



How to Understand the Bible

Basic Principles

1. What is one of the first principles set forth to understand the Bible?

“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” John 5:39

2. How often should you study and why should you study the scriptures?

“And these were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” Acts 17:11

3. How much of the scriptures should we study?

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.” 2Tim. 3:16

“And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.” Luke 24:27

Note: When Jesus spoke these words only the Old Testament was written. However, Jesus addressed those who did not believe all of the Bible, which now would apply to both the Old and New Testament. “Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.” Luke 24:25

4. What should be our organized method of study?

“For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little.” Isa. 28:10

5. What is said of those in the Old Testament who lacked knowledge of the scriptures?

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.” Hosea 4:6

Note: God’s people went into captivity because they lacked knowledge, and today many are locked up in captivity by false theories because of a lack of study and knowledge of the Bible. “Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.” Isa. 5:13

6. What did Christ say of those in the New Testament who lacked knowledge?

“Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.” Matt. 22:29

Conditions and Promises for Understanding the Bible

7. The Lord has appointed His servants to give you understanding.

“And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.” Jer. 3:15

“And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. ²⁷And he arose and went: and behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, ²⁸Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. ²⁹Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. ³⁰And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? ³¹And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him...³⁵Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.” Acts 8:26-31, 35

8. Pray for the Holy Spirit to be your teacher and guide your mind into truth.

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 14:27

9. Pray for spiritual enlightenment.

“Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” Ps. 119:18

10. What will be the result of a disciple of Christ who desires to know the truth and prays for it?

“Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures.” Luke 24:45

“Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; ⁴If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; ⁵Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. ⁶For the Lord giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.” Prov. 2:3-6

11. What promise is given to the one who understands and believes the Scriptures?

“And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” 2Tim. 3:15

12. What is your responsibility once you have gained some understanding of the Scriptures?

- Hearken to the voice of the Lord – “If now thou hast understanding, hear this: hearken to the voice of my words.” Job 34:16

- Do His commandments – “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.” Ps. 111:10
- Sing praises – “For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.” Ps. 47:7
- Meditate on the testimonies – “I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation.” Ps. 119:99
- Speak of wisdom – “My mouth shall speak of wisdom; and the meditation of my heart shall be of understanding.” Ps. 49:3
- Forsake the foolish – “Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding.” Pr. 9:6
- Buy the truth – “Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding.” Pr. 23:23