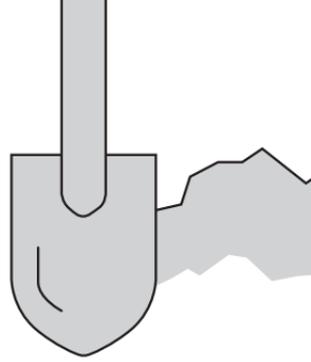


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# CHAPTER 1

## STUDY THE WORD



Study [Be diligent] to show [present] thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

*2 Timothy 2:15*

The study methods set forth in this book have been tested in the classroom, with classes of college graduates, and in classes largely composed of people of very moderate education (and in some cases of almost no education) and have proven to be practical and fruitful. If some of the suggested methods of study seem elaborate and difficult, do not let them frighten

or overwhelm you. They are not as difficult as they may appear.

Some of these methods require time and hard work. But the Bible contains gold; and almost any one is willing to dig for gold if he is certain he will find it. And you will certainly find gold in the Bible if, as you dig, you meet the conditions outlined in Chapter 2. As you use these methods, you will find your studying abilities increasing, until you can soon do more in fifteen minutes than you could do in an hour at the beginning.

You will find the first method of study suggested to be an exceptionally good mental training. When you have pursued this method of study for a time, your powers of observation will have been so quickened that you will begin to see at a glance what you at first saw only after much study and reflection. This method will help you train your logical powers and cultivate habits of order, systemization, and classification in your thinking. It will even help you develop the power of clear, concise, and strong expression.

The Bible is much read, but comparatively little studied. The study of no other book affords the opportunity for intellectual development that the study of the Bible does. No other book, and no other subject, will so abundantly repay close and deep study.

The first method of study suggested (Chapter 3) is essentially the method scientists use to study nature: first, careful analysis and fact-finding; second, classification of facts. But the facts of God's written revelation far transcend those of nature in understanding and knowing God, in spiritual helpfulness, and in practical usefulness. They are also far more accessible.

We cannot all be profound students of nature, but we can all be profound students of Scripture. Many an otherwise "uneducated" person has a marvelous grasp of Bible truth, acquired through sincere reading and study. There are individuals who have studied little else, but who have daily studied the Scriptures by the hour, whose spiritual understanding and wisdom astonishes and sometimes dismays the scholars and theologians.

## HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE

David understood something of this. He wrote,

“O how love I thy law!

it is my meditation all the day.

Thou through thy commandments hast made me

wiser than mine enemies:

for they are ever with me.

I have more understanding than all my teachers:

for thy testimonies are my meditation.

I understand more than the ancients,

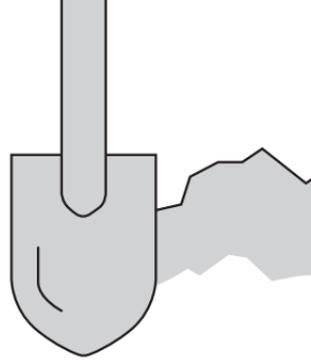
because I keep thy precepts.”

*-Psalm 119:97-100*

We will in this book consider seven profitable methods of Bible study. More important, however, than the best methods of Bible study, are at least eight fundamental conditions that make Bible study profitable. The one who meets these conditions will get more out of the Bible while pursuing the poorest method than the one who does not meet them will get while pursuing the best method.

Many who are eagerly asking, “What method shall I pursue in my Bible study?” need something far deeper than a new or better method. They need to meet God’s conditions. We will look at these fundamental conditions in Chapter 2.

## CHAPTER 2 CONDITIONS FOR PROFITABLE BIBLE STUDY



He that hath ears to hear,  
let him hear.

*Matthew 11:15*

### **You must be born again.**

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This is the first and most fundamental condition for profitable Bible study. The Bible is a spiritual book, and only a spiritual man can understand its deepest and most characteristic and most precious teachings. “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14).