are seen in **DEU 17:18-19; PRO 25:1.**
 - 3. The Greek N.T. contains many quotations from the Hebrew O.T. That's translation. God's power to make His word known in other languages is plainly seen in **ACT 2:4-6.**
 - 4. By these means, many nations could receive God's word in their own language to accomplish the apostles' assignment to evangelize them. **MAT 28:19-20.**
 - C. There are basically two families of manuscripts from which English Bibles have come.
 - 1. One family of manuscripts largely came out of a philosophical academy in Alexandria, Egypt and is associated with the Roman Catholic Church which virulently opposed those churches who preserved scriptures which opposed the Alexandrian manuscripts.
 - a. "It is almost 300 years since James, Archbishop of Genoa, is said to have translated the Bible into Italian. More than 200 years ago, in the days of Charles V, the French king, was it put forth faithfully in French, the sooner to shake out of the deceived people's hands, the false heretical translations of a sect called Waldenses." (Preface to the Jesuit-Rheims Bible of 1582)
 - b. Egypt was a place of bondage for God's people, not liberty. **EXO 1:13-14.**
 - c. This family of manuscripts is the basis of (or has influenced) virtually all modern English Bibles since 1850.
 - 2. The other family of manuscripts (particularly N.T. manuscripts) largely sprang from Syria where the Apostle Paul had been commissioned to evangelize the Gentiles. **ACT 13:1-2; 14:26-28.**
 - a. Paul especially advanced the principle of liberty that comes from being led of the true God declared in the true Scripture. **ROM 8:14-15; 2CO 3:17.**
 - b. This family of manuscripts was the basis of KJV Bible.
 - 3. If the only criterion for identifying the true Bible was the distinction between

identifying with bondage or with liberty, choose liberty.

- D. The KJV excels all other English Bibles.
1. It upholds and glorifies Jesus Christ more than any other English Bible. Other versions provably diminish His nature, virgin birth, deity, sinlessness, work, and victory over death.
 2. It bears the fruits that God's true word should produce in men who believe it: repentance from sin, submission to Christ and victory over the darkness of this world. **ACT 26:18; 1TH 2:13-14.**
 3. It bears the fruits of God's wisdom among peoples who exalt it: justice, righteousness, technological advancement and prosperity. **PRO 8:12-21.**
 4. It is internally consistent whereas other English Bibles have obvious internal contradictions and errors. God's word is pure. **PSA 12:6-7; JOH 10:35.**
 5. It is very readable, written primarily in single-syllable words and research has shown that it is more readable than other English Bibles.
 6. It lends itself to easy memorization. God wants His words to be remembered. **PSA 119:11; 1CO 15:1-2.**

IV. Here is a simple overview of the Bible.

- A. It consists of 66 books and epistles (letters) in two major divisions: the Old Testament (39 books) and the New Testament (27 books and letters). All of it is inspired. **2TI 3:16.**
1. The O.T. consists of the *Law* (Pentateuch/Books of Moses [**GEN to DEU**] plus the historical books [**JOS to EST**]), the *Writings/Psalms* (**JOB to SON**), and the *Prophets* (**ISA to MAL**).
 - a. The Hebrew Canon of Scripture did not include the Apocrypha.
 - b. Jesus Christ only recognized the Law, Prophets and Psalms as Scripture which testified of Himself. **LUK 24:44-45 c/w JOH 5:39.**
 2. The N.T. consists of the four gospels which are the record of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ (**MAT to JOH**), the **Acts of the Apostles** of Jesus Christ, the epistles/letters of the apostles (**ROM to JUDE**) and the **Book of Revelation**.
 3. The O.T. is Christ *veiled*; the N.T. is Christ *revealed*.
 4. The N.T. is the clearer, superior revelation from God; the O.T. must be interpreted according to the explanations given of it in the N.T. **2PE 1:19-21; 1JO 4:6.**
- B. The O.T. was the peculiar blessing of the nation of Israel (**PSA 147:19-20; ROM 3:1-2**) whereas the N.T. marked the going forth of God's word to *all nations*. **ROM 16:25-26.**
- C. The central Person of the entire Bible is the Lord Jesus Christ.
1. The O.T. anticipated His coming and testified of Him. **ISA 7:14; JOH 5:39.**
 2. The N.T. declares His arrival, saving work and victory in fulfillment of prophecy and that He has been made King and Judge over all. **1CO 15:3-4; ACT 10:39-43.**
- D. The major events of the O.T. are:
1. The record of creation and the entrance of sin. **GEN 1-3.**
 2. The worldwide flood in Noah's day because of great sin. **GEN 6-9.**
 3. The calling out of Abraham whose descendants would end up in Egyptian bondage. **GEN 12 to EXO 1.**
 4. The exodus of Abraham's descendants from Egypt under the leadership of Moses. **EXO 1 to DEU 34.**
 5. The giving of the Law / the Ten Commandments. **EXO 20.**
 6. The Jewish conquest of the land of Canaan and their establishment as a nation there. This is the record of the Book of Joshua.
 7. The establishing of a messianic royal lineage in Israel, beginning with King David.

- This is the record of the Books of **1SAM, 2SAM; 1CH.**
8. The overthrow and captivity of Israel because of sin. This is recorded in the historical books of **2KI** and **2CH.**
 9. The return and restoration of Israel to their land to await the coming of Messiah. This is the record of the Books of **Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.**
- E. The major figures of the O.T. are:
1. Adam, the first man. He was created perfect but sinned and brought sin, death and the curse into the creation (**GEN 1-3**) and serves as a type/picture of the next Perfect Man Who should come and Who would not fail: Jesus Christ. **1CO 15:45; ROM 5:19.**
 2. Noah, the lone preacher of righteousness whose family was spared from a worldwide flood brought on by sin (**GEN 6-9; 2PE 2:5**) and so also forms a picture of Jesus Christ Whose entire spiritual family will be saved from universal judgment. **1PE 3:18-22 c/w LUK 17:26-27.**
 3. Abraham, whom God suddenly called out of his idolatrous land and family, to whom God made great promises of eternal significance, and with whom God made an everlasting covenant. **GEN 12-25.**
 - a. Abraham was the ancestral father of the Jewish people.
 - b. Abraham was a model of great faith in God's word and his faith was a token or evidence of righteousness. **ROM 4:1-5.**
 - c. Abraham was given the sign of circumcision for himself and all his male descendants *after* he had been declared to be righteous. **ROM 4:9-13.**
 - d. God's promises to Abraham were only to Abraham and Christ. **GAL 3:16.**
 4. Moses, the deliverer who brought God's people out of bondage and gave them God's law (**EXO**), who also forms a picture of Christ Who delivered His people out of the bondage of sin and gave them His law, the N.T. **HEB 3:1-6.**
 5. Joshua, who brought God's people into their *earthly* inheritance and rest, which Moses could not do.
 - a. *Joshua* is spelled *Jesus* in the N.T. **ACT 7:45; HEB 4:8.**
 - b. This all serves as a beautiful picture of the overall message of the Bible: Jesus alone brought God's people into their *heavenly* inheritance and rest, not Moses or his law. **ROM 3:20-22; HEB 9:12.**
 6. David, a prophet and the first king of a royal dynasty in Israel which would culminate in Jesus Christ, David's descendant and the Eternal King. **ACT 13:21-23; LUK 1:30-33.**
- F. The major events of the N.T. are:
1. The conception of Jesus Christ in the virgin Mary's womb which was God becoming a man who was the Son of God. **MAT 1:23; LUK 1:35.**
 2. The ministry of John the Baptist who prepared Israel for Christ's public ministry and who baptized Jesus Christ. **MAR 1:1-11.**
 3. The blameless life and public ministry of Jesus Christ which was rejected by His own people and which culminated in His crucifixion death. **ACT 13:27-29.**
 4. The resurrection of Jesus Christ after being buried for three days and nights. **ACT 13:30; MAT 12:38-40.**
 5. The ascension of Jesus Christ to take the eternal throne. **EPH 1:19-23; REV 3:21.**
 6. The coming of the promised Holy Spirit to indwell and empower the church which Jesus Christ established on earth. **JOH 14:15-17, 26 c/w ACT 2:1-6.**
 7. The building of Christ's church in fulfillment of promises of a Divine Kingdom. **DAN 2:44 c/w MAT 16:18-19.**

8. The conversion of Saul of Tarsus from being the chief enemy of Christ to become the chief apostle of Jesus Christ with a special ministry to the Gentiles. **ACT 9:1-6, 15.**
9. The conversion of the first uncircumcised Gentile believer, which was the breaking down of a barrier that had separated Jews and Gentiles. **ACT 10; EPH 2:11-18.**
- G. The major figures of the N.T. are:
 1. Jesus Christ, the virgin-born son of God Who fulfilled all of the requirements of God's holy Law for righteousness by living a sinless life, dying for sinners, and rising from the grave in victorious conquest over death and the grave. **ROM 10:4; 4:23-25.**
 2. John the Baptist, who announced Christ's arrival and baptized him. John's ministry marked the sunset of the O.T. economy. **LUK 16:16.**
 3. The Twelve Apostles whom Christ called out to be the ministers of His New Testament and foundations of His church. **LUK 22:14, 29-30; EPH 2:20.**
 4. The Apostle Paul, the once sworn enemy of Christ and His church who was called out for a special ministry to the Gentiles. **1CO 15:9-10; 1TI 1:12-15.**
- H. The N.T. is not only a clearer, superior revelation from God, it has *legally replaced* the O.T.
 1. testament: A formal declaration, usually in writing, of a person's wishes as to the disposal of his property after his death; a will.
 2. It is always the Last Will and Testament of a deceased person through which heirs receive their inheritance.
 3. Jesus Christ made a New Testament just before He died which abolished the Old Testament. **LUK 22:20; HEB 9:15-17; 2CO 3:13.**
 4. Therefore the heirs of God do not receive their inheritance according to the terms of the O.T. but rather of the N.T. The "property" they inherit is God, righteousness and eternal life.
- I. Another way to describe the two testaments is that the O.T. is the Mosaic Covenant and the N.T. is the Messianic Covenant.
 1. The *message* of the Mosaic Covenant is "do and live" righteousness. **ROM 10:5.**
 2. The *message* of the Messianic Covenant is "done and given" righteousness. **ROM 5:19; GAL 2:20-21.**
 3. Remembering this distinction resolves many issues concerning salvation.
- J. The foregoing points show a continuity, correspondence and consistency between the two testaments of the Bible.
- K. In summary, the Bible is:
 1. the account of God's, plan, power and performance of His will through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is God and man.
 2. the account of the victory of God, the Supreme Good over Satan, the supreme evil.
 3. the account of humanity's bondage to Satan, sin and death being remedied by the sinless, victorious work of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 4. the account of Jesus Christ's exaltation to the throne of God to reign over all things.
 5. the announcement of His certain return to judge all things. **ACT 17:31.**
- V. Scripture sets forth definite principles for understanding it. The first and most important principle is actually two principles which need to be understood together.
 - A. We always take words of Scripture in their primary definitions unless Scripture itself tells us to do otherwise, or if, in so doing, we create an absurdity or a contradiction, BECAUSE:
 1. There are no absurdities in Scripture. **PRO 8:8.**
 2. There are no contradictions in Scripture. **2PE 1:20.**

- B. **NEH 8:7-8, 12** sets forth a foundation for sound Bible interpretation.
1. First they "...read in the book in the law of God..." (v. 8).
 - a. By reading the words of Scripture, we come to understand Scripture. **EPH 3:3-4; PSA 119:104, 130.**
 - b. The Bible means what it says. **2CO 1:13; 3:12; 4:2.**
 2. Secondly, they read "distinctly."
 - a. distinctly: In a distinct or separate manner; separately, individually, severally.
 - b. Every word in a text must be considered, for they are all vital (**MAT 4:4**). Important doctrine often hinges on little words.
 3. Thirdly, they gave "the sense" which is the primary meaning.
 - a. Giving to the reading THE SENSE yields one interpretation with the whole being the sum of the parts.
 - b. Beware of any system of doctrine that involves denying the plain sense of the words in a verse.
 - c. Resorting to secondary meanings of words capriciously produces obscurity, not clarity.
 4. By this method, the words of the Lord "...were declared unto them" (v. 12).
 - a. declare: To make clear or plain (anything that is obscure or imperfectly understood); to interpret.
 - b. interpret: To expound the meaning of; to render clear or explicit.
 - c. Words taken in their primary meanings are necessary to declare or interpret something.
 5. A good dictionary is a valuable tool. The best is the Oxford English Dictionary (available as a multi-volume set, a compact edition, a CD-ROM, and online through universities, libraries, etc.).
 6. All languages of necessity have signification (meaning) which facilitates the conveying of information from one to another. **1CO 14:10-11.**
 - a. Ancient civilizations had dictionaries: "The oldest known dictionaries were Akkadian Empire cuneiform tablets with bilingual Sumerian–Akkadian wordlists, discovered in Ebla (modern Syria) and dated roughly 2300 BCE. [7] The early 2nd millennium BCE *Urra=hubullu* glossary is the canonical Babylonian version of such bilingual Sumerian wordlists." (Wikipedia art. *Dictionary*)
 - b. It is not unreasonable to consider that the ancient Hebrews who had a highly developed language that depended upon the accuracy of its smallest components (**MAT 5:18**) would have had some form of dictionary, lexicon, glossary, etc., to facilitate coherent communication of thoughts.
 - c. The Levites caused people to understand the Law by defining terms. **NEH 8:10.**
 - d. The successful communication of ideas from one person to another depends upon a recognized standard of the definitions of words.
- C. The Bible declares that it has no internal contradictions. **2PE 1:20-21; ROM 12:6.**
1. prophecy: Divinely inspired utterance or discourse.
 2. private: Withdrawn or separated from the public body. (The "public body" in context would be the entirety of the Scripture)
 3. proportion: A portion or part in its relation to the whole; a comparative part...
 4. We are to live by "...EVERY word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (**MAT 4:4**). It would be impossible to obey this command if some words did not

- harmonize.
5. There are not a number of “truths” taught in the Bible. *Truth* is singular, starting at Genesis and ending at Revelation.
 6. The words of Scripture testify of Jesus Christ, who is THE Truth and THE Word. **JOH 5:39 c/w JOH 1:14; 14:6; PSA 119:151.**
 7. There is only one truth because there is only one God, Who is *not the author of confusion*. **DEU 6:4 c/w 2PE 1:21; 1CO 14:33.**
 8. The doctrine of God is always in the singular. Whenever the Scripture refers to *doctrines* it is always in reference to evil. **1TI 4:1; COL 2:22; MAR 7:7.**
 9. There is one faith. **EPH 4:5; JUDE 1:3; PHIL 1:27.**
 10. There is one gospel. **GAL 1:8-9; GAL 3:8 c/w HEB 4:2.**
 11. All parts of Scripture must harmonize so as to form a singular fabric of truth or doctrine.
- D. By combining these two principles of Bible study, proper understanding is facilitated. Consider these examples:
1. **1TI 1:18.** If the word “son” here is taken in its literal primary sense, it would create a contradiction.
 - a. Other Scripture plainly teaches otherwise. **ACT 16:1; 1CO 7:8.**
 - b. Thus, we are safe in appealing to a subordinate definition or a figurative application of the word “son” for the answer. **1TI 1:2; PHIL 2:22.**
 2. **PHIL 3:2; REV 22:15.** If the word “dog” is taken in its literal primary sense (a quadruped of the genus *Canis*...), we have an absurdity. However, by applying the primary sense *figuratively*, one understands that there are people whose characteristics parallel those of dogs. c/w **PSA 22:16; DEU 23:17-18.**
 3. **PSA 18:2.** “Rock” cannot be taken in its literal primary sense since this would contradict the fact that God is a personal Spirit, not an impersonal, feelingless stone (**JOH 4:24**). Applying the primary sense *figuratively*, though, denotes the solid unmoveable nature of God.
 4. **PSA 100:3.** “Sheep” cannot be taken its literal primary sense (Any animal of the ruminant genus *Ovis*...) or we have both an absurdity and a contradiction. But applying the primary sense *figuratively*, we understand that we are similarly lowly creatures that tend to go astray and need a Shepherd. **ISA 53:6 c/w JOH 10:11.**
 5. “I maintain, that in figures there is no different meaning of the word. It is only a figurative application. The meaning of the word is always the same. Nor does any one need to have a figurative application explained in any other way, than by giving the proper meaning of the word.”
(Alexander Carson, *Baptism...Its Mode and Subjects*, p. 57)
 6. **JAM 2:24.** Here it appears that one is *made just or right* (the primary definition of *justified*) by his works.
 - a. But Scripture plainly teaches elsewhere that eternal justification is not based on human works. **GAL 2:16; ROM 3:20, 24.**
 - b. Therefore we conclude that there is a need to seek a secondary definition here.
 - (1) Justify can also mean, “To show (a person or action) to be just or in the right; to prove or maintain the righteousness or innocence of; to vindicate.”
 - (2) **LUK 7:29** is a corroborating example of this usage.
 - (3) Conclusion: God’s children are *shown to be just* by their faith and good works.

7. **MAT 23:14.** Obviously, “devour” here must be understood in a secondary sense to avoid an absurdity.
 - a. devour: 1. To swallow or eat up voraciously, as a beast of prey... 3. Of a person or personal agent: To consume destructively, recklessly, or wantonly; to make away with, waste, destroy (substance, property or *fig.* its owners).
 - b. The #3 sense is derived from the plainness of the primary sense.
8. **JOH 11:11-14.** Notice here how a secondary or figurative meaning is understood by defining it with a word meant to be understood in its primary meaning.
c/w **MAT 16:7-12.**
9. The Bible does contain parables, proverbs, dark sayings and figures.
PSA 78:2; PRO 1:6.
 - a. However, these are declared or interpreted with words used in their primary meanings. Otherwise, there is no declaration or interpretation that yields understanding.
 - b. Consider these important examples of interpretation.
 - (1) **GEN 40, 41:1-32.** Joseph interpreted dreams in words taken in their primary meanings.
 - (2) **DAN 4-5.** What kind of reputation as an interpreter would Daniel have gained had he not interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream with words taken in their primary meanings?
 - (3) **MAT 13:36-43.** Declaring the parable was explaining the analogy with primary meanings.
 - (4) **MAR 5:41-42.** The context shows that interpretation involves explanation with words given their primary meanings.
 - c. The Bible usage of the word “interpret” shows us what the Bible means by interpretation: making plain by primary meanings.
- E. False doctrine begins with not taking words in their primary meanings.
 1. The method of false teaching is that which Satan used in the garden of Eden.
2CO 11:3-4.
 2. Satan beguiles from the *simplicity* that is in Christ.
 - a. simplicity: The state or quality of being in simple form, structure, etc.
 - b. simple: Free from duplicity, dissimulation, or guile; innocent and harmless; undesigning, honest, open, straightforward.
 - c. duplicity: The quality of being ‘double’ in action or conduct (see double a. 5); the character or practice of acting in two ways at different times, or openly and secretly; deceitfulness, double-dealing.
 - d. dissimulation: The action of dissimulating or dissembling; concealment of what really is, under a feigned semblance of something different; feigning, hypocrisy.
 - e. Explanation with primary meanings is *simplicity*.
 - (1) If an interpretation of parabolic language does not primarily mean what it says, then the interpretation is itself a parable which really interprets nothing.
 - (2) If the explanation of parabolic language is not given in primary meanings, then it is *duplicity* or *dissimulation* (concealment).
 3. Mark Satan's method in the garden of Eden. **GEN 3:1-6.**
 - a. The word of God was first *disputed*: “Yea, hath God said...?”
 - b. Read what God said in **GEN 2:16-17** and give the words THE SENSE.
 - c. Satan's question is echoed in such questions as:

- (1) Is that really what that means?
- (2) Could not that mean...?
- (3) Since that language is used in an exceptional or figurative sense elsewhere, must it be taken in its primary sense here?
- d. The word of God was added to: "...neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die" (v. 3).
 - (1) God did not forbid them to touch the tree. Eve was already flirting with the idea that God's words need improving.
 - (2) Eve invented ascetic will-worship: "Touch not..." (COL 2:21).
- e. The word of God was *denied*: "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die" (v. 4).
 - (1) From GEN 3:5 we note that once the error was established, a system of doctrine was built around it.
 - (2) Again, beware of any system of doctrine that involves denying the plain sense of words in a verse.
- f. The word of God was *defied*: "...the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat" (v. 6).
- g. Eve was more affected by Satan's system of doctrine than by God's words.
- h. Mind that Satan's system was desirable. It appealed to human need, pleasure and *philosophy* (love of wisdom or knowledge). c/w COL 2:8.
 - (1) Satan's system assumes greater wisdom derived from something created than revelation from the Creator. This is the basis of the seduction.
 - (2) The post-Fall *corrupted* creation still yields a message consistent with the Creator's revelation (ROM 1:20). Since the tree of knowledge of good and evil was a *pure* creature, it certainly would not yield any knowledge contrary or superior to God's spoken revelation.
 - (3) If a pure creature cannot give knowledge contrary or superior to God's revelation, how much less a corrupt creature?
 - (4) Beware the teacher who *makes something up* (creates) in order to deny the plain sense of words and then gets you to focus on what he created rather than what God said.
 - (5) Mind also how Satan's system accords with atheistic evolution's theme: matter (the creation) yields knowledge that denies God's revelation and it is the highest source of knowledge. c/w ROM 1:25.
 - (6) Theistic evolution similarly assumes that God's revelation is subordinate to the message in the material creation and it therefore reinterprets GEN 1 accordingly. But if you can't believe God's revelation concerning *earthly* things (creation, biology, geology, climate, anthropology, etc.) on what basis should you believe God's revelation about *heavenly* things? JOH 3:12.

VI. Pay attention to the grammar. 2TI 1:13.

- A. grammar: The department of the study of a language which deals with its inflexional forms or other means of indicating the relations of words in the sentence, and with the rules for employing these in accordance with established usage.

- B. form: Shape, arrangement of parts.
- C. **JOH 5:24; 1JO 5:1**. The grammar of these texts is unmistakable. The *passing from death unto life* and *being born of God* PRECEDE the hearing and believing.
- D. **MAT 22:29-33**. Jesus argued an important point of doctrine on the basis of the grammar of **EXO 3:6**.
- E. The grammar of the KJV does not always conform to the current rules of grammar.
 - 1. Harbrace College Handbook (p. 293) tells its readers to avoid removing the pronoun too far from the antecedent: "Make your meaning immediately clear to the reader. Save him the annoyance of searching for the antecedent."
 - 2. However, God commands us to "SEARCH the Scriptures." **JOH 5:39; ACT 17:11**.
 - 3. The Bible is not written the exact way a man would write a book (**ISA 55:8-9**). In **PSA 105:37**, the antecedent of the pronoun "they" is "Israel" up in v. 23.
 - 4. Whenever there is disagreement between the wisdom of man and the wisdom of God, always opt for the latter. **MAT 11:19**.

VII. Pay attention to the context. Always look first of all to the immediate environment of a given scripture. Who is being addressed? What is the occasion of the utterance? What precedes and follows the text? Use the W-5 of inquiry: who?, what?, where?, when?, why?

- A. **HEB 3:7-8**. The injunction here is not for unregenerate men to change their nature, but rather for children of God to obey the Lord speedily. **HEB 3:1**.
- B. **JAM 5:19-20**. The people here in need of conversion are not unregenerate but rather brethren in the church who have already evidenced their new birth. **JAM 2:1-2 c/w ACT 2:41, 47; 8:37 c/w 1JO 5:1**.
- C. **GAL 5:2**. In the context of Galatians, Paul is not teaching that circumcision disqualified or undid Christ's work of faith to justify them by grace.
 - 1. Paul himself was circumcised. **PHIL 3:5**.
 - 2. Paul called them *brethren* in Christ's liberty. **GAL 4:31; GAL 5:1**.
 - 3. Rather, he was warning them about the inherent problems of law-works justification. **GAL 5:3; 3:10**.
- D. **ACT 6:3**. What business were the deacons appointed over in the context? Who appointed them?
- E. **JOH 1:12**. Whoever is being spoken of here *were already born of God* (v. 13) --- too late for them to produce it themselves.
- F. **EZE 24:18**. Considered by itself, this text has wild ramifications, but the context explains it. **vs. 15-17**.
- G. Context is in no way the sole means of correctly interpreting an utterance. Other rules of Bible study cannot be discarded in deference to this rule. **JOH 2:18-21**.

VIII. Compare spiritual things with spiritual. **1CO 2:13; ISA 28:10**.

- A. Subjects in the Bible are presented in piece-meal fashion. Not all the information on any subject is found in just one place in Scripture.
 - 1. Baptism. **MAT 3:11; ACT 8:37-38; MAR 16:16; 1PE 3:21; ROM 6:4-5; ACT 2:38-47**.
 - 2. Prayer. **MAT 7:7; MAR 11:24; JOH 15:7; 1JO 3:22; JAM 5:16; 1PE 3:12; 1JO 5:14-15; LUK 18:1-7**.
- B. Comparison is good for:
 - 1. Confirmation. **2CO 13:1**.
 - 2. Elucidation: explaining obscure passages with clearer ones. **MAT 13:21 c/w MAR 4:17** ('By and by' = immediately).

3. Amplification.
 - a. **MAT 18:21-22 c/w LUK 17:3-4.** Forgiveness of an errant brother's offenses is qualified.
 - b. **MAT 7:1 c/w JOH 7:24, PHIL 1:9, 1CO 2:15.** Being judgmental is not wrong, but hypocritical judgment is condemned. **MAT 7:2-5.**
 - c. **JOH 6:27 c/w 2TH 3:10.** Working for a living is not wrong but being consumed with material pursuits to the disregard of spiritual concerns is wrong. **LUK 12:16-23; 14:16-24.**
4. Harmonization and definition.
 - a. **ROM 1:16 c/w 1CO 1:18.** The preaching of the gospel obviously cannot benefit the unregenerate so it is wrong to read free-will gospel-regeneration into **ROM 1:16.**
 - b. **MAT 13:11 c/w MAR 4:11.** The kingdom of God is also the kingdom of heaven. c/w **MAT 19:23-24.**
 - c. **ROM 8:28-30.** The "called" of v. 28 are explained in the following verses.
 - d. **2CO 5:17 c/w GEN 1:3; 2CO 4:6 & JOH 5:25.** Creation is by God's will and voice rather than by the preached word. c/w **EPH 2:10.**

IX. Distinguish between a proof text and a reference text.

- A. A proof text expressly *states* a point of doctrine by the definition and construction of its words.
 1. **JOH 5:24 SAYS** that the passage from death unto life precedes hearing and believing.
 2. **JOH 6:37-39 SAYS** that Christ will raise up every one that the Father gives Him.
 3. **ROM 8:30 SAYS** that every single one who was predestinated will be glorified.
 4. **ACT 8:36-37 SAYS** that the lack of a proper confession of faith is an effective hindrance to baptism.
 5. **1CO 2:14 SAYS** that the things of God are foolishness to the natural mind and he cannot know them.
 6. **JOB 19:25-27 SAYS** that a dead, decayed body shall someday physically behold the Redeemer.
- B. A reference text refers to a point of doctrine which is proven elsewhere.
 1. **MAR 16:16** doesn't identify what salvation is under consideration.
 2. **JOH 3:16** does not say "all mankind without exception," but rather that God loved the "world." That world must be reconciled with **ROM 9:13; HEB 1:2; 1JO 2:15; LUK 2:1.**
 3. **ACT 16:30-31** again does not identify the salvation. Is it eternal or temporal? from hell or from troubles, ignorance, etc.? **PSA 34:4; 116:8.**
- C. All texts prove something, but do they prove the doctrine that is being contended for? **JOH 3:16** does prove that:
 1. God loved.
 2. God has a son.
 3. That son was His only begotten.
 4. Believers should not perish.

X. Heed the argument from silence (**HEB 7:13-14**). What the Bible does not teach, it does not teach!

- A. God forbids additions to or diminutions from His word. **DEU 4:2; REV 22:18-19.**
- B. The Lord Jesus Christ even concluded a point of doctrine using this argument. **MAT 12:3-4 c/w LEV 24:9.**

- C. The argument from silence cannot be used to the disregard of the other rules of Bible study. They must all be considered.
1. Some would contend that it is wrong to use a hymnal in the church service because the Bible nowhere mentions a hymnal. But there is no problem in so doing. God has ordained *singing* in the N.T. church (**EPH 5:19; COL 3:16**). The hymnal adds nothing to that command; it is only an *aid*. However, musical instruments add an element of music which is not prescribed, and therefore falls under the censure.
 2. Example: God told Noah to build an ark of gopher wood. For Noah to use a hammer and saw in the fulfillment of the command would have been acceptable. But what if he were to have *substituted* cedar for gopher wood or *mingled* the two? That would have been wrong, but God had given no law as to the process of construction, only the materials and design. "Where no law is, there is no transgression" (**ROM 4:15**).

XI. Reason out of the Scripture. **ACT 17:2 c/w 2TH 3:2.**

- A. With the employment of the other rules, apply valid reasoning processes to arrive at valid conclusions.
1. A fundamental of reasoning is that "A" cannot equal "non-A" in the same context.
 - a. "I love women's hair" in the same context cannot equal "I don't love women's hair."
 - b. However, in different contexts (on a woman's head or in the butter), the two statements are not in conflict.
 2. Reason from what is known to what needs to be known.
 3. Reasoning is built upon a premise. A premise may be valid or invalid.
 - a. Valid premise + valid reasoning = valid conclusion.
 - b. Valid premise + invalid reasoning = invalid conclusion.
 - c. Invalid premise + valid reasoning = invalid conclusion.
 - d. Invalid premise + invalid reasoning = indeterminate conclusion.
- B. Observe the reasoning process in **ACT 2:25-31**:
1. **PSA 16:8-11** is quoted. David is the author.
 2. David is dead. His flesh saw corruption.
 3. Therefore, David could not have been speaking of himself when he said, "Neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."
 4. David was a prophet. Prophets foretold things to come.
 5. God promised to raise up one of David's fleshly descendants to sit upon his throne.
 6. Conclusion: **PSA 16:8-11** refers not to David but to Jesus Christ, the descendant of David Whose soul had just gone through the terrors of hell, then He had died, and God had raised Him up from the dead.
- B. **HEB 8:7-13**. Paul reasons that God having spoken of a new covenant made the first one old.
- C. **MAT 6:30; LUK 18:7**. Jesus reasons from the lesser to the greater.
- D. Apply reason, but remember that any reasoning process that concludes with something that contradicts Scripture is faulty somewhere and should be discarded. Justify God's wisdom, not yours! **MAT 11:19**.

XII. All of these rules of Bible study must be considered as a body.

- A. To exalt any one rule to the disregard or detriment of the others will lead to error and confusion.
- B. Understand that these rules are structured in a hierarchy, with the weightiest rule being the

first one, namely: “We always take words of Scripture in their primary definitions unless Scripture itself tells us to do otherwise, or if, in so doing, we create an absurdity or a contradiction, because there are no absurdities or contradictions in Scripture.”

- XIII. The following are some helpful hints which are simply applications of the rules of Bible study:
- A. The plain statements of Scripture define and interpret the obscure ones.
 - 1. The N.T. is a superior revelation to the O.T. (**2PE 1:19**) and its explanation of O.T. types, shadows and prophecies are the standard.
 - 2. Furthermore, reference texts must be reconciled to the plain statements of proof texts.
 - B. Observe words denoting causes and conclusions such as: for, because, wherefore, therefore.
 - 1. Example: (**LUK 1:35**) And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: **THEREFORE** also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.
 - 2. The term “Son of God” pointedly refers to the incarnation, not some mysterious relationship in the Godhead in eternity past.
 - C. Watch for *irony*, which is: “a figure of speech in which the intended meaning is the opposite of that expressed by the words used.”
JDG 10:14; AMO 4:4; MAT 23:32; ZEC 11:12-13.
 - D. Watch for *hyperbole*, which is: “a figure of speech consisting in exaggerated or extravagant statement, used to express strong feeling or produce a strong impression and not intended to be understood literally.” **PSA 107:26; 119:136; 6:6; JDG 7:12.**
 - E. Some texts can have more than one application:
 - 1. **2SA 7:12-14** refers to Solomon (**1CH 22:9-10**), and to the Lord Jesus Christ. **HEB 1:5.**
 - 2. **HAB 1:5 c/w ACT 13:41.**
 - 3. **ISA 6:9-10 c/w ACT 28:25-27.**
 - F. Observe the rule of *emphasis*. Some things are more important in Scripture than others (**MAT 5:19; 23:23**). Examples:
 - 1. The death and resurrection of Christ are more emphasized than His birth.
 - 2. All four gospels deal with Christ's baptism, indicating that it is important.
 - 3. The teaching ministry is far more prominent in the N.T. than singing and should be stressed more.
 - G. Note the law of *progress*. Truth is revealed progressively from beginning to end in Scripture. **JOH 16:12-13; EPH 3:4-6; 2PE 1:19.**
 - H. Consider passages where a subject receives copious treatment, such as:
 - 1. **PSA 119.** The word of God.
 - 2. **ROM 3:9-20.** Total depravity.
 - 3. **ROM 9.** Sovereign election.
 - 4. **1CO 15.** The resurrection.
 - 5. **HEB 11.** Faith.
 - 6. **1CO 5.** Church discipline.
 - 7. **ISA 53.** Sufferings of Christ in prophecy.
 - I. Pay particular attention to the Pauline epistles. **ACT 13:47; ROM 15:16; 1TI 2:7.**
- XIV. When all is said and done, give humble thanks unto God for the understanding that has been gained. We are beholding to His grace for this gift as well. **JOH 3:27; MAT 13:11.**