

# **How to Study the Bible**

by R. A. Torrey

## **STUDY GUIDE**

by Roger L. Berry

## HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

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# How to Study the Bible

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# Go and Inquire

"Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life." John v: 39.

W. A. O.

W. A. Ogden.

1. Searching the Scrip-tures, the bless-ed Scrip-tures, Seek-ing the  
 2. Searching the Scrip-tures, the bless-ed Scrip-tures, Seek-ing to  
 3. Searching the Scrip-tures, the bless-ed Scrip-tures, Seek-ing the

Sav - our day by day, Striv-ing to learn the wondrous sto-ry,—  
 know the heav'nly way, Try-ing to reach the gold-en cit - y,—  
 wan - d'rers by the way, Try-ing to point a soul to Je-sus,—

## CHORUS.

What does the bless - ed Bi-ble say? Go and in - quire, . . the King com-  
 What does the bless - ed Bi-ble say?  
 What does the bless - ed Bi-ble say? Go and inquire,

mand-eth; Ask of the Lord for me and thee; Knock at the  
 Ask of the Lord

o - pen door of mercy, Where there is par - don full and free.  
 Knock at the o - pen Where there is pardon

By permission.

## Lesson 1

# The Blessings of Bible Study

**Lesson Aim:** To realize the joy and spiritual blessing that comes from taking Bible study seriously.

**Memory Selection:** For this course, you and the class or study group may want to memorize a passage that relates to Bible study. We suggest using Psalm 119:9-18. This passage consists of ten verses, so that you may assign one verse to memorize for each class period. This passage lists some of the blessings of Bible study, such as the fact that hiding God's Word in our hearts helps keep us from sin. Through Bible study, the Lord will deal bountifully with us (v. 17) and we will "behold wondrous things" (v. 18) from the Scriptures we have studied.

For a brief devotional before each class, you may want to read and briefly comment on a portion of Psalm 119. Read two sections of 18 verses each day. The last day, read four sections.

**Theme Song:** The theme song for this course is found on the inside front cover—"Go and Inquire." It is a song first printed in the late 1800s but is found only rarely in modern songbooks. It points out the value of the Bible for opening our understanding about God and His purposes for our lives. As an alternative, you may want to use the song "Give Me the Bible," #138 in *The Christian Hymnal*.

## Words and Terms

Blessed — happy (OT), supremely blessed or happy (NT).

Power — *dunamis* (Greek), force, great power (the English word *dynamite* comes from this word).

### Synonyms for the Bible:

Law—Psalm 119:1

Testimonies—Psalm 119:2

Ways—Psalm 119:3

Precepts—Psalm 119:4

Statutes—Psalm 119:5

Commandments—Psalm 119:6

Judgments—Psalm 119:7

Word(s)—Psalm 119:9

Scripture(s)—Acts 17:11

Truth—John 17:17

Gospel—Revelation 14:6

Prophecy—2 Peter 1:19

Book of the Lord—Isaiah 34:16

## **Some items compared with the Bible:**

A fire—Jeremiah 23:29

A hammer—Jeremiah 23:29

Power of God unto salvation—Romans 1:16

A sword—Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12

Seed—Luke 8:11

Food—Job 23:12

Milk—1 Peter 2:2

## **Quotes on the Blessings of Bible Study**

“It is highly necessary that Christians know what are the teachings of the inspired Word, and that they make these doctrines a part of their faith and life. It makes a difference what we believe.”

—D. H. Bender

“Centered in the Law are the thirty-nine messages or books of the Old Testament. Centered in the Gospel are the twenty-seven messages or books of the New Testament. The whole constitutes a perfect message from God to man, the sacred canon of the Holy Scriptures, the BOOK which we have learned to cherish and which we call *the Bible*.”

—Daniel Kauffman

“A contagious enthusiasm among Christians for the Word of God and a return in faith and obedience to its precepts would do more to point the way out of present world distress and despair than all the plans and strivings of men.”

—Merrill F. Unger

“The highest earthly enjoyments are but a shadow of the joy I find in reading God’s Word.”

—Grey

“No one ever graduates from Bible study until he meets the Author face to face.”

—Harris

“If God is a reality and the soul is a reality, and you are an immortal being, what are you doing with your Bible shut?”—  
Johnson

## **What the Bible Says About the Blessing of Bible Study**

Consider the following blessings of Bible study mentioned in the Word of God. May they challenge us to hide God’s Word in our hearts that we might not sin against Him.

1. Great reward in keeping God’s Word—Psalm 19:11.

2. To find God's approval—2 Timothy 2:15.
3. It will prosper our way—Joshua 1:8.
4. The truth will make us free—John 8:31, 32.
5. The Word cleanses us—Psalm 119:9; John 15:3.
6. The Word helps us grow—1 Peter 2:2.
7. All Scripture is profitable to build us up—2 Timothy 3:15-17.
8. That we might not sin against God—Psalm 119:11.
9. The Word is a light to show us the way—Psalm 119:105, 130.
10. The Word provides comfort—Psalm 119:82.
11. The Word brings us joy—Jeremiah 15:16.
12. The Word is a saving power—Romans 1:16.
13. The Bible penetrates the inner parts of our spiritual being—Hebrews 4:12.
14. A special blessing on those who read the Word—Revelation 1:3.

### **The Word of God should be:**

1. Loved exceedingly—Psalm 119:97.
2. Delighted in—Psalm 1:2.
3. Regarded as sweet—Psalm 119:103.
4. Esteemed above our physical food—Job 23:12.
5. Hidden in our hearts—Psalm 119:11; Deuteronomy 6:6; 11:18.
6. Remembered—Psalm 119:16.
7. Searched—Acts 17:11.
8. Meditated upon—Psalm 1:2.
9. Received as God's words to us—1 Thessalonians 2:13.
10. Received with meekness—James 1:21.
11. Handled carefully—2 Corinthians 4:2.
12. Heard and obeyed—Matthew 7:24; Luke 11:28; James 1:22.
13. Trusted in—Psalm 119:42.
14. Preserved and not added to or taken from—Revelation 22:18, 19; Deuteronomy 4:2.

### **What the Bible Says About Itself**

1. The Word of God will stand forever—Isaiah 40:8.
2. Not one jot or tittle will pass from the Word until it is fulfilled—

Matthew 5:18.

3. All Scripture is given by inspiration—2 Timothy 3:16.
4. Scripture writers were moved to write by the Holy Spirit—2 Peter 1:21.
5. The Word is the power of God to salvation—Romans 1:16.
6. The Word sanctifies or purifies—John 17:17.
7. All the Scriptures testify of Jesus—John 5:39.
8. It is written for our instruction and learning—Romans 15:4.
9. Helps us to be victorious over sin—Psalm 119:11.
10. The Word is perfect—Psalm 19:7.

### **Study Outline and Questions**

1. As you consider the blessings of Bible study, remember that Bible study is not really something optional—something that will “bless” you, but is really not essential for the Christian life. The believer is commanded to study the Word and to apply it to his life. Consider the following Scriptures: 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Romans 1:16.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Most of the Scriptures listed above in the section on what the Bible says about the blessings of Bible study, emphasize the personal blessings of Bible study. How might our faithful study of the Bible be a blessing to others? Our fellow Christians? Non-Christians? (What influences and changes our lives certainly has an effect on other people. Christians encourage one another through the preaching of the Word and as we personally share what God has done for us. Our knowledge of the Word of God and what it can do for ourselves and others, helps us in sharing with those who do not know Christ. We are much more effective witnesses as we are knowledgeable of the Word of God.)



3. Many people have been discouraged from Bible study because of fears of all the elaborate methods they have heard about and a lack of knowledge of original languages and how to use many Bible helps. These things can be learned gradually, but meanwhile, there are many blessings in simply reading the Scriptures and meditating on them without a lot of additional input. *How to Study the Bible* emphasizes Bible study by reading, asking questions about what you have read, and analyzing the Scripture on your own. Torrey also emphasizes prayer and personal preparation to receive the Word—the subject of Lesson 1 in the book.
  
4. The end of this lesson on the blessings of Bible study would be a good opportunity for the class members to share some blessings they have already experienced in Bible study. This course should serve to reinforce your desire to study the Scriptures and “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18a).

## Lesson 2

# Conditions for Profitable Bible Study

(Chapter 1, pp. 7-24)

**Lesson Aim:** To learn some important personal preparations for profitable Bible study and to allow the Lord to work in our lives so that we will be open to His Word.

**Memory Selection:** If you are using the memory passage suggested in Lesson 1 of this study guide, you and your class should have Psalm 119:9, 10 memorized for this lesson. Assign verse 11 for the next class period. These first two verses give us one of the key blessings and motivations for studying the Word—personal cleansing. We find this cleansing by seeking the Lord with our whole hearts. That seeking, of necessity, involves Bible study and unswerving allegiance to the Word of God.

### Words and Terms

Born again (John 3:3) (*gennao anothēn*) — born from above or born anew.

Word (*logos*) — literally “something spoken.” Used of the Bible (the spoken Word of God) and of Jesus Christ the “Word made flesh.”

Searchest (Proverbs 2:4) — to seek or search out.

Blessed (OT) — how happy; (NT) — supremely blessed, happy, or well off.

Doctrine (NT) (*didache*) — teaching, instruction.

Truth (NT) (*aletheia*) — truth.

Obedient (NT) (*hupakoe*) — to be attentive, hear under authority.

Sincere (1 Peter 2:2) (*adolos*) — undecitful, unadulterated.

Believe (NT) (*pisteuo*) — to have faith or trust.

### Eight Conditions for Profitable Bible Study

Lesson 1 lists eight conditions for profitable (and effective) Bible study. They are:

1. You must be born again.
2. You must have a love for the Bible.
3. You must be willing to work hard.
4. You must be wholly surrendered to God.

5. You must obey its teachings as soon as you see them.
6. You need a childlike mind.
7. You must believe God's Word.
8. You must come to Bible study prayerfully.

Many have tried to make Bible study meaningful by shortcutting one or more of these conditions. Some want to be spoon-fed by others so they need not dig into the Word and work hard themselves. Others rely too heavily on Bible translations, paraphrases, and commentators, but do not dig into the Word on their own. As Torrey says, "What you will need is far deeper than a new and better technique."

The following study questions and items for research into God's Word follow the outline of Chapter 1 and provide food for thought and discussion as you go through the lesson. Under each item you will find a list of additional Scriptures on the same theme.

### **Obtaining Spiritual Understanding**

(You must be born again.)

(See also: *Ezekiel 36:26*; *John 1:13*; *2 Corinthians 5:17*; *Titus 3:5*; *1 Peter 1:23*; *1 John 5:1*.)

1. What does 1 Corinthians 2:14 say is the reason the "natural man" (the unconverted person) cannot receive the things of God or fully understand the Word?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Can reading the Bible be of any help to an unconverted person? How? Read Titus 1:9 and Psalm 19:7. (Many people have been led to the truth by reading the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit can and does bring conviction through the reading of the Word. But a person cannot go on to understand God's will for them and the "deeper things" of the Word of God without a personal relationship with the Author.)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. How could we place a wrong emphasis on study of the original languages? What must come first? (Later, we will learn more about the values of word study for the believer.)

## **Gaining a Spiritual Appetite**

(You must have a love for the Bible.)

(See also: *Psalms 119:72, 74, 97, 140; Jeremiah 15:16; Colossians 3:16.*)

1. Name some ways a person can gain a healthy appetite for Bible study. What must come first? How does studying the Word help create a hunger for more study? (As you study the Word, you will marvel at the truths God shows you. As you discover the joys of learning and the joys of finding the Word a blessing in your life, your appetite will increase.)
  
2. Name some things that can hinder Bible study and take away your appetite for the Word. (The list would include material things that rob us of time, as well as mental attitudes, worry, and anxiety that rob us of peace.)
  
3. Name some advantages and disadvantages of books about the Bible. How can we keep such books in proper perspective?

## **Digging for Treasures**

(A willingness to work.)

(See also: *Acts 17:11; John 5:39; 1 Corinthians 2:14.*)

1. What would you say is the antidote for laziness in Bible study?
  
2. What are some of the rewards in diligent work as far as Bible study is concerned? (Consider the spiritual blessings and insights received through diligent Bible study as well as the eternal consequences of taking God's Word seriously.)

## **Finding the Treasure's Keys**

(A will wholly surrendered to God.)

(See also: *Joshua 24:15; Deuteronomy 30:19, 20; Romans 12:2; Ephesians 6:6; Luke 22:42; John 6:38; Philippians 2:13.*)

1. What is the reward of being willing to do God's will?
2. Our will has been defined as our power to choose. How do we know that God has created us with a free will? (Consider John 7:17 and 2 Peter 3:9.)
3. How does a complete surrender to God's will affect our view of the Bible?

## **Use It or Lose It**

(Be obedient to Bible teachings as soon as you see them.)

(See also: *Romans 6:16, 17; James 1:21-25; 1 Timothy 6:14; John 13:17; 14:15, 21; Ecclesiastes 12:13; Revelation 1:3; Proverbs 29:18; Luke 11:28; John 5:24.*)

1. What are some dangers of knowing what the Bible says do and then not doing it?
2. How do you answer someone who says, "I don't want to go too deep into the Bible because I will be more responsible than before"? (Ignorance is not bliss, of course. To refuse God and His Word altogether is just as dangerous spiritually as reading and not heeding the Word.)
3. According to Hebrews 4:12, what does the Bible do for us?

## **Come as a Child**

(A childlike mind)

(Read also: *Matthew 18:4*; *Mark 9:36, 37*; *Mark 10:15*; *Luke 9:47, 48*; *1 Peter 2:2*.)

1. How can we come to the Bible with a spirit like a little child? (Think of some characteristics of children that we as adults need to have.)
  
2. How is coming to the Bible with preconceived notions, and allowing that to color our interpretation, different from going to the Bible to reinforce what we know is Biblical truth? (Consider, for example, reading 1 Corinthians 11 on the headship veiling, and then finding other Scriptures which bear out the validity of its teachings—other Scriptures on the marriage relationship and the headship order. Or consider coming to the Scriptures assuming such teachings as unconditional election and eternal security. In those cases, people have to twist and interpret some Scriptures in awkward ways so they will fit their teaching. For example, in John 15:4-7 and 1 John 2:24, the word *abide*, which in many other New Testament passages means “to stay,” or “remain,” or “be a part of” is often interpreted by eternal security teachers to mean much less. They must interpret it to mean “stay close to” but “not part of.” But when they interpret 1 John 2:27, they use a stronger meaning.)

## **Believing God’s Word**

(Studying the Bible as the Word of God.)

(Read also: *2 Timothy 3:16*; *1 Thessalonians 2:13*; *Philippians 2:16*; *2 Peter 1:19*.)

1. The writer says in this section, “He who does not believe the Bible is the Word of God should be encouraged to study it.” Later, he writes that Bible study “involves the unquestioning acceptance of its teachings when definitely ascertained, even when they may appear unreasonable or impossible.” How can you reconcile these two statements? (While it is true that the believer needs to come to God’s Word and accept it unquestioningly, many people have

read the Bible, intending to disprove it and have been convicted by its power and truth.)

2. The writer says, “Studying the Bible as the Word of God involves absolute reliance upon all its promises in all their length and breadth.” Should this statement be qualified? (Consider cases in the Bible where specific promises were made to individuals that do not necessarily apply to everyone. For example, God’s promise to Abraham to multiply his seed certainly would not be a promise for Christians today.)
3. How does studying the Bible “as in God’s presence” help us to take its teachings to heart, applying them to our lives?

### **The Key to Understanding** (Prayerfulness)

(See also: *Matthew 7:7; 26:41; John 15:7; 1 John 3:22.*)

1. What does it mean to study the Bible “on your knees”? Could this apply in both a literal and a symbolic sense? What kind of attitude does this suggest?
2. What are some steps we can take toward understanding a “difficult” passage before running to some commentary or other interpreters to find out what they have to say? More answers to this question will surface as we continue through this study. (Someone once asked a minister to preach on a certain “debatable” passage. The day before the message, a friend asked him what he was going to say. After the minister said what various commentators had to say, the friend said, “I don’t care what others say, I want to know what you believe from your own study.”)

## Lesson 3

# Individual Book Study #1

(Chapter 2, pp. 25-35)

**Lesson Aim:** To learn the value of book study and how to go about choosing a Bible book for study.

**Memory Selection:** By today, students should have memorized Psalm 119:11. This is another key verse describing the purpose and result of Bible study. The Word shows us how to follow God's way and how to live. A most important part of Christian living is purity. We find direction for that by hiding God's Word in our hearts and then relying on the Holy Spirit to apply those truths to our lives. Assign v. 12 for the next class period.

**Theme Verse for Lessons 3 and 4:** "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

## Words and Terms

Approved (*dokimos*) — acceptable.

Dividing (*orthotomeo*) — making a straight cut, dissecting.

Pilgrims (*parepidemos*) — an alien alongside, a resident foreigner.

Strangers (*paroikos*) — a guest, a foreigner in a country temporarily.

Bible (*biblia*) — book, collection of books.

Gospel (*euaggelion*) — good news or message.

Scripture (*graphe*) — a writing or a document.

(Note that questions and class projects relating to this lesson are found in *italics* below.)

## Advantages of Book Studies

*What are some of the advantages of book studies? Are there any disadvantages?*

Torrey is correct when he says that a book study in the Bible is the most thorough method of Bible study and yields the most lasting results. Consider some of the advantages of book study. Originally, of course, the Old and New Testaments were divided into books but not into chapters and verses—divisions made later to help people more easily find portions of Scripture. While we would not



want to do without them, chapter and verse divisions can sometimes be a bit artificial, perhaps even separating a thought or idea that would better be placed together. Interestingly, in the original languages (Hebrew and Greek) there were no capital and lowercase lettering, no marks of punctuation, and no divisions between words or sentences. This should help us appreciate the zeal of the Bereans who “searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11b). Certainly we have no excuse for not being diligent in Bible study, considering all the Bible helps we have today.

Some advantages of book studies include:

1. We get a better overall view of Scripture than we do by skipping around to isolated portions or subjects.
2. We can better grasp the larger picture of a book’s purpose, organization, and teaching.
3. It is easier to remember the teaching of a book when we have followed its outline and organization.
4. It is easier to do detailed Bible study within the confines of a book than by skipping about.

If there is any disadvantage to book studies, it would be that it can keep us in one portion of the Bible too long, when we might receive a blessing or inspiration from some other portion of Scripture. It is good, for example, to sometimes take a break from a book study to be refreshed in the Psalms or some other portion of Scripture. For the same reason, when reading through the Bible, many people prefer to read a portion from both the Old Testament and the New Testament each day. Thus, they do not become bogged down in any one part of the Scriptures.

## **Step 1—How to Begin**

*What are some guidelines for choosing a Bible book for intense study? For beginners? For more seasoned Bible students? Can you add some to Torrey’s list?*

The book gives tips especially for beginners in Bible study. You may want to choose a book that is not too long and one that does not require so much “digging.” You may also want to consider a book that you are less familiar with and would like to know more about. Perhaps you would like to study a book that you have not studied much before. Or perhaps you are involved in a book study in Sunday school. Seldom are book studies in quarterlies extremely thorough. You may want to do a very thorough study of a book in conjunction with your Sunday school lessons. This may have the added benefit of giving you more thoughts and inspirations to share in Sunday school.

You do not need to shun a book just because there may be some “difficult” passages in it, as Torrey suggests is the case with First Peter. You may not be able to come to a final conclusion on everything you discover. This should not hinder you from gaining great inspiration from the study. In 1 Peter, for example, Torrey probably had in mind 3:18-20 which refers to Christ preaching to the “spirits in prison,” and perhaps 2:24 which speaks of being healed by Christ’s stripes—does this refer to physical healing, spiritual healing, or both? A bit of comparing Scripture with Scripture can usually clear up such uncertainties.

Some people may have difficulty with a passage such as Matthew 24, most of which is Christ’s answer to two questions asked by His disciples: “When shall these things be?” (the destruction of the temple) and “What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?” People sometimes struggle with separating the items that refer to the destruction of Jerusalem from those referring to the return of Christ. Careful reading and rereading of this chapter and the chapters that follow make it clear that some of these prophecies could obviously refer to both events. As one reaches the middle of the chapter, the Second Coming of Christ comes more and more into focus. One need not fret over exactly which item refers to which event or try to force the entire chapter into ancient history (as does Adam Clarke) or into the future.

*A good activity for this lesson would be to have each student think about a book he would like to study and come to the next class period prepared to share why he would be interested in this particular study.*

## **Step 2—Master the General Contents of a Book**

*Why should we try to get as much as we can on our own in Bible study before we go to Bible helps, especially commentaries? Name some ways we can find “hidden treasures” in the Word, on our own.*

To master the contents of a book, you need to be prepared to do at least some note-taking, jotting down main thoughts and a possible outline. You need not worry that your outline is not just like someone else’s or that you have caught everything that some other person would. All you need to do is to look at the outline of a Bible book in two different Bible dictionaries, and you will see that outlines vary as much as the people who make them.

Always try to find the purpose the writer had for writing a given book. You may not always be able to find an exact purpose stated, but you can find basic themes that would reveal, at least indirectly,

the reason the Holy Spirit inspired a particular book. Sometimes you will find a book's purpose near the beginning—Jude 3, for example. Consider the purpose of the Gospel of John as stated near the end in 20:30, 31. In at least one case, you can find the purpose for one book stated in another. The purpose of Luke is stated in Acts 1:1, 2.

You will note that Torrey does not, at this point, put much emphasis on using Bible helps. This is purposeful. We must not become too dependent on the work of others, lest we become lazy in our own work. It is always best in a study of the Bible or any other book, to get as much out of it as we can before we start depending on what others have said. This does not mean that Bible helps, even commentaries, are all wrong. But they should not take the place of personal digging.

Discuss some of the reasons why it is good to read and reread a passage several times when studying it in depth. We always face distractions which may divert our minds momentarily from what we are reading. A rereading will help us catch what we missed the first time. Of course, rereading helps us to think more deeply about a subject and pay more attention to the details.

### **Step 3—Practical Principles for Study**

*Name some things you can look for in studying a Bible passage or book that will help you have a better grasp of the intent and meaning of the writer.*

Torrey presents a rather thorough list of things you can look for in a book. You may want to add a few more to the list. For example, what do you learn about Christ or God and their work, about Satan and his deceptiveness? Also you will find it helpful to list key words in a book or words that occur with frequency in a book. An obvious example are the words *know*, *fellowship*, and *love* in 1 John.

*Perhaps you or your class could list some other practical things to look for in a book study.*

### **Seeing the Big Picture**

*What are some of the values of comparing Scripture with Scripture in understanding the Bible and what principles should we apply to our lives?*

In order to compare one book of the Bible with another, you will need to use some Bible helps, at least center-column cross-references, perhaps a topical Bible, and a harmony of the Gospels. Bible dictionaries can help you find various references to the same per-

sons, places, and events.

In the second paragraph of this section, Torrey refers to false interpretations of the Bible arising from taking a local application and applying it to all Christians or from applying to unbelievers what was intended for believers. Another source of false teaching, often ignored, is applying to ancient times and certain groups of people things intended for all Christians to practice. Footwashing, anointing with oil, the Christian woman's veiling, and the holy kiss have all been subject to this kind of misinterpretation. Some would even go so far as to claim that baptism and Communion are no longer needed because we don't need them when we have the guidance of the "inner light."

## **Step 4—Divide and Conquer**

Remember that in dividing a book for study, chapter and verse divisions may not divide it logically into subjects or themes. You cannot always depend on the traditional paragraph markings found in some editions of the King James Bible. The entire Bible does not contain these markings anyway. You may want to invest in a study Bible that divides the books into subject divisions with headings. Such divisions are not "divinely inspired," and you may see logical divisions that others do not.

*For an exercise in class, you may want to take a very short book such as Jude, 2 John, 3 John. Give the class a few minutes to divide them into logical sections. Note that a short book like this often has an introduction and a conclusion with several divisions between.*

## **Step 5—Taking Bite-Size Pieces**

*What factors do we need to take into account when studying and analyzing short portions of Scripture? What are some of the blessings of word study?*

We tend to read and study passages by verses because of the traditional divisions in our Bibles. Try reading a passage by sentences, not verses, to get a better picture of the thought pattern. You may also want to read a few verses at the time and look at these verses together.

Word study as described on pages 33 and 34 is an often overlooked part of Bible study. Initially, you may simply want to note in a given passage or book the key words and how they are used. Using a concordance, you may want to look up the same words in other passages or books and consider how they are used.

For example, if you study the Book of Romans, you will encounter

the word *grace* at least 19 times. Note what each reference says about grace. The first 14 references ending with 11:6 refer to grace as the “unmerited favor of God” in bringing us salvation. But some of the final references refer to other aspects of grace. Romans 12:3 points out that it takes God’s grace to think soberly and not too highly of ourselves. Romans 12:6 refers to the grace (enabling power of God) that it takes to exercise the various gifts God has given the church.

If you do much word study, you will need to go eventually to a Hebrew or Greek dictionary such as the one in *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*. There you will discover that the same word may have been translated in several different ways. For example, the Greek word *charis* is translated “grace” in Romans 19 times and “thanked” one time (Romans 6:7).

Another blessing of word study (especially New Testament words) are the many cases of Greek words that are the same or very similar to English words. This similarity helps us understand and appreciate the Biblical words. For example, in Romans 12:2 we find the word *transformed* which translates the Greek word *metamorphoo* (*metamorphosis*). Thinking about the metamorphosis of a butterfly, from a caterpillar to a winged creature of exquisite beauty, helps us understand more about the transformation of the Christian. Another example is one Greek word often translated *power* as in Acts 1:8. The Greek word is *dunamis* which gives us the English word *dynamite*. What a dramatic picture of the power of God!

## Looking Behind and Ahead

*Why should we always study Scripture in its context? Where might you need to go to get the entire context of a passage?*

Always study Scripture in its context whether you are studying a book, a subject, or one short passage. Look for words such as *thus*, *therefore*, *wherefore*, *but*, and *like* which suggest something before that we should also read. When you encounter a “therefore” in your study of Scripture, investigate what it is “there for.”

Consider a verse such as Romans 13:8: “Owe no man any thing.” People have misused this Scripture, saying that Christians should not own property or go into debt. Looking at it in its context—our duty toward the authorities of the land—it obviously has to do with not letting our debts remain outstanding. The mention of love in the same verse, “but to love one another” also links the verse to love being a debt we owe people. While it is true that Christians should

be careful with the use of money and should avoid or be very careful about debt, it is taking this passage out of context to use it to advocate debt-free living or not owning property.

In taking Romans 13 in its context you need to go back to the chapter before which speaks of presenting our bodies as living sacrifices (12:1), not being conformed to the world but transformed by the renewing of our minds (12:2), showing love (12:9), letting God be the avenger (12:19), and returning good for evil (12:21). Even the last part of Romans 13 relates to the first part in that we are to be examples to the society around us, walking honestly, not in rioting and drunkenness. This will help us to relate to the government authorities—to respect and honor them.

Sometimes you may need to consider the entire book in which a particular Scripture is found to find the context.

## Lesson 4

# Individual Book Study #2

(Chapter 2, pp. 36-60)

**Lesson Aim:** To learn how to thoroughly analyze Scripture, verse by verse, and to appreciate the wealth of teaching that can be found in the Bible.

**Memory Selection:** By this class period, the class should have memorized Psalm 119:9-12. Verse 12 points out what it is that we learn from the Scriptures—God’s statutes. This synonym for the Word of God emphasizes the rules and standards taught by the Word of God. These statutes need to be taken to heart and obeyed. Assign verse 13 for the next class period.

### Look at Comparison Verses

The Bible teaches that “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16). God did not intend for people to simply sample His Word, picking out a thought here and there for inspiration. His will is that we study the whole Book and compare its teachings.

First Corinthians 2:13 speaks of comparing spiritual things, which certainly would include comparing one Scripture with others to find the whole counsel of God. “Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”

As was mentioned in Lesson 3, you will need some Bible helps to efficiently compare Scripture with Scripture and to study the words used in the Scriptures. A Bible with a good reference system can help you find related passages and thoughts. If you are studying the Gospels, a harmony of the Gospels is valuable to compare at a glance the same or similar incidents.

To study individual words, you will find it most helpful to learn how to use an exhaustive concordance and the Hebrew and Greek dictionaries with them. You do not need to study Greek or Hebrew to benefit from this. These dictionaries will explain to you different meanings and usages of the same word. An often-overlooked alternative to using these dictionaries is the *Amplified Bible*. The *Amplified* is not a translation to be used in public worship but is more a study help. If a given word has several shades of meaning,

the *Amplified* will indicate some of these meanings in parentheses, brackets, after a dash, or with “ands” between meanings. For example, in the Beatitudes, words such as *blessed* and *poor in spirit* are explained at length. “Blessed are the poor in spirit” reads “Blessed—happy, to be envied, and spiritually prosperous [that is, with life-joy and satisfaction in God’s favor and salvation, regardless of their outward conditions]—are the poor in spirit (the humble, rating themselves insignificant), for theirs is the kingdom of heaven! (Matthew 5:3).

This explains much of what you would find in a concordance.

As you study individual verses and compare one Scripture with another, you will discover some of the blessings of comparison studies and word studies. You will begin to understand and appreciate the rich variety of meaning in Bible words and phrases. You will realize how much the Bible is interconnected. Sometimes very ordinary words or phrases will take on new meaning (to you, at least). You will better understand all of what the Word of God has to say on a given theme.

Modern translations of the Bible can sometimes help in understanding, but do not really take the place of word study and comparison studies. Even a modern translation (except the *Amplified*) uses only one word to translate a given Hebrew or Greek word in a particular verse. Sometimes a translation can be misleading. Almost all modern translations, for example, will translate *fornication* as “sexual immorality.” While technically correct—it is a form of immorality—this can be misleading in a few cases. A case in point is Matthew 5:31, 32 which reads in one version: “Whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery.” Failure to understand that “sexual immorality” here refers to “fornication” (immorality between unmarried people) could affect our view of divorce and remarriage.

Another misunderstanding, perhaps not as serious, arises in 1 Thessalonians 5:22: “Abstain from all appearance of evil.” Almost without exception, modern translations will read something like this: “Refrain from every form of evil.” Again, this is technically correct, because the Greek word translated “appearance” in the King James is sometimes translated “form.” However, a very careful study of the Greek word will reveal that the word also includes the idea of something that may not be evil but has the appearance of being so.



## The Importance of Meditation and Prayer in Bible Study

We can be ever so diligent in Bible study, searching out the meanings of words and phrases, making sure to compare Scripture with Scripture, and still not assimilate the truths we have encountered. Two ingredients that we want to make sure are not missing in our Bible study are meditation and prayer.

The word *meditate* or *meditation* is used more often in the Old Testament than in the New. The word suggests “murmuring, sighing, or moaning.” This does not necessarily mean that we are to be miserable in our meditation, sighing and complaining. That would violate other Scripture! The word does suggest an earnestness and deep contemplation. One use of this word is in Psalm 1:2b: “. . . and in his law doth he meditate day and night.” Some other uses of the same word include Psalm 19:14; Joshua 1:8; Psalm 104:34; 119:97, 99.

In the New Testament, the Greek term for meditation occurs only twice—Luke 21:14 and 1 Timothy 4:15. In the first reference it suggests “preparing a defense” and in the second “taking pains with.” The idea, however, occurs in such passages as Philippians 4:8 and Colossians 3:2.

One Bible dictionary makes this comment about meditation: “Meditation is a lost art for many Christians, but the practice needs to be cultivated again.”

Through meditation on what we have read and learned from the Word of God, we can better remember what we have learned. In meditation, we think about the meaning of what we read and how we can apply it to our lives.

In prayer, we then ask God to guide us in applying the truth. In prayer we also thank God for His Word and for what He is teaching us. We express our love and devotion to the Giver of all good things, including the written Word.

### Questions and Discussion

1. The Bible is a book that you can come back to repeatedly, seeing more truths you had not noticed before. For example, read Ephesians 2:1-10. For a non-Christian or a new Christian, verses 8 and 9 would probably stand out—salvation by grace through faith. As a person matures in his Christian experience, he will appreciate more what he has been delivered from (v. 3) and will think more about the implications of being Christ’s workmanship—serving Him faithfully. In a sense, we begin by assimilating the “milk” of the Word (the more obvious teachings) and gradually

understand more “meat” that we can apply to everyday living (Hebrews 5:12-14).

2. Effective Bible study requires meditation and concentration. Discuss ways we can avoid distractions and interferences. Consider such things as the time of day we choose for Bible study, the environment around us, what to do about the telephone, family members, etc. Probably the greatest distraction for most of us is our minds wandering. Discuss the part that meditation and prayer can have in avoiding mental distractions.
  
3. Torrey goes into much detail illustrating how to study a book in detail, using 1 Peter to illustrate. After you have read his outline, an interesting activity would be to try the same procedure in class with a short book like Jude, Philemon, or 2 John or a chapter such as 1 Corinthians 11; 1 John 1; or John 3. List the main teachings of the book or passage, then analyze in detail several verses. Students could complete this as an assignment for the next class. Jude contains one quite “difficult” passage (v. 6). Can you figure out what this means simply by reading the book? Can you understand any better by comparing Scripture with Scripture? (See Revelation 12:9.)
  
4. Name some ways you can retain your Bible knowledge after you have studied a book or passage in detail. (Some possibilities include keeping a notebook outlining your studies and what you have learned, memorizing Scripture or outlines, refreshing your mind periodically after you have done a detailed study.)

## Lesson 5

# Topical Study

(Chapter 3, pp. 61-80)

**Lesson Aim:** To learn the value of topical studies in the Bible and its importance in helping us learn what the Bible has to say about various topics.

**Memory Selection:** Students should memorize Psalm 119:13 for today. This verse points out that it is not enough just to study the Word of God and meditate on its teachings. The Word needs to be shared with others. Notice the synonym of the Word in this verse—*judgments*. Assign verse 14 for the next class period.

### Advantages of Topical Study

1. Topical study helps us better grasp all that the Bible has to say on a given subject or word. (For example, if you study the word *grace* in the Bible you will find a rich variety of meaning and interesting differences between the Old and New Testaments. The word *grace* is used at least 39 times in the Old Testament and over 120 times in the New Testament. In a few cases the word is translated in other ways in the King James. You can find out where by going to Hebrew and Greek dictionaries in a concordance. We tend to think of *grace* as “the unmerited or undeserved favor” God shows to mankind. In the Old Testament we frequently find this use when it says someone found “grace” in someone else’s eyes. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, for example. In the New Testament, we find a similar concept in such passages as Ephesians 2:8a: “By grace are ye saved through faith.” But grace involves much more. A careful study of all the passages where the word is found in the New Testament shows that grace for the believer is divine empowerment for service. We find grace to enable us to exercise spiritual gifts (Rom. 12:6). Grace helps us live godly and sincere lives (2 Cor. 1:12). We receive special “grace” to help us face weaknesses and infirmities (2 Cor. 12:9). We also find that grace is something that radiates from the believer’s life and manifests itself in his relationship with others (2 Cor. 8:7; Col. 3:16). We find grace to aid us in the spreading of the Gospel (Eph. 3:8). You can probably categorize most references to “grace” under one of the above headings.)
2. Topical study helps you see and appreciate the interconnection of the Scriptures and how you can compare Scripture with Scripture to better determine Bible teaching.

3. As Torrey notes, a thorough study of a topic takes “a remarkable hold upon the heart of a Christian.” As with no other method of study, a topical study can impress us with what the Bible has to say on a given subject. We may be able to retain the truths better than with some other methods of Bible study.

### **Disadvantages of Topical Study**

1. Completely well-rounded Bible study is not possible with topical study alone. You will need to use other methods as well.
2. Topical study lends itself more than most other types of study to “proof texting.” That is trying to find a Scripture to back up a preconceived notion or a Scripture to support some pet doctrine. Some people can see their favorite doctrine in unusual places. They may use proof texts to support erroneous views relating to baptism, divine healing, predestination, angels, the Second Coming of Christ, eternal security, etc.
3. The topical method can lend itself to taking Scriptures out of context if we are not careful. We need to at least look at the immediate context—verses surrounding a topic we are investigating. A case in point is John 5:39 which reads, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” Many people have used this passage to teach that we should study the Scriptures faithfully. But consider the context. Jesus was speaking to the Jews who were persecuting him (vv. 16, 17). Verse 38 says, “And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.” Verse 40 says, “And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” The context implies that this is not a command to search the Scriptures but a statement of the fact that the Jews searched the Scriptures thinking they were finding eternal life. But they would not heed what they were reading. Another case is a verse often quoted by those who believe in soul sleep—“But the dead know not any thing” (Eccl. 9:5b). The entire verse reads, “For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.” This and other references to the dead would show that as far as this life is concerned the dead know no more and they are forgotten. This does not prove that they are asleep or nonexistent.

### **Getting the Most From Topical Study**

1. As the book suggests, don’t “follow your fancy” in the choice of topics, but choose from a variety of topics as you move from one topical study to another.

2. Note that various words may translate the same or a similar thought. If, for example, you are looking at what the Bible says about meditation, you will find other words that suggest the same idea—*ponder, consider, think, etc.*
3. Once you have read all or most of what the Scripture says on a certain topic, categorize the Scriptures into related or similar thoughts. You may find a word or topic you have chosen is used in two or three different ways. Note which Scriptures use it in each way. If you are studying *grace*, for example, you may find four or five basic aspects of grace. Make a heading of each one and list the Scriptures that seem to fit under each one.
4. Use a topical Bible and a concordance to help you find all the Scriptures on a given subject. Some topical Bibles are quite thorough and present the vast majority of Scriptures on a subject.
5. Note that you will find verses on a topic or word which does not use the exact word but contains the idea.
6. Use a Greek or Hebrew dictionary to find other translations of a common word. For example, most uses of the Greek word *charis* (grace) are translated *grace*. But the word is also translated as *acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, joy, liberality, pleasure, thank-worthy*. If possible, get a list of every time the word *charis* is used and that will reveal where it is translated differently.
7. As the book suggests, you may find subjects for topical study in your regular study or reading in the Bible. As you read, think about words or subjects you would like to learn more about.

## **Questions and Discussion**

1. How are topical studies related to word studies? (Often a topic is a word found in Scripture such as *prayer, love, power, grace, meditate, etc.*)
  
2. Name some benefits and blessings of topical study. Students could share testimonies of how study into a particular subject encouraged them in Christian living.
  
3. Discuss ways to better understand the full meaning of verses you

find in a topical study. (Be sure you don't just take a verse alone, but at least look at its context, the verses around it. Look at all the Bible says about a subject, not just a handful of passages. Compare various Scriptures with each other. Often one Scripture sheds light on another.)

4. Choose a subject to look at in class that does not have such a large number of Scriptures associated with it. For example, the word *salt* is used 36 times in the entire Bible, six of those in the New Testament. In a study of the word, note both its literal meaning and its symbolic meaning. The word *liar(s)* is used 21 times in the entire Bible. Notice especially what liars are guilty of doing and what their future will be. *Meditate* and *meditation* is another subject without an overwhelming number of references.

## Lesson 6

# Biographical Study

(Chapter 4, pp. 81, 82)

**Lesson Aim:** To realize the blessings of learning lessons from Bible characters both good and bad.

**Memory Selection:** By today, students should have memorized through Psalm 119:14. Verse 14 points out another result of studying the Word of God—joy in following the ways of God. Even if we are not rich financially, we can be rich spiritually as we feast on the divinely inspired Scriptures. Notice the word *testimonies*, another synonym for the Word of God. This word brings out the fact that God’s Word bears testimony to the greatness of God and the things that He does for those that love Him. Loving that Word then becomes part of our own testimony to the world around us. Assign verse 15 for the next class period.

### Character Studies

Another term we often use for biographical studies is *character studies*. We are studying about individuals, especially their characters (good or bad). We learn their strengths and weaknesses, their victories and their failures. We often learn how God felt about them and what their relationship to God was. Character studies are not only interesting to do on a personal basis, but also make good studies to share with others in youth meetings, topical programs, Sunday school, and even in sermons.

So much can be found in the Bible about the major people of the Bible that the available material is almost overwhelming. Consider Jesus, Paul, Moses, Abraham, King David. A character study of one of these or some of the other major characters could be divided into several studies. You might study Paul before his encounter with Christ and after his conversion.

A topical Bible is one of the best helps to discover most of the Scriptures about a particular character. You may also find information in Bible dictionaries and other sources. You need to realize that some Bible characters have the same names, so be sure the references you are looking up are for the right person. For example, in the Old Testament, you will find two Hiram and seven Judahs. In the New Testament, you will find six Marys.

The *Thompson’s Chain Reference Bible* has a fairly detailed char-

acter study of Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Joshua, Gideon, Samuel, David, Solomon, Elijah, Elisha, Daniel, Jesus, and Paul.

Some minor characters make short but interesting character studies. Here are some possibilities: Abel, Adam (note the comparisons with Christ), Eleazar, Haman, Ishmael (interesting in light of the Arab-Israeli conflict), Jethro, Jonathan, Lot, Melchizedek, Mordecai, Agrippa, Barnabas, Onesimus, Pilate, and Nicodemus. Some women include Abigail, Miriam (Moses' sister), Naomi, Ruth, Anna, Dorcas, Elizabeth (the mother of John the Baptist), and of course, several of the Marys.

## **Blessings of Biographical Study**

1. Biographical or character studies help you better understand Bible characters, their lives, and times.
2. Suggests character traits you would want to emulate or avoid.
3. Helps us understand how God works through individuals.
4. Lets you know that even the most noble of Bible characters were human and made mistakes. (Consider the sins of David in spite of the fact that the Bible calls him "a man after God's own heart." Noah, who found grace in the eyes of the Lord, was still human (cf. Genesis 6:9). Joseph is one of the few major Bible characters whose flaws are not mentioned unless it would be boasting of his dreams to his brothers.)
5. Shows you how Biblical principles were practiced in the lives of everyday people.
6. Convinces us that even the godly Bible characters were real people with problems and needs similar to our own.
7. Introduces variety into our Bible study and makes it "come alive."

## **Questions and Discussion**

1. In class, look up the references to several minor Bible characters and discover what you can learn about them. For example, look up Enoch, the man who walked with God. You will find two Enochs plus a city with that name. Begin with the first reference to him in Genesis 5:18-24. You learn that he was the father of Methuselah and that he walked with God. You find out more about his character in the New Testament. He is mentioned three times there. Luke 3:37 simply refers to him. Hebrews 11:5 lists him among the heroes of faith and the fact that he was translated to heaven without seeing death. Jude 14 says he was a prophet who prophesied of the Lord's return. Consider several more such



as Abel, Adam, Jonathan, Agrippa, Nicodemus, Miriam, and Ruth. The Scriptures on any of these are not overwhelming. Don't forget that for some of these, more than one Bible character had the same name.

2. An important part of character study that you don't want to overlook is the meaning of the characters' names. This was much more important in Bible times than it is today. Not every name in those times appears to have been significant, but some were. Often you learn something about a person's character by the meaning of his name. *Abram* meant "high father" and *Abraham* meant "father of a multitude." *Christ* means "anointed one" or "Messiah." *Jesus* means "Saviour." Find a list of Bible names and meanings in a Bible help and find some more that appear to reflect on the person's character.
  
3. What things might you learn from a character study of an evil Bible character such as Saul or Herod? Perhaps you can contrast them with another person they encountered such as David or John the Baptist.
  
4. Can you think of any disadvantages of character studies on a regular basis?
  
5. Have class members mention various Bible characters who have stood out to them and tell what has challenged them about this person.

## Lesson 7

# Study of Types

(Chapter 5, pp. 83, 84)

**Lesson Aim:** To see the value of comparing the Old Testament and the New, learning how Old Testament ceremonies and even persons point to Jesus Christ.

**Memory Selection:** Psalm 119:15 should be memorized by today's class period. Verse 15 points out the importance of meditating on the Word of God. The Hebrew word for *meditate* suggests a very deep agonizing over something. We approach the Word of God with serious intent, desperately wanting to know God's will. The special term for the Bible in this verse is "precepts." This term focuses on those things which are "appointed" or "mandated" by God. We meditate on those things so that we know how they apply to our lives. Assign verse 16 for the next class period.

## Words and Terms

Types (Greek, *tipos*) — examples, comparisons, or illustrations.

Shadows (Greek) — that which pictures something that will become clearer later on. (What shadow yet to be made clearer is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 13:12?)

Antitype — a fulfillment or completion of something. For example, the Law was an antitype of Christ. It was fulfilled in Christ.

Figure — another term for *type*.

## Initial Considerations

As you will notice, *How to Study the Bible* spends only two pages on the study of types and gives warnings about possible abuses of this method of Bible study. But this certainly should not prevent us from studying and profiting from the many comparisons we can make between the Old and New Testaments.

Some will only consider something to be a type if the Greek word for *type* is used with it in the New Testament. This severely limits the number of comparisons we can make between the Old Testament and the New. Hebrews 8:5 mentions the tabernacle as an example (type) and shadow of things to come. Hebrews 10:1 says the Law was a shadow of good things to come. First Corinthians 10:1-11 mentions examples (types) twice in reference to things that hap-

pened to the Children of Israel that serve as types or examples for us to learn from. Other Scriptures do not use the word *type* but strongly suggest the idea. Melchizedek (Genesis 14:18-20) is said to be a forerunner of Christ (Hebrews 6:20). Jesus said the lifting up of the brazen serpent in the wilderness (Numbers 21:4-9) was in some sense typical of His own crucifixion (John 3:14, 15). Hebrews 9 and 10 point out that the tabernacle and the services of the tabernacle foreshadow the person and work of Christ. In the New Testament, you can find numerous items regarding Christ and the church that hark back to Old Testament incidents or practices. For example, you can compare the Passover with the Christian Communion. The New Testament compares Christ to the Passover and says Christ is our Passover.

Sometimes comparisons are obvious even though you cannot find a direct New Testament passage to prove that the Old Testament person or situation was a type. For example, most people agree that Joseph in Genesis was a type or picture of Jesus Christ even though no New Testament Scripture specifically says so. The betrayal of Joseph, his vision of his brothers bowing down to him, his trust in God, his providing for the needs of His people, his forgiveness of his brothers, his body being taken out of Egypt, and more resemble the life of Jesus Christ. Interestingly, Joseph is one of the few godly Old Testament Bible characters that the Bible says nothing negative about.

If you define “types” as obvious comparisons that can be made between the Old Testament and the New with Old Testament people and situations picturing something in the New or even something yet future, then one could find numerous types. The word *figure* is sometimes used to suggest types in the New Testament. Romans 5:14b says that Adam was “the figure of him that was to come” (Jesus Christ). Jesus was called the “second Adam.” We know that the Old Testament points repeatedly to Jesus Christ and His work.

We often use the word *shadows* along with the word *types*—types and shadows. A shadow is something future that was pointed to in the Old Testament, something fulfilled in a higher degree in the New. For example, Hebrews 8:5 says the tabernacle served “unto the example [type] and shadow of heavenly things.” Colossians 2:16, 17 says the Sabbath is a “shadow of things to come.”

One time a minister preached from the Old Testament in a particular congregation. At the end of the service, someone rose and rebuked him saying, “Don’t preach the Old Testament, preach Jesus.” Certainly, we can preach Jesus from the Old Testament. That is how

Philip preached to the Ethiopian eunuch (from the Prophet Isaiah). This is how many early Jews became Christians. We certainly do not want to limit our study to the Old Testament, but we can learn to understand the New Testament better and also see the unity and inspiration of the Scriptures through a study of types and shadows of things to come found in the Old Testament.

### **Discussion—Learning More About Types and Shadows**

1. Begin your investigation of types by reading 1 Corinthians 10:1-11. The word *example* (ensample) is used twice in this passage, translating the Greek word *tipos* (type). How many different types or comparisons can you find in these verses between Old Testament persons and events and things that Christians face? Note that the cloud—of fire—pictures God’s divine guidance. The sea pictures divine deliverance. Moses pictures divine leadership provided by God. The meat pictures spiritual meat or divine sustenance. The drink pictures spiritual refreshment through Jesus Christ. Verse 11 says, “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples [types]: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.”
  
2. The most obvious and thorough set of types in the Old Testament relate to the tabernacle, its furnishings, and the offerings performed there. The New Testament says this is the case. Jesus said in John 5:46: “For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.” More than 40 chapters in the Bible give information about the tabernacle and its services. Someone aptly said, “In the service of the tabernacle, the work of Jesus Christ as Saviour is revealed in detail as in no other portion of the Scriptures.” (Read Hebrews 8:5—the tabernacle as a type [example] and shadow. Compare the seven golden candlesticks in the tabernacle with Revelation 1:20. What might the tabernacle candlesticks [lamps] have been pointing to? Compare the altar of incense in Exodus 30:7, 8 with Revelation 8:3. Compare the veil separating the “holy place” from the “holiest of holies” in Exodus 26:31-33 with Matthew 27:51. What do you think this symbolizes in relation to what Christ came to do?)

3. Here are more comparisons between the tabernacle and New Testament concepts. With what does the New Testament compare each item? Compare the laver in the tabernacle (Exodus 30:18-21) with Ephesians 5:26. Compare the altar of incense (Exodus 30:7, 8) with Revelation 5:8.
  
4. You can also find many of the feasts and offerings of the Old Testament fulfilled in Christ. Compare the Feast of Firstfruits to 1 Corinthians 15:23. The Day of Atonement certainly points to the eternal redemption of Christ—Hebrews 9:12. The Feast of Pentecost, 50 days after the Passover, points to the coming of the Holy Spirit 50 days after the Resurrection of Christ. What do you think the sin offerings in the Old Testament point to in the New? What about the peace offering? (In both cases, Jesus Christ and what He does for us is in focus.)
  
5. Many people in the Old Testament also serve as types of Christ—at least we can make comparisons. Adam, whom we have already looked at, is clearly a type of Christ. The New Testament says so. Joseph, as we noted, can be compared in many ways to Christ though the New Testament does not mention the comparisons. Names that applied to Moses also applied to Christ—see Deuteronomy 18:15 and Acts 3:22, 23. Consider also Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness and the fulfillment in Christ in John 3. Can you think of anything about King David that points to Christ?
  
6. Here is a list of additional types that you will find interesting. Consider as many of them in class as you have time for.
  - a. Marriage is a picture or symbol of what other relationship? (Read Ephesians 5:25-32.)
  
  - b. The flood of Noah's day pictures or foreshadows what coming

- event? (2 Peter 3:5-7)
- c. Babylon (an ancient city) pictures what in Revelation 17:3-6 and 18:2?
  - d. With whom is Abraham compared in Galatians 3:27-29?
  - e. Manna in the Old Testament is compared with what in John 6:48-51?
  - f. Mt. Sinai, where God gave Moses the Law, is compared to what in Hebrews 12:18-24?
7. Some people feel that the Song of Solomon is a book full of comparisons between Christ and His bride, the church. Obviously, some things in this book can be applied to the husband and wife relationship—pure married love. But we can at least make some comparisons between Christ and His bride here. Interestingly, the Jews in Christ’s time often compared this book to the relationship between Jehovah and His people. We sing songs such as “The Sands of Time Are Sinking” with the phrase, “I am my Beloved’s, and my Beloved’s mine,” harking back to the Song of Solomon. Such comparisons are inspirational. Of course we would not want to be too dogmatic on this or build doctrine on these comparisons.
8. While not strictly types, we can also learn many valuable lessons from things that happened in the Old Testament. Consider the lessons from Job on accepting sufferings and God’s will. We can learn lessons on witnessing from the little maiden who told Naaman about the man of God who could cure his leprosy. What can Christians learn from the following incidents in the Old Testament: The story of Ruth (Ruth 1:16-18); Esther (Esther 4:14-16); the widow’s oil; Moses’ faithful sister Miriam; the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3:16-18)? Find key verses for some of these illustrations that teach us how we ought to live.

## Lesson 8

# Study of Biblical and Chronological Order

(Chapter 6, pp. 85-87)

**Lesson Aim:** To learn more about how the Bible can be read and studied from the beginning to the end or in chronological order.

**Memory Selection:** By today, have Psalm 119:16 memorized. This verse points out still another response to the Word of God—delighting ourselves in our study and application of the Word. As we surrender to God, learn to know His Word better, and apply it to our lives, it will become a delight. Should we not look upon this as the main goal of this course—that we would delight in our study of the Word of God? Assign verse 17 for the next class period.

### Words and Terms

Chronology — not a Biblical term but a word that comes from two Greek words—*chronos*, time and *logos*, word. It means “the study of time” or the science of measuring time in fixed periods and dating events or arranging them in order of occurrence.

### Study Helps

If you are going to study or read the Bible according to the Biblical order, of course you will read from Genesis through Revelation. If you want to do chronological studies in the Bible, you will need various Bible helps. You can buy chronological Bibles that list the passages in the entire Bible in chronological order. (You may be able to pick one up at a bookstore.) Of course, these Bibles are compiled by fallible men. Some of the chronology is guesswork. For example, no one knows for sure where to put Job in a chronology of the Bible. *The Reese Chronological Bible* puts Job at the beginning of the age of the patriarchs. Without a chronological Bible, you can gain some sense of chronology if you have a Bible encyclopedia and study the article on chronology. For the Gospels, a harmony of the Gospels is a good reference to use to determine the order of events in the life and teachings of Jesus.

### Biblical Order

You would probably not want to study in detail the entire Bible

in order from Genesis to Revelation. You would be spending too much time in the Old Testament and would tend to get bogged down in some of the longer historical books. One way to go through the Bible in order is to begin a through-the-Bible reading program. Different schedules are available to read through the Bible in a year. The best are ones that take you through the Bible, reading some from the Old and some from the New Testament each day. That way you do not stay in the Old Testament for two-thirds of a year. If you read about four chapters from the Old Testament each day and one from the New, you will read through the Bible in approximately a year. You may also use such schedules to read through only the Old Testament or through the New Testament in a year.

The Bible student who is going through the Bible in order will no doubt want to be using other studies at the same time, such as a particular book study or a topical study.

## **Chronological Order**

When you use this method of Bible study, you will probably not be studying the Bible as a whole, but a certain portion of the Bible to see how the events fit together in order historically. For example, using a harmony of the Gospels, you will see how the various accounts found in the Gospels relate to each other chronologically—in the order they happened. Or you may want to see how the events of the Book of Acts relate to the Epistles of Paul.

Using this method, you may discover some inspirational and helpful insights on how different parts of the Bible relate to other parts and how the books are tied together. You will see, for example, how the various kings and prophets of the Old Testament related to each other. You will learn that the Books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther fit the time period just before the Book of Malachi at the end of the Old Testament.

This method is especially helpful in getting the events of Jesus' three years of ministry in proper order.

## **Questions and Discussion**

1. List all the advantages and disadvantages you can think of in studying Bible passages in chronological order. The method has definite benefits as listed above. You do well to consider at least several limitations. One would be that the exact time of a number of Bible events is uncertain. Any attempt to list them in chronological order is educated guessing. People can get into unprof-



itable debates over chronology. For example, some people insist to the point of controversy that Jesus was crucified on Thursday instead of Friday. While they may raise some interesting and even valid observations, does the exact day of the week really matter in relation to salvation and the Christian life?

2. Go to a harmony of the Gospels and share with the class a list of the events of the last week of Jesus' life in chronological order. Read the different Gospel versions of such events as the Triumphal Entry, Jesus' betrayal, and Jesus' last words on the cross. In what order do you think Jesus gave His last sayings on the cross?
  
3. One of the most difficult sections of Scripture to understand chronologically are the sections on the kings of Israel and Judah. In a Bible dictionary, read the article on chronology of the Old Testament. Most will list these kings in parallel columns. Of course the beginning parallel reigns are obvious—Jeroboam I (Northern Kingdom) and Rehoboam (Southern Kingdom). Find out which kings reigned in Judah when the following ruled in Israel: Omri (Jehoshaphat), Jehu (Ahaziah), Jeroboam II (Uzziah), and Hoshea (Hezekiah).

## Lesson 9

# Study for Practical Use in Dealing With People

(Chapter 7, pp. 88-90)

**Lesson Aim:** To learn pointers on how to make our Bible study practical in reaching out to others who need Jesus Christ or Christians who need encouragement.

**Memory Selection:** By today the class should have memorized Psalm 119:17. The last two verses of this memory selection (Psalm 119:17, 18) change from the subject of how we respond to the Word of God (hiding it in our hearts, rejoicing in it, meditating on it, delighting in it, and declaring it to others) to how the Lord works in us through His Word. In verse 17, we call upon God to deal bountifully with us so that we may live to keep His Word. We all deserve to die because of our sins, but the Lord spares us to give us opportunity to keep His Word. Assign verse 18 for the next class period.

### How We Can Meet Peoples' Needs Through the Word

A logical outworking of applying the Word of God to our own lives through Bible study is being able to help other people. Chapter 7 emphasizes helping the lost through our Bible study. But we can also help other Christians face life's problems and discouragements.

We must be careful in this type of Bible study not to pick verses out of context in an attempt to help others. We must make sure that the verses, taken in their settings, really speak to the need. When sharing the truths we have found with those in need, we should normally take them to the Bible, reading the Scriptures with them, to show them that this is indeed what the Bible says.

### Questions and Discussion

1. Pick out some of the items listed on page 89. List as many Scriptures as you can find to help a person with those needs or who makes statements such as those that are listed. You may wish to use a topical Bible and concordance to find helpful Scriptures to answer the following excuses: (1) The careless or indifferent: 2 Corinthians 6:2; Proverbs 27:1; James 4:14. (2) "I am too great a sinner": 2 Peter 3:9; Romans 10:9-13; 1 Timothy

2:4. (3) “I will be persecuted if I become a Christian”: 2 Timothy 3:12; Matthew 5:11, 12; Luke 12:11, 12.

2. Every Christian should learn a number of Scriptures on how to lead a person to Christ, so that he can be prepared to help the honest seeker he might meet in a great variety of circumstances. One of the simplest outlines of Scripture to lead a soul to Christ or to help a person see his needs is what some call the “Romans Road to Salvation.” These Scriptures are in order through the Book of Romans. You can use a Bible or a New Testament and show a person step by step how to become a Christian and how to grow in Christ. Memorize this outline or at least mark them in your Bible to help others: All have sinned (Romans 3:23); Christ died for us (Romans 5:8); Christ offers us salvation (Romans 6:23); We accept Christ by confessing and believing (Romans 10:9-13); We are transformed by the renewal of our mind (Romans 12:2); Put on the Lord Jesus and make no provision for the flesh (Romans 13:14); We will all give account of ourselves (Romans 14:12). An even simpler outline is believe, repent, confess—suggest a verse or two for each of these categories.
  
3. Another group of people we can help through Bible study are believers who need spiritual encouragement. Together as a class, make up a list of areas that Christians often have questions about or need help with. Pick out several of these to find Scriptures that could help meet the need. Consider such needs as assurance of salvation; discouragement; peace of mind; answers to prayer; healing—physically or spiritually; loving our enemies; trust; faith; facing temptation; doubt; and evil thoughts.
  
4. Through our study of the Scriptures, we can also help people who are caught up in false teaching. Of course, we will not study the Scripture to hold up our end of an argument or to dispute with people. One of the greatest testimonies we can leave with a person who is involved in false teaching is a consistent Christian

example which shows what the power of God can do in a person's life. It is good to know something about the teaching they are following and what the Bible says about the subject. The best time to share this Scripture with them is when it comes up naturally. Rather than arguing with them, simply share the Scripture or give them Scripture to look up on their own. Sometimes neighbors or friends that belong to cults are actually easier to witness to than those who have once followed the truth and have departed from it in varying degrees. Perhaps you would want to briefly discuss what Scriptures you could use to help people of a false religion that is common in your area. We need to know the Scriptures to help them and to be able to stand ourselves. With that, we need to have a firm testimony of what Christ has done in our lives. As Jesus said to the man delivered from demon possession: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee" (Mark 5:19b).

5. Ask students to share how a Scripture, an insight from the Scripture, or a Bible tract spoke to them either before they became a Christian or how they were encouraged by sharing of Scripture since they became Christians. Perhaps you, as the teacher, could also share a testimony about how you were encouraged.

## Lesson 10

# Getting the Most Out of Your Bible Study (Final Suggestions)

(Chapter 8, pp. 91-95)

**Memory Selection:** Today you and the class should have completed the ten-verse memory selection—Psalm 119:9-18. The last verse, “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law” makes an excellent conclusion for this study. This was one of the main purposes for Torrey writing *How to Study the Bible*.

### On Using What You Learned

It is very possible to have learned many techniques of Bible study in this course and to have put them to practice, but still not have benefited much from the course. These concluding suggestions are meant to help you get the most out of your Bible study. No techniques or suggestions in relation to Bible study really benefit a person unless he has a living, right relationship with Jesus Christ.

### Questions and Discussion

1. We cannot overemphasize the importance of a regular diet in the Word of God. We know what happens to people who are sporadic in their eating habits. Alternating periods of going on eating binges and starvation will soon affect our physical health. A regular, balanced diet is one of the keys to physical health. For that reason, we need to daily spend some time in the Word of God. Because of pressing responsibilities, we may not be able to spend as much time some days as others, but regularity is essential. In class, list as many benefits as you can of regular Bible study. Not the least of our considerations should be the discipline of taking time each day for our relationship with God. The Bible likens our relationship with Christ to the marriage relationship. Husbands and wives know the value of daily communication, simply taking time for each other.

2. How do we know that the Psalmist David had a daily relationship with the Lord? What did he say about it in Psalm 119:97; 86:3; and 88:9? What does Psalm 119:97 say is the motivation for daily meditation on God's Word?
  
3. Reread Acts 17:11 (found on page 91 in *How to Study the Bible*). For what were the noble Bereans known? (We can appreciate this more when we remember that the Bereans did not have all the Bible study helps that we do today. Concordances and topical Bibles were unknown to them. At that time the Scriptures had not been divided into chapters and verses. Ancient Hebrew and Greek did not have marks of punctuation to divide sentences, and they wrote without space between the words. Searching the Scriptures must have been a daunting task.)
  
4. Finding time is one of the most difficult things about Bible study. Ironically, in our world of modern conveniences, timesaving devices, and shorter workweeks, it seems harder and harder to take time for the things that are most important in life, including relationships with God and with others. Is it that we clutter our lives with more things that demand time and energy? In class, take some time to discuss ways we can order our priorities to find time for Bible study. How does it differ for a person who works away from home, a person who works at home, a housewife, a single person?
  
5. Discuss the best time of day to study the Bible, to have personal devotions and family devotions. What factors determine the best time? What different times did the Psalmist David find for communication with God? Read Psalm 5:3; 55:17; 119:148.

6. As you study the Scriptures, look for Jesus Christ and focus on Him. In a sense, all Scripture points to God's great plan for mankind and ultimately to Jesus Christ. You can go back to Genesis and find direct prophecies concerning Christ. Even the Psalms and Proverbs point to a right relationship with God. Much of it can be applied to the Christian life and our relationship with Christ. The prophecies throughout the Old Testament and the types and shadows found there also point to Jesus. Compare the following Old Testament prophecies with their fulfillment: Genesis 3:15 and Galatians 4:4; Genesis 18:18 and Acts 3:25; Micah 5:2 and Matthew 2:6; Daniel 9:25 and Luke 2:1, 2; Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23; Hosea 11:1 and Matthew 2:15; Isaiah 53:7 and Matthew 26:62, 63; Psalm 22:16 and John 20:25; Psalm 22:18 and Mark 15:24.

7. Memorizing Scripture is an important addition to studying God's Word. Many people think they cannot memorize, but it is possible for most people, the younger the easier. It is a lot easier to retain memorized Scripture if you follow some pattern or purpose. For example, memorizing an entire passage or section of verses is easier than miscellaneous scattered verses. Memorizing verses on a given subject (such as the Romans Road to Salvation) will stick longer than miscellaneous, unrelated Scriptures. As a class, share techniques and tips for memorization. It does require concentration, the same kind of concentration that meditation requires. (A certain man had memorized entire books of the Bible and could quote them flawlessly. When asked how he did this, he explained that he was a carpenter and wrote out Bible passages on slips of paper which he would tack up near where he was working. He would occasionally look at the Scriptures and repeat them. At lunch break, he would focus on the Scriptures again. He would take spare moments in situations where he had to wait for something or someone to focus on a passage he was memorizing. Undoubtedly, he also had a special ability to memorize, but much of it was through cultivation. Some of us probably couldn't memorize entire books of the Bible, but we could memorize more than we do.)

8. Another way we get the most from our Bible study is by putting

what we study to practice. This is, without doubt, the most important way. Discuss some examples of different ways you can put Biblical truths to practice. You may want to consider areas such as witnessing to the lost, helping others with spiritual needs, facing temptations, discouragement, doubt, interpersonal relationship problems, marriage problems, raising children, and the list could go on. Think of Scriptures which could give guidance in some of these areas.

9. If time permits, close the class period with some testimonies of blessings received from this study or how class members have received blessing by putting some of the principles to practice.

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