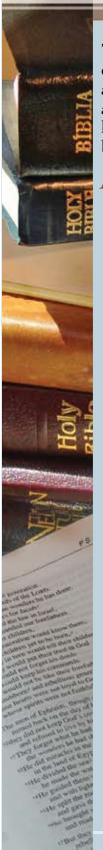
# How to Study BIBLE

Basic Principles of Bible Study Why Study the Bible? Inductive Bible Study Ways to Study Tools for Bible Study

# WHY STUDY THE BIBLE?



The Bible is the most printed and read book in history. More evidence exists to confirm the Bible than to confirm any other ancient historical documents. God's Word can change your heart and transform your life. The Bible wasn't written to be merely history or a piece of great literature. It is meant to be read with both the mind and heart. God loves you and wants you to love him.

## Reasons to Study with Your Mind and Heart

To know God—God created the heaven and the earth and everyone in it. (Genesis 1-3)

To enjoy and love God—Meditate on God's character, principles, and promises. Rejoice in his love, care, and forgiveness. (Psalm 119:12-18, 160-162; 1 Timothy 6:17)

To know God's Word—The Scriptures were inspired by God. They teach us the truth and show us what is wrong in our lives. They straighten us out. (2 Timothy 3:16)

To understand the Word—Jesus is called the Word because he is the ultimate communication from God. He existed from the beginning with God, he is God, and he created everything. He said that those who have seen him have seen the Father. (John 1:1-3: 10:30: 12:44, 45: 14:7-9)

**To learn direction in life**—The Bible shows us what to do. (Psalm 119:11)

To find comfort and hope—The Scriptures give us encouragement. (Romans 15:4)

To let God expose our innermost thoughts and desires—His Word helps us see ourselves as we really are and convicts us of sin so that we repent and change. (Hebrews 4:12-16)

**To become pure and holy**—Jesus prayed this for all believers that they would be set apart for God and his holy purposes. (John 17:17-23)

To obey the Great Commandment — The more we know God, the more we can love him. The Great Commandment is to love God with all of our being and our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12:29-31). And Jesus gave us a new commandment to love one another (John 13:34-35).



### HOW TO BEGIN STUDYING THE BIBLE

#### Plan a Study Time

Decide on a quiet time and place to study God's Word and make it a daily habit, like eating. Some people get up early to spend time with God. Others study during the day or evening.

#### Pray

Ask God to help you understand his Word. Pray using your own words or something like this: "Lord, thank you for the Bible so that we will know who you are and what you want for our lives. Please help me understand it and do what you want me to do."





#### Read and Re-read It

The Bible is the most important letter you can ever receive—a message from the God of the universe who made you, loves you, and wants to communicate with you. Open your "love letter" every day. Re-read each chapter and verse several times.

#### **Know the Author**

Read Genesis to learn about God who created the world. All Scripture is inspired by God. God actually visited Earth in the form of man—the man Christ Jesus. Jesus said, "I and my Father are one." Read the Gospel of John to learn about God's plan for you.

#### Take Notes

Write notes about what you read. Use a specific notebook or "spiritual journal" especially for Bible study. The three questions of "Inductive Bible Study" will help you look at the facts and discover how they apply to you. You might want to underline key verses or write notes in the margin of your Bible.

#### Make the Bible Your Authority

Accept and believe that what the Bible says is true. You may not understand everything in the Bible, but obey and apply what you do understand.

#### Find a Group

"As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another" (Proverbs 27:17). God gave his Word to his people. When you share what you are learning with other fellow believers, God will do amazing things. It will also help you to be accountable to someone.



#### BASIC PRINCIPLES OF BIBLE STUDY

#### **GENESIS**

Who: Moses

What: The Beginnings Where: Egypt and Canaan When: c. 1450 BC-1400 BC Why: To demonstrate that God is sovereign and loves his creation.

Outline (Chapter)

- Creation, Fall, and Flood (1-11)
- Abraham (11-25)
- Isaac and Jacob (25-36)
- Joseph (37-50)

**Key Verse**: I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. (Genesis 17:7)

From Bible Overview chart, Rose Publishing

#### JOHN

Who: John (The Beloved Disciple)

What: Gospel Where: Asia Minor When: c. AD 85-AD 95

Why: To show Jesus as the Son of God, the Word made flesh, who provides eternal life for all who believe in him.

#### Outline (Chapter)

- Introduction (1)
- Ministry of Christ (2-12)
- Private Ministry (13-17)
- Death and Resurrection (18-21)

Key Verse: For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

#### Look for God's Over-All Plan

The Old Testament reveals God's loving plan of salvation, from Creation to prophecies of the future Messiah (the Savior).

The New Testament reveals God's salvation of sinful man by the suffering, death and resurrection of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, and reveals the everlasting Kingdom of God.

God inspired 40 people over a period of 1600 years to write the 66 books of the Bible.

#### Find the Background of the Books (Five W's and One H)

Find out who wrote the books and the reason for, or theme of, the books. Ask "Who, What, Where, When, Why, and How?" Usually this information is in the first chapter or in the introduction to the book.

#### Read Verses in Context

Read the surrounding chapters and the verses before and after the verse you are studying. Get the whole picture. Don't study verses out of context. Look at the outline of the book.

#### Whole Message of God's Word

Take the whole Bible as God's Word. Don't just concentrate on one verse or one idea. See if the teaching is explained more fully in other parts of the Bible. Look at the small cross references in your Bible to help you find other verses on the same subject. For example, look at the cross references and the verses around John 3:16.

12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

13 And ano man hath ascended up to heaven, but bhe that came down from heaven, even cthe Son of man which is in heaven.

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in  $^{c~Mt}$  8:20 the wilderness, even so must the Son of 14 a Jn 8:28; man abe lifted up.

15 That whosever believeth ain him should not perish, but have eternal life. 13 a Pr 30:4; Deu 30:12;

Cross

references

Ac 2:34 b Jn 3:31; 6:38

15 a Jn 20:31; 1 Jn 5:11

16 For God so aloved the world, that he <sup>b</sup>gave his <sup>c</sup>only begotten Son, that whosoever delieveth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17. For God asent not his Son into the world bto condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 <sup>a</sup>He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

16 a Ro 5:8; Eph 2:4; 1 Jn 4:10 b Ro 8:32; 1 Jn 4:9 c Jn 1:18; 3:18 ∂ Jn 3:36; 6:40

17 a Jn 3:34; 5:36; 6:29; 20:21 b Jn 8:15; 12:47; 1 Jn 4:14

18 a Mk 6:16; Jn 5:24 *b* Jn 1:18; 1 Jn 4:9

Sample page of John 3:12-18 from a Bible with cross references.



# BASIC PRINCIPLES OF BIBLE STUDY

#### Discover the Intended Meaning

As you read the Bible, look for the author's intended meaning. What did the author want to say? What did it mean in that culture? What does it mean now? What are the main ideas? If you have questions, write them down, pray for insight, and discuss your ideas with others.

# Learn the History and Geography

Use a time line to learn about the history of the Bible. Use maps to learn about the geography of where the events took place.

#### Figurative Language

Figures of speech are word pictures that help us understand a truth. "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" is a metaphor that helps us picture the Bible enlightening our minds and actions and giving us direction. "As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for you, O God" is a simile that compares ideas with the words "like" or "as." Similes occur over 175 times in the Psalms. Jesus used personification when he said if the people did not declare the mighty works they had seen God do, the stones would cry out in praise. Hyperbole (exaggeration) is found in Matthew 5:29-30.

#### Forms of Literature

The Bible contains various forms of literature: History, Narrative, Poetry, Wisdom, Prophecy, Parables and Letters. Recognizing each form will help you interpret the meaning. For example, parables explain a spiritual truth by means of a story or analogy. The parable of the Prodigal Son does not refer to a specific historical person but teaches that God is a loving father who joyfully welcomes back prodigal or rebellious children who later repent and return to him.



From Where Jesus Walked: Then and Now wall map, Rose



# INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

# What does it say? What does it mean? How does it apply to me?

- 1. How can I find out for myself what the Bible says?
  Read it and re-read the Bible passage using the "Basic Principles of Study," pages 3-4 in this pamphlet. Read silently some times and read aloud other times. Don't start by reading what others have concluded about the Bible. Inductive reasoning moves from specific examples to general conclusions. Deductive reasoning moves from general examples to specific conclusions.
- 2. How can I know what the Bible means?

  After reading the facts, you can summarize them. Don't jump to conclusions too fast. Read the passage several times and pray for wisdom. You will learn more and remember more if you discover what the Scriptures say yourself. Look at cross references (other verses in Scripture that relate to the verses you read).
- 3. How can I apply what the Bible says to myself?

  The goal of Bible study is a transformed life and a deep relationship with God. Sometimes in Scripture, you will see a command to obey, an example to follow, a lesson to learn, or a sin to confess. Apply that to your life.

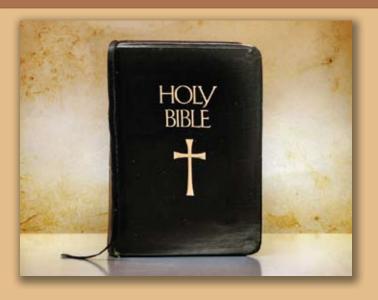
  Other times, you will want to claim a promise, pray a prayer, forgive someone, or ask forgiveness. Listen to the "still small voice" of God. God says, "Be still and know that I am God." As you listen and respond to God, you will be amazed at the results in your life as your relationship with him deepens.

  (1 Kings 19:12, Psalm 46:10)

Resources: Inexpensive *Life Journals* for all ages are available at New Hope Resources at 1-877-755-9555 http://resources.enewhope.org/store/Personalized Bibles (with your own name inserted into the verses) are available at Personal Promise Bible at 1-866-YOUR BIBLE. Source: Pamphlet. www.personalpromisebible.com/



# SOME BASIC BIBLE PASSAGES TO STUDY



Start with these books: 4 Genesis 4 John
Short Books: 🗆 1 John 🗀 1 Thessalonians
Book Study: 11 More Books to Study
□ Mark, Matthew, or Luke □ Acts □ Galatians □ Ephesians
☐ Philippians ☐ Colossians ☐ 2 Thessalonians ☐ 1 Timothy
□ 2 Timothy □ Psalms □ Proverbs
Chapter Study: 11 Key Chapters
□ John 1, 3, 4 □ John 14, 15, 16, 17
□ Romans 6, 8, 12 □ Ephesians 5
Passage Study: 7 Key Passages
□ The Fall of Man — Genesis 3
☐ The Ten Commandments—Exodus 20:1-17
☐ The Prophecy of the Coming Messiah — Isaiah 53
☐ The Beatitudes — Matthew 5:1-11
□ The Sermon on the Mount—Matthew 5-7
□ Two Great Commandments—Matthew 22:36-40
□ The Prodigal Son—Luke 15:11-32
Verse Study: 17 Key Verses to Memorize
□ Genesis 1:1 □ Proverbs 3:5, 6 □ John 3:16 □ John 1:9, 12
□ Romans 3:23 □ Romans 6:23 □ Romans 5:8 □ Romans 10:9
□ Ephesians 2:8, 9 □ Acts 16:30, 31 □ Philippians 4:6, 7 □ Psalm 119:11



# TOOLS FOR BIBLE STUDY

#### 1. Study Bibles

A study Bible will help you a great deal. Study Bibles contain explanations, introductions, outlines, cross references and study notes. A good study Bible has a concordance, maps, and a topical index. Ask your pastor to recommend one.

#### 2. Concordances

A concordance helps you look up any word in the Bible. It gives an alphabetical listing of key words, names, and topics, plus a list of verses that contain that word.

#### 3. Bible Software

Bible concordances and other references are available on both desktop and hand held software. Enter a word or reference to quickly find and print out Bible verses in various versions. Complete Bible libraries and study Bibles are available on computer software.

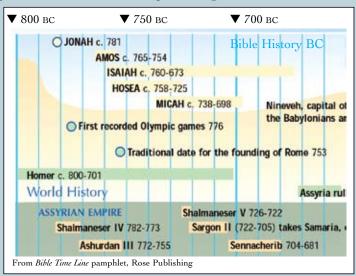


#### 4. Bible Dictionaries

Look up words you don't understand, such as "grace," "redemption," or "faith." Expository dictionaries give you more detailed meanings and explanations.

# 5. Bible Atlases, Maps, and Time Lines

On a map, locate where Bible events took place. Daniel was in Babylon. Babylon ruins are south of Baghdad today. On a time line, locate when Bible events took place. During the fierce Assyrian Kingdom, around 781 BC, Jonah went to Nineveh to warn the people to repent.



#### 6. Bible Commentaries and Handbooks

First, study the Bible yourself. See what it means and how it applies to you. List questions you have. Later, you can read to see how Bible scholars explain it.

#### 7. Special Bibles

**Topical Bibles** organize Scripture in special areas of interest, such as Salvation, Marriage, or Prayer. **Interlinear Bibles** compare original language (Hebrew or Greek) to modern language. **Large-print Bibles** are easy to read and helpful for many people.



# BIBLE REFERENCE LIBRARY

A **Study Bible** will bring out the significance of God's Word. In addition, you will want to build a **Reference Library**. Check off each category as your library grows.

References

Publishers

Concordance (Locates all the occurrences of a word.)

Strong's Exhaustive Thomas Nelson Publishers
NAS Exhaustive Broadman & Holman Publishers

NIV Exhaustive Zondervan Publishers

Bible Software (Concordance, Libraries, Bibles, Maps)

Scholars Library Series X (PC and Mac) Logos Bible Software

Bible Works, LLC

PC Study Bible (PC)

QuickVerse (PC and PDA)

Accordance (Macintosh)

BibleSoft

QuickVerse

OakSoft

Then/Now Bible Maps PowerPoint® Rose Publishing

Bible Dictionary (Defines Scripture words; gives some background)

Holman Bible Dictionary Broadman & Holman

New Illustrated Bible Dictionary

Dictionary of the Bible

New Unger's Dictionary

Zondervan Pictorial

Nelson

Eerdmans

Moody Press

Zondervan

Bible Atlas and Time Lines (Geography maps; history time lines.)

Atlas of Bible Lands

Broadman & Holman

NIV Atlas of the Bible

NIV Atlas of the Bible Zondervan
Moody Bible Atlas Moody
Deluxe Then & Now Bible Maps book Rose Publishing

Bible and Christian History Time Lines book Rose Publishing
Bible Time Line pamphlet Rose Publishing

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**Commentary** (Written by scholars with years of study; explanations)

One Volume: Wycliffe Bible CommentaryMoodyMatthew Henry's CommentaryZondervanNew Bible CommentaryEerdmanTwo Volume: Zondervan CommentaryZondervan

Two Volume: Zondervan CommentaryZondervanBible Knowledge CommentaryNelsonBible Exposition CommentaryVictor Books

Bible Handbook (Overview; background; customs and history)

New Unger's Bible Handbook Moody

Holman Bible Handbook Broadman & Holman

Halley's Bible Handbook Zondervan

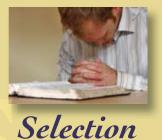
**Topical Bible** (Organizes Scripture in special areas of interest)

Nave's Topical Bible Hendrickson Publishers
Topical Analysis of the Bible Baker Book House Company



# DIGGING DEEPER: IN-DEPTH BIBLE STUDY

Bible study is important to our growth as followers of Jesus. Jesus compares reading the Bible with a seed being planted in good soil. The seed planted in good soil represents those with an honest and good heart, who hear the word, apply it, and with patience, produce a crop or fruit. Read Luke 8:4-15.



#### What do I study?

#### 1. Pray

"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law." (Psalm 119:18)

#### 2. Become Familiar with the Bible

- The Old Testament was written before Jesus' birth and tells about the people of Israel and anticipates the coming of Jesus the Messiah. The New Testament was written about Jesus' birth, life, ministry, death and resurrection and the years that followed as Christianity spread.
- Know the type of book you are reading such as Law, Prophet, History, Poetry, and so on. This can be found in the introduction to a Study Bible.
- Memorize the order of the Books of the Bible.
- Learn how to read the references: For example: 2 Timothy 3:16

2 = Second letter or book
Timothy = Name of letter or book
3: = chapter
:16 = verse

#### 3. Select the Passage

Determine where the passage begins and ends.

#### 4. Select a Version

Decide on a translation such as the King James Version (KJV), the New International Version (NIV), the New Living Translation (NLT), the New King James Version (NKJV), or the New American Standard Bible Update (NABU).

#### 5. Remember the Four "Do-Nots"

- Do not "proof text" (take verses out of context).
- Do not be too literal (see Matthew 5:29, 30).
- Do not ignore the Bible's cultural, historical, and literary background.
- Do not read your own ideas into the Scriptures.



#### What do I see?

#### 1. Make Use of Tools

Study Bibles, commentaries, concordances, Bible dictionaries, Bible encyclopedias, interlinear Bible (Greek and Hebrew to English), Bible handbooks, and Bible atlases, time lines, and topical Bibles.

#### 2. Observe the Text

- Do word studies. Observe words or expressions. Notice synonyms (words that have similar meanings) and antonyms (words that have opposite meanings). Pay attention to reoccurring words.
- Who are the people in the passage?
- What are the important ideas in the passage?
- Where are the places in the story?
- Pay attention to timespans.
- What is the literary genre (form), such as Narrative (story), Epic, Priestly Writings, Law, Liturgy, Poetry, Lament, Teaching, Prophecy, Gospel, Parable, Epistle (letter), or Apocalyptic literature?

#### 3. Observe the Context

- What is the immediate context? What comes before and after the text?
- Who is talking? Who is listening?

#### 4. Observe the Historical Setting

- When was this passage written?
- Where was this passage originally written?
- Who is the author? What is his occupation? What is his personality? Where is he from?
- Who is the original audience? To what nation do they belong? What is their history?
   Where do they live? Where are they from?
- What is the original purpose for this writing?
- Refer to maps, time lines, and other historical documents for more about the historical, sociological, and geographical setting.



#### DIGGING DEEPER: IN-DEPTH BIBLE STUDY



# Interpretation

#### What does it mean?

#### 1. The Language Question

- What is the meaning of each word?
- What is the meaning in the original language (Hebrew or Greek)?
- How are significant words used elsewhere in scripture?
- How does the genre affect the text?
- What is the form (such as the structure of the Abraham story in Genesis 11-25)?
- What is the sentence structure?
- Why are particular words used?
- Compare this passage to other versions of the Bible.

#### 2. The Historical Question

- How does the historical situation affect this text?
- How does the sociological situation affect this text?
- How does the geographical situation affect this text?

#### 3. The Theological Question

- What truths are taught about the nature of God?
- What does this passage tell us about human nature?
- Does this passage have anything to say about sin?
- Does this passage teach truths about redemption and salvation?
- What does this passage have to say about the church and/or the Christian life?

#### 4. The Tactical Question

• How does each paragraph fit into the author's reason for writing?



# Life Application

#### How does this apply?

#### 1. The Contemporary Question

- How do we apply what the author has said to the assumptions, values, and goals of our lives and society?
- What are the principles found in this passage that apply to the contemporary situation?
- How is God's redemption illustrated by this passage?
- Is there anything this passage has to say about certain social issues, such as racism, justice, poverty, or money?

#### 2. The Personal Question

- How do we relate what the author says to our personalities?
- How do we relate this passage to our personal needs?
- How does this passage impact our families and close friends?
- What does this passage say about our moral decisions?
- How does the text affect our personal goals?
- How do these verses or principles apply to the Church as a body?

#### 3. The Final Question

- What am I going to do about what I have learned?
- What personal goals am I going to set in my life to implement the truths found in this passage?
- How does this passage impact my relationship with God?

#### 4. Pray About What You Learned

 Pray for God's strength to help you to grow through your study.





# WAYS TO STUDY

#### **Bible Studies**

Study alone or with a partner. Small groups and home study groups can help you ask questions and share insights. Attend a Sunday School class or Bible Study at a Bible-teaching church.

#### Psalms and Proverbs

Read five Psalms and one chapter of Proverbs each day. (You'll read the 150 Psalms and 31 chapters of Proverbs in a month.)

#### Overview of the Bible

Read through the Bible in one year (about three chapters a day). One-Year Bibles and calendars give daily passages to read.

#### Listen to Learn

Listen to tapes of the Bible, radio programs that teach the Bible, and sermons that teach from the Bible. Taking notes is helpful.

#### Discuss the Bible With Others

Share what you've learned with others. Their questions will challenge you to pray and study more to find the answers.

#### Good Books on Bible Study

Discipleship Journal's Best Bible Study Methods, Munro & Couchman, NavPress, 2002. How to Study Your Bible, Kay Arthur, Harvest House, 2001. How to Study The Bible, R. A. Torrey, Whitaker House, 1986. How to Study The Bible and Enjoy It, Skip Heitzig, Tyndale House, 2002 Rick Warren's Bible Study Methods, Rick Warren, Zondervan, 2006. How to Get the Most from God's Word, John MacArthur, Jr., Word Publishing How to Read the Bible For All It's Worth, Fee and Stuart, Zondervan, 1982 Bible Study Made Easy, Mark Water, Hendrickson Publishers, 1992

#### Other Materials for Bible Study

Bible Overview chart and pamphlet, Rose Publishing
Bible Translations Comparison chart and pamphlet, Rose Publishing
How We Got the Bible chart and pamphlet, Rose Publishing
50 Proofs for the Bible: OT and NT pamphlet, Rose Publishing
100 Prophecies Fulfilled by Jesus chart and pamphlet, Rose Publishing



# Bible Pamphlets for Bible Studies, Small Groups, **Youth Groups, and New Member Classes**

#### What are Bible **Reference Pamphlets?**

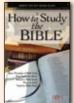
These pamphlets are full-color, glossy, plastic-coated fact sheets that contain hundreds of facts at a glance and fit inside a Bible. Each pamphlet unfolds 33" long and is an easy-to-understand summary of the major teachings on each Bible topic. Ready-to-use PowerPoints are available.



# **Bible Basics**



**Bible Time Line** Compare Bible and world history side by side. Every Bible student needs this. 9789901983513



How to Study the Bible Learn to do inductive Bible study: reading the context, using commentaries, and word studies. 9781890947637





**100 Prophecies** Fulfilled 100 Old Testament prophecies about Jesus fulfilled in the New Testament.

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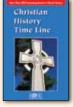
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**Genesis Time Line** Key events and people in Genesis includes maps. and the promises God made to each patriarch. 9781596360105



Christian History Time Line 200 people and

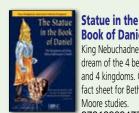
key events from the time of Jesus to today. Missions, Bible translation, and more. 9780965508292



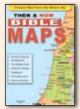
Reformation Time Line 100 key events and people in the Protestant Reformation. Explains denominations, Bible translations, etc. 9781596360938



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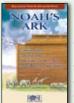


Then & Now Bible Maps 12 colorful maps for the back of your Bible. 9781596361300



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100 Bible passages that shows God's care, love, and tenderness for us as we go through tough times. 9781596360747



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THEN AND NOW BIBLE MAPS

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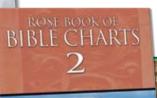
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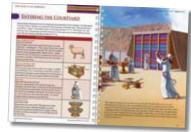
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