

(#144)

Learning the basics about being saved: Studying the Bible to find out (7).

### A focus on what God says. Though there may be value in what <u>people</u> say (= commentaries and study helps), our <u>primary</u> focus is to be on what <u>God</u> says (= the Bible)!

- 3. "Observing" the immediate passage you are studying. In our "Basic Bible Study Method," this would refer to the words and how they connect (Steps 1 and 2).
- 4. Attempting to "interpret" (understand) the passage within the context of Scripture. In our "Basic Bible Study Method," this would refer to the nearby and distant contexts (Steps 3 and 4). Our goal is to understand the verse within its context, not to invent our own "personal interpretation" (opinion) of it!
- 5. "Applying" what you learn to your life. How should the things you learned influence the way you live? This might not always be possible (depending on the nature of the passage); but our goal should always be to become more "Christ-like"... not just to learn a lot of facts!

# There are many ways to study the Bible, depending on your goal.

**IF YOUR GOAL IS TO "FOLLOW JESUS,"** you will choose a study method that: ① helps you *learn* what Scripture says, and ② encourages you to *apply* what you learn to your life.

Certain features tend to be present in study methods designed for this purpose.

### > COMMON FEATURES:

An awareness of dependency on God. Attitude is important!
 Prayer is important! As you study God's Word, remember
 who God is, and who we are ... and be teachable!

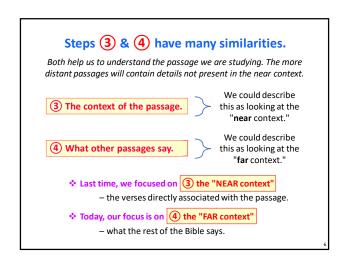
6. Writing down one's observations. Though not mandatory, it is quite helpful to write down something. This is because writing involves coordination between eye, hand and brain. Doing this helps us to remember things better – and perhaps even to think better!

There is no specific note-taking method we must follow. Many people put their thoughts and observations in a notebook or journal. Some people even draw pictures (sometimes including the verse) that visually illustrates what they are learning.

Many people find it encouraging to look back at previous notes, to reflect on what God has done in their lives.

Some people refer to the three points about "Observing / Interpreting / Applying" as the "OIA" method of Bible Study. There are many books and websites that describe these points in greater detail.

# A BASIC METHOD FOR UNDERSTANDING SCRIPTURE. We're looking at a basic and valuable starting point for studying the Bible, using the "save/salvation" concept to illustrate it. We need to pay attention to: 1 The words and their meanings. 2 How those words connect. 3 The context of the passage. 4 What other passages say.



APPLYING 4 What other passages say

⇒ IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SAVE/SALVATION CONCEPT.

It's like an extension of Step #3 - which we looked at last time. Because of that, much of what we learned last time also applies here.

- · Sometimes the nearby context will be enough for us to understand a passage.
- At other times, it will be necessary to review other Scripture passages, in order to avoid false conclusions and error.



As we increase our understanding of the whole Bible, it will enhance our understanding of the individual verses.





THEY HELP US TO AVOID GOING ASTRAY WITH "HALF-TRUTH."

We will be accepting ALL that Scripture says.

Seeing that I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, if somehow I could provoke my people to jealousy and save some of them.

Romans 11:13b-14 (NET)

This verse focuses on human responsibility. It is NOT a denial of God's role in salvation – which other Scripture passages affirm! People may be saved because of what  $\underline{we}$  do; but we are not the cause of their salvation. (God does the actual saving.)

In the above passage: The Jews tried to *earn* salvation, and failed; but the Gentiles were trusting Jesus and being saved. Paul was hoping that the Jews would see this, and want the salvation that comes by faith (since it can't come by works).



### THEY HELP US TO AVOID REACHING FALSE CONCLUSIONS AND OTHER MISUNDERSTANDINGS.

· We will protect ourselves from wrong interpretations of what Scripture passages say.

And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.

1 John 4:14 (NET)

Without the greater context of Scripture, we might reach the false conclusion that the term "Savior of the world" means that all people will be saved. The rest of the Bible shows that this is

Jesus is the world's savior. He is the *only* savior. But many people in the world will refuse to accept that fact. They will refuse to repent, believe and obey him. They will remain unsaved.

### The RIGHT USE of CONTEXT.

Paying attention to context minimizes error,

**★** BUT WE NEED TO APPROACH IT WITH THE RIGHT ATTITUDE! ★

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE!

Avoid adding to, or subtracting from, Scripture, using one verse to distort or cancel the meaning of another.

Accept all of what Scripture says, realizing that different passages complement, rather than contradict each other.

"USING SCRIPTURE TO INTERPRET SCRIPTURE."

- This can be a good principle, if used properly.
- Without the right attitude, it actually becomes "using Scripture to <u>mis</u>interpret Scripture.'

Warnings about DISTORTING Scripture.

**NOT AN OPTION:** 

✓ Replacing Scripture with your own opinion. ✓ Inventing your own "interpretation."

Some things in [Paul's] letters are hard to understand, things the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they also do to the rest of the scriptures.

2 Peter 3:16b (NET)

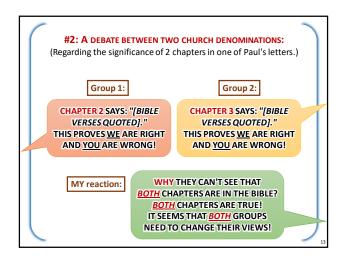
But stop using this phrase, 'prophecy from the LORD.' For people are using it to give authority to their own ideas, turning upside down the words of our God, the living God, the LORD of Heaven's Armies.

Jeremiah 23:36 (NLT)

"You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.'

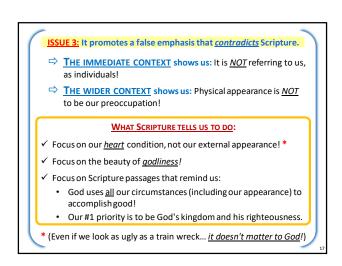
Mark 7:8 (NIV)

**EXAMPLES: "USING SCRIPTURE TO MISINTERPRET SCRIPTURE." #1:** AN EXAMPLE FROM EARLY CHURCH HISTORY: Group 1: Group 2: "[THIS VERSE]" SAYS "[THIS VERSE]" SAYS THAT JESUS IS GOD. THAT JESUS IS A **HUMAN. THIS PROVES** THIS PROVES HE IS NOT HE IS NOT GOD! A HUMAN! **NEITHER GROUP WOULD ADMIT** Reality: THAT SCRIPTURE DESCRIBES JESUS AS BOTH GOD AND MAN! INSTEAD, EACH GROUP USED ITS OWN SELECTED VERSES TO "REINTERPRET" THE VERSES THE OTHER GROUP USED.





With further research, we discover that this is a "messianic" psalm. Part (or all) of this psalm applies to Jesus, the "Messiah" (or "Christ"). In fact, verses 6-7 are quoted in the New Testament in reference to Jesus. Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; OLD a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. **TESTAMENT** You love righteousness and hate wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy. Ps 45:6-7 (NIV) But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever; **TESTAMENT** a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy." Hebrews 1:8-9 (NIV)





# Your MISSION:

## ⇒ Focus on GROWING in knowledge.

of the "growing in grace" part.)

(God will take care But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 2 Pe 3:18a (NET)

### We NEED to understand Scripture.

- It's a <u>lifelong growing process</u>. ⇒ So we should <u>never</u> reach the arrogant conclusion that we "know it all."
- It's also *guided by the Spirit of God*. 

  ⇒ So we should never despair over the fact that we <u>don't</u> "know it all"! We can trust <u>God</u> to get us to where we need to be!

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