



How to Study the Bible

Selah Mountain Ministries: How to Study the Bible

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A Christianity Every Day™ Resource

Published by Christianity Every Day, United States of America
www.christianityeveryday.com

Selah Mountain Ministries is a Biblically foundational church outreach that provides in-person and web based services, counseling, education, and training. Learn more on the web at www.selahmountain.org

Content acknowledgement: Many thanks to First Baptist Church of Jackson (Ohio) for sharing much of this content with us. We pray it blesses you as it has us.

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Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible, King James Version. Printed in the United States of America.

Introduction

The title of this course is How to Study the Bible. It is a foundational course that will help you learn principles and methods used to study the Bible so that you may understand what the Bible teaches. During this course you will be introduced to the power of God's Word. You will also see how the powerful teachings of Scripture can apply to your life. With this knowledge and understanding, you will gain the ability and direction needed to experience life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10).

This course is also an introductory course to all programs taught at Selah Mountain Bible Institute, an educational outreach of Selah Mountain Ministries. The principles taught in this course apply no matter if the student is taking this course as part of a diploma or degree producing program or if they just want to gain a better understanding of the Bible. It is hoped that this course will prove to be a blessing to all who take it. We pray God blesses you in your study.

Course overview

This course is normally taught over several sessions that vary from 25-35 minutes in length. It is expected that extra time will be necessary between sessions for study by the student. Likewise, there may be session quizzes and exams as well as special assignments and projects.

The total time required by design to complete this course is about 26 hours. If this course is taken as part of a program offered by Selah Mountain Bible Institute, it is valued at 1.5 semester hours and a prerequisite for all programs as of the date of this course publication. Acceptance of this course and its academic value may vary depending on the specific institution granting such credit.

Academic Materials

Required: King James Bible

Supplemental: Bible dictionary, King James Old English Word Definition Guide

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Course Preview Getting Started

To be successful at anything in life it takes a certain amount of time and effort. However, before someone decides to invest the time and energy required to be successful, they must have the proper attitude in their mind and the determination to make things happen. The same is certainly true when it comes to the study of the Bible. You must be determined to make the effort to invest the time and energy into studying.

Course Details

This course will help you to learn how to study your Bible. It will teach you how the Bible, also known as the Word of God, can change your life and the foundational principles you need to know to study it (Read also 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 4:12; Revelation 19:11-13). Likewise, it will teach you a basic approach to Biblical study and some simple rules and factors needed to assure proper understanding of what the Bible teaches. Finally, this course will provide checkpoints at the end of each session to help you evaluate how well you are learning.

Given what was just said, you must be committed to being prepared to study and ready to learn. Take a moment and read the following Bible verses and consider your personal commitment to God as you start this course:

Psalms 1:1-6. Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly *are* not so: but *are* like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore, the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Psalms 119:9-16. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word. With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments. Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee. Blessed *art* thou, O LORD: teach me thy statutes. With my lips have I declared all the judgments of thy mouth. I have rejoiced in the way of thy testimonies, as *much as* in all riches. I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways. I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word.

Psalm 119:97-105. 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. I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word. I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me. How sweet are thy words unto my taste! *yea, sweeter* than honey to my mouth! Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

1 Corinthians 2:9-16. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed *them* unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us 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. But 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. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.

2 Timothy 2:1-7. Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man also strive for masteries, *yet* is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

2 Timothy 2:14-15. Of these things put *them* in remembrance, charging *them* before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, *but* to the subverting of the hearers. Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 3:14-17. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*; 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. All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

James 1:5-8. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.

These verses teach us some very important things about how studying the Bible can change your life. But, you must make a personal decision to ask God for wisdom in your study. You must trust what He teaches you about having life and having it abundantly as much as you trust that He can save you and change your eternal destiny. (Read also John 10:10; James 1:1-7).

Without this commitment, your mind cannot be clearly focused so that you will learn anything from the Lord. Therefore, before you proceed take a moment to think about your commitment and pray that God will convict you about the importance of what you are about to learn in this study and completing it. (If you have not done so already, take a moment to pause for reflection and prayer about this study).

If you have committed to this study and asked God to convict you about the importance of what you are about to learn in this study and completing it, then you are ready to move on.

Consider the following things as you begin. These will help you remember the things that you are taught and cause you to gain the most from your study:

1. Deliberately schedule a specific time each day to do your study and read your Bible when you are mentally fresh and not in a hurry. If necessary, schedule your study time as an appointment on your calendar and make sure you are prepared to start on time. This includes adjusting your bedtime if needed so that you are mentally fresh. Even if you do not feel like studying, deliberately make the effort to study during the time that you have scheduled.
2. Set up a study space where you can do your study that is quiet and prevents you from being interrupted or distracted. Gather everything you need to study and keep them together in your study space or a place where they are readily available when it is time to study.

3. Before starting, pray that God will give you the wisdom and discernment that you need to be mentally focused and fully alert so that you can understand and remember what you are learning. Pray that He will prevent any distractions that would stop you making the best use of the time that you have scheduled.
4. If you are considering doing this course with someone else, ask that the person and/or others commit to God and each other that they will faithfully attend the sessions and earnestly pray and support one another as you go through the course.

End of session checkpoints

At the end of each session, you will encounter an end of session checkpoint. These checkpoints are designed to help you consider some things about what you have just learned and to check to see if you are ready to continue to the next session. It is important that before you move on to the next session you successfully complete each checkpoint.

If you are unable to successfully complete a checkpoint, then go back through the entire session. Do not be tempted to just look up the answers to the checkpoint. Keep in mind that the goal of this course is to learn and understand how to study the Bible. Therefore, being totally familiar with what is taught in each session is important so that you can successfully complete each checkpoint. Then when you have successfully completed all the checkpoints, you will have completed the learning for this course.

Before you move on to the next session, please complete the requirements listed for this session's checkpoint. Checkpoint answer keys can also be found in the back of this workbook in the Appendix. When you have successfully completed this checkpoint, then you may move on to Session 1, The Word of God can change your life (Part 1). May God bless you in your study.

Course Preview: Checkpoint

Instructions: In your own words, write your answers to the following questions.

1. What do you hope to learn or gain from this course?

2. What is your personal commitment to Jesus Christ for this course?

[END OF SESSION]

Session 1
The Word of God can change your life (Part 1)

Introduction:

Sometimes people who claim to not believe in God will ask me if I have ever seen God. I reply to them that I have not seen God, but I have seen evidence of God. Incredibly they will ask how I can see the evidence of something that does not exist. I tell them the same way that if you jump off the roof of a building, you will see the painful evidence that gravity exists. They will quickly reply that of course gravity exists. I will then ask them how they know it exists? You cannot see it or touch it or even know it exists except for the evidence that it exists. It is the same way with God, we cannot see Him or touch Him in our human state, but we see the evidence of Him in creation and the lives that are changed by Him.

For example, I have had addicts come to me for Christ-centered counseling that have been battling addictions for decades. They have been convinced that they have a disease that is incurable and that they just have to learn some man-made coping mechanisms to successfully deal with it. However, when I show them several passages from Scripture that teach how God can protect our minds from the desire to get drunk or high, most get real interested and commit to meet for several weeks to learn more.

The first thing we do is address their immediate situation. Jesus gave us an example of this in John 8:1-11. He encountered a woman in desperate need to be delivered from a dangerous situation. He immediately addressed her situation and delivered her from the danger. Once done, he helped her to see that she was safe and that He was not going to condemn her. Then He could effectively tell her how to go on with her life.

In the life of an addict, the same process applies. As we help them with their immediate physical needs and demonstrate a non-condemning Christ like attitude toward them, trust is formed. This creates the environment where they can talk about their challenges without worrying that their problems are going to be used to condemn them. As more time is spent together and they realize that you care enough to help, they are willing to see what the Bible says about their situation. It is then that we can share the clear gospel message of salvation and explain how the power of the Holy Spirit will give them the ability to have victory over their life issues (Read also Philippians 4:13; James 1:2-8).

To help them plug into the power of how the Word of God can change their life, basic Bible study techniques are taught. Likewise, getting them to start reading the Bible each day is encouraged. One way is to have them read a chapter of Proverbs for each day of the month. For example, if it is the fifth of the month, they read the fifth chapter of Proverbs. If there are less than 31 days in the month, I have them read the remaining

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

chapters on the last day of the month. At the same time, have them write down any verses that speak to them that day in a notebook or journal. With time they start seeing subtle changes in their desires and how they see things because of what they are reading and want to learn more because they see the evidence of how the Word of God is changing their life.

When someone experiences and sees the evidence in their life that God is real, no person can ever convince them that the Word of God cannot change your life. Obviously, there are many other things that need to be taught to incorporate into their lives. The most basic of which are a few things that they need to learn about the Bible so that they can learn how to study it.

What we need to know about the Bible

It is not a book of *fairy tales* and *legends*

The first thing that we must understand about the Bible is that it is not a book of fairy tales about people and places in the distant past or tells us rules that we must follow. The Bible is a book that has a *supernatural* power to cause *change*. Look up the following verses in your Bible and consider what they are saying about the supernatural changes that the Word of God can make happen:

- Psalms 33:6-9. "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was *done*; he commanded, and it stood fast."
- Matthew 24:35. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."
- John 11:43-44. "And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go."
- 1 Peter 1:23-25. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh *is* as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."

- Revelation 21:1. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

We see from these verses that God's Word can do the following:

- God's Word can create something out of *nothing*
- God's Word can endure forever and *never* pass away
- God's Word can raise a *dead* man from the grave
- God's Word can deliver the salvation of one's *soul*
- God's Word can make all things *new* again

Since God's Word can do all these things, imagine what it can do in our lives. However, for it to make changes in our lives we must invest the time and effort to read it. We must invest the time and effort to hear it. We must invest the time and effort to memorize it. And, we must invest the time and effort to study it. When we do this, then the Word of God will change our hearts so that we desire to live what it teaches and love it for the rest of our lives.

The Bible is *timeless* in its application

Consider for a moment the times and conditions of the world in which we live today. Then look at the following verses in your Bible and how they apply today despite being written over 1900 years ago:

- Amos 8:11-12. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find *it*."

Consider the following: God will send a famine in the land of *hearing* the Word of the LORD. It is no secret that in times past, the Bible had been taught in schools to children. However, in recent history, many children have grown up without ever learning anything from the Bible. In fact, in many cases, they have been told all sorts of reasons why they should not read the Bible and that it should never be taught in schools. Yet, this same attitude is never once considered when it comes to other books that are clearly identified as being fables, fiction, mythology, or philosophy. Instead, they are told that these other books are perfectly fine to read and should be taught in schools to help children grow to be well rounded adults in the liberal arts.

- 2 Timothy 3:1-7. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady,

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

Consider the following: Perilous times shall come when man will only care about himself and will see nothing wrong with taking advantage or hurting others to get what he wants. He will be driven by lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, and pride. He will profess his own form of godliness and deny the power of the one true God and His Word. His philosophy will destroy families and lead people to thinking like they do, which will ultimately destroy them. Man will be ever learning and never come to the knowledge of the truth because his respect of only himself and prideful arrogance will get in the way. This way of thinking will result in a break down in society and the abandonment of values that makes for a civilized culture.

- Matthew 24:3-12. “And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these *are* the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.”

Consider the following: Jesus described 12 signs that would show that His return is near. We see every one of these on a world-wide scale today:

- False Christs. The word Christ is not a name. It is a title that identifies the Messiah, or the one anointed by God to die for the sins of humanity to provide a way for man to be reconciled to God. We know that person as Jesus Christ. Instead, we are told by many in the world there are “many roads to the mountaintop.” We are told that all religions worship the same God and that there are many ways to come to God. We are told that all people are children of God, despite God’s Word telling us that we become children of God by faith in Christ (Read also Galatians 3:26). Therefore, we live in a world where everyone has their own version of a Christ.

- Wars and rumors of wars. Despite official reports from organizations that claim to be experts in peace, we are living in perilous times that are consumed by war. Not long ago, weapons of mass destruction were deferred from being used because people generally had a fear that if they were used, it would lead to mutually assured destruction (MAD). In other words, the people of the world would destroy each other. However, in recent times a new attitude has arisen amongst terrorists that advocate violence. They instead believe that dying in the process of killing others is pleasing to their god or version of "Christ." This was no surprise to Jesus Christ when he told the disciples that this would happen (Read also John 16:2-3).
- Famines. Despite most nations of the world being extremely rich, we still have areas of the world where people are starving to death. In most cases, people are starving because local wars are preventing people from growing food and the food that is shipped in to help alleviate the suffering is stolen and sold on the black market. As the world falls headlong into turmoil, famines will become more widespread.
- Pestilences (diseases). We have an ever-growing list of new diseases today that we did not experience just 50 short years ago. While some diseases such as polio have been mostly eliminated, we now have diseases for which there are no cures. Likewise, we have saturated the population and our food supplies with antibiotics and pesticides to the point where we have certain diseases and ailments that will not respond to antibiotics or other treatments. Scientists tell us that many of these diseases will even change their molecular structures to avoid destruction by new treatments and medications. We are ripe for a world-wide plague that will kill people by the millions because there is no cure.
- Earthquakes in new locations. Scientists tell us that in certain areas of the world, earthquakes are increasing in frequency. Others say that the increase is a normal part of fluctuation that takes place over time. In any case, we are seeing more earthquakes in the news and discovering new fault lines that we have not identified before in places in the United States like Oklahoma and Texas. The same is happening in Japan and South America. These will continue to increase as Jesus said they would.
- Persecution and hatred of Christians. We are seeing Christians targeted for violence more than ever before. In many areas of the middle east, Christians are being rounded up and publicly executed, often in ways that include beheading. In the United States, people not only speak out against Christians, but even political leaders with declare Biblical beliefs held by Christians to be racist, sexist, and intolerant. This has encouraged many to commit assaults on Christians simply because of their beliefs.
- People being offended. This is probably one of the fastest growing signs seen today. Everybody is offended by something. Now we have people who claim that

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

people who do not hold the same beliefs as they do “trigger” emotional anxiety to the point of even claiming that certain words are “micro-aggressions” that need to be physically stopped. Therefore, they create “safe spaces” where no one can say or wear anything that might cause those being offended to not feel safe. In many places, if a controversial speaker comes to a college campus, those offended resort to violence to shut down the speaker or even set fire to the facilities out of a belief that they have the right to physically assault those that they consider dangerous.

- Betrayal. Betrayal is now commonplace, especially in personal relationships, which has resulted in the breakdown of families and communities.
- Hatred of one another. As we saw in people being offended, those who are labeled as “offensive” are accused of being motivated by hate. Despite the word hate being used as a label, which is an action verb, not a noun, the real term is hatred. Simply stated, hatred is ever increasing as people become less tolerant of others. This hatred then motivates them to hate others in ways that demonstrate their feelings.
- False prophets. Along with false Christs, we have false prophets. Sadly, many of them are in our churches. It is now common place for people to claim the God has “gifted” them with the ability to prophesy. Yet, they make these claims that God spoke to them and told them certain things. Upon closer examination, these so-called prophecies not only contradict the very word of God, but make a mockery of the very ministries that claim to have these gifts. Sadly, it is common to find that those who claim to be able to prophesy are theologically illiterate about what the Bible teaches, which results in the misleading of their followers.
- Sexual iniquity and deviancy. Perhaps nothing is more apparent than the sexual iniquity and deviancy that has become common place in the world today. Sadly, these practices are even being taught now to children in schools that are encouraging them to embrace these practices as part of their right to express their sexuality and independence. Unfortunately, this has left extensive destruction in its wake to the lives of many people and has resulted in the breakdown of the family and society.
- Love waxing cold – loss of natural affection. Because of all of these things, Love, or the practice of esteeming others above your self has been replaced by lust, which increases and decreases based on moods and feelings. Recent studies of the explosion of gangs and violence have revealed a culture where parents have all but abandoned their children for their own personal pursuits. This has left many young people with the need to have family like relationships, which they find in gangs. Violence and lawless living becomes a way of life and the taking of the lives of others is celebrated as a way of being respected. This further results in a society that is out of control and drives people away from those things that foster love as defined by the Bible.

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

- Daniel 12:4. "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, *even* to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

Consider the following: The end times will be a time of an explosion in travel, knowledge, and information technology. The way we communicate are much different that just 20 years ago. We can be anywhere in the world within 24 hours and it is now commonplace to even live in space. Yet, despite all of man's self-declared progress, God will demonstrate new experiences to humanity as His plan for eternity unfolds as written in the Bible.

The Bible clearly still *applies today*

Like generations before us, the Bible still speaks to each generation. We can see that these verses describe exactly the times that we are living in now. The 12 end-times signs of Matthew 24 are all present today. The world has become materialistic, prosperous, with houses of worship everywhere and religions to fit every lifestyle and opinion about God. Unfortunately, few really know God because few are preaching directly from His Word and few are *hearing* and learning what the Word of God teaches. Therefore, it is important to pay attention and learn what God says in His Word. It has the power to transform our lives and change our eternal destiny.

End of session checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session, please complete the requirements listed for this session's checkpoint. Checkpoint answer keys can also be found in the back of this workbook in the Appendix. When you have successfully completed this checkpoint, then you may move on to Session 2. May God bless you in your study.

Instructions: Fill in the blanks for each question.

1. The Bible is not a book of _____ and _____.
2. The Bible is _____ in its application.
3. The Bible clearly still _____.

[END OF SESSION]

Session 2
The Word of God can change your life (Part 2)

In our last session, we started to learn how the Bible can change your life. We considered how the Bible is a book that has a *supernatural* power to cause *change*; it is not a book of *fairy tales* and *legends*; it is *timeless* in its application; and it clearly still *applies today*. In this session, we will consider how the Bible is timeless in its application to world events and the people who live through them.

The Basic Principles of Bible Study

When we first learned how the Bible is a book that can change your life, we discovered some basic truths about what it is and what it can do. Now we will learn some basic principles about the Bible that are necessary for it to change your life.

The Bible is not difficult to understand

There is a common misconception that the Bible is difficult to understand. In fact, there are even books written about difficult passages in the Bible. Likewise, there are untold numbers of commentaries written by men, some of which are highly trained and brilliant theologians. However, we place ourselves in great *danger* when we rely on *books* written about the Bible and not spend the time and effort to rely on what the Bible says about *itself*. This is because we are relying on man to tell us what the Bible is teaching.

This is not to say that there is not value in being taught by someone, but it is critical that no matter whom is doing the teaching, we must study the Bible for ourselves to verify and validate that what is being taught is correct. (Read also Ephesians 4:11-16; 2 Timothy 2:14-18). We will discuss more about this later, but for now it is important that we consider that for us to understand the Bible, we must take the approach of looking for the simple truth that it is teaching. Unfortunately, many people think that there must be some sort of *secret* or *hidden* meaning in the Bible and that the only way they can learn is if someone teaches them. In doing so, they totally overlook the simple truth of God's Word, because God's Word is truth. (Read also Psalms 33:4; Psalms 86:11; Psalms 100:5; John 8:31-32; John 14:6; John 17:14-19; Ephesians 1:10-14; 1 Thessalonians 2:13). Consider the truth found in the following verses:

1. 2 Peter 3:16. "As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."

Consider the following: When someone is unlearned and unstable in their knowledge of the Bible, they cannot easily understand what the Bible is teaching so they "wrestle" or twist the words to make their own explanation. Unfortunately, when they do this, they change the meaning of the words. This makes it so that the Scripture they are trying to understand, becomes out of sync with other Scriptures in the Bible that either say the same thing or explain the meaning of the passage they are unable to

understand. This results in their own destruction because they are forever learning, but unable to come to the knowledge of the truth. (Read also 2 Timothy 3:1-7).

2. Genesis 2:16-17 KJV "And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: (17) But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Consider the following: God gives clear instructions about what he expects of humanity. (Read also Philippians 2:1-16).

3. 2 Corinthians 11:3. "But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

Consider the following: Probably one of the biggest problems with understanding Scripture is when someone whom does not know what it teaches or they blatantly lie about what it teaches. Then they go on to corrupt the minds of those they teach. An example of this is described when Satan deceived Adam's wife, Eve, in Genesis 3:1-5 as follows:

- a. Genesis 3:1-3. "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? (2) And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: (3) But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die."
(Note: Satan questions the Word)
- b. Genesis 3:4. "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:"
(Note: Satan contradicts the Word)
- c. Genesis 3:5. "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."
(Note: Satan changes the Word)

(Read also Genesis 2:16-26; Genesis 3:1-8; 1 Timothy 2:13-14).

Who would want the Bible to be difficult to understand?

Ultimately, it is Satan. But practically speaking, anyone that does not like what the Bible teaches has their own selfish motivation to change the meaning of it to make it difficult for others to learn. It could be that they want to appear to be know things that others do not know. They may even want a following or even want to use the Bible in a way that enables them to convince others that the teacher has power over them. Or, there are parts of the Bible they do not like or agree with. Jesus described these types of people when he rebuked false teachers whom took advantage of others. He pointed out to them that the reason they did this was because their father was the Devil:

John 8:42-45. "Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not."

This is why it is important to understand that the Bible is not the Words of mere *men*, it is the Word of *God*. Consider the following verses:

John 1:1-4. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men."

John 1:14. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

1 Thessalonians 2:13. "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

(Read also 2 Peter 1:16-21)

Can just anyone learn what the Bible teaches?

As we just learned, Satan does not want us to know what the Bible teaches and will *question, contradict, and change* the Word of God. He even tried to do it to Jesus when he tried to use a Scripture quote out of context to deceive Jesus and convince Him to throw Himself off the top of the Temple (Read also Psalms 91:10-12; Luke 4:9-13). Satan does this so that we will fall for his deception and will not seek after God for salvation and a changed life. Satan knows what the Bible teaches. Even his devils or demons tremble at what it teaches (Read also Matthew 8:29; Mark 1:24; Mark 3:11; Luke 4:41; Acts 19:15; James 2:19).

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

The fact is, anyone can get a working knowledge of the Bible if they want it. There is no special *secret*, no *magic* formula. But one thing is certain, a formal Bible education or knowledge of Biblical languages can help, but it is not necessary. If you think about it, the disciples were common people, not scholars. Consider for a moment what the Lord said about David:

Mark 12:35-37. "And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David? For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he *then* his son? And the common people heard him gladly." (Read also Psalms 110).

Notice the Lord said that "David himself said by the Holy Ghost." This is a very important thing for Jesus to bring up. You see, it was not David that made the profound statement about the Lord making our enemies our footstool. It was the Holy Ghost (Holy Spirit)! If you read the previously mentioned passage in the last section, 2 Peter 1:16-21, you would have found that the Apostle Peter described this very thing about the Holy Ghost:

2 Peter 1:20-21. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost."

So, while anyone can get a *working* knowledge of the Bible, to *understand* what the Bible teaches, requires the Holy Spirit to *interpret* it, not man. This is clearly seen in 1 Corinthians 2:6-16 where we are taught that the wisdom needed to read, speak, and teach with understanding the deep spiritual things of God, comes from the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 2:6-16. "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us 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. But 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. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

The question then becomes, how does someone get the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is given to someone the moment they trust Christ is their Savior. We see this in several places in Scripture:

Ephesians 1:10-14. "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

2 Corinthians 1:19-22. "For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, *even* by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea. For all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us. Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."

(Read also John 6:27; Ephesians 4:30; Revelation 7; Revelation 9:4).

The wonderful thing about this is that from the moment we received the Holy Spirit, we have eternal life and the power to walk in newness of life. This power, if used, produces changes in our life that is the evidence in us that the Holy Spirit is empowering us with wisdom and strength. (Read also Acts 1:1-8; Philippians 4:30; Hebrews 11:1). Therefore, while anyone can learn from the Bible, only someone whom has trusted Christ as their Savior has all that they need to understand the wisdom of God (Read also Romans 15:19-21; 1 Corinthians 2:6-7; 1 John 5:4-13).

God wrote the Bible to reveal *truth*, not *hide* it

The Bible makes this revelation of truth to us by comparing the Word of God or the Bible to a light or lamp.

Psalms 119:105. "Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."

Psalms 119:130. "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple."

Proverbs 6:23. "For the commandment *is* a lamp; and the law *is* light; and reproofs of instruction *are* the way of life:"

While the Holy Spirit teaches the truth, this is not to say that God cannot use other people or instruments to help people study. What is most important to keep in mind is that how

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

much you learn depends on your willingness to spend time in study seeking God's truth from the Holy Spirit. Therefore, what you learn from the Bible depends on your *reliance* upon the Holy Spirit to be your teacher through *faith*. Consider the following verses:

John 14:26. "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 16:13. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."

Read 1 Corinthians 2:9-14 again and focus on what it says about God revealing things to us by his Spirit (Verse 10) and how the Spirit teaches us (verses 12-13).

The Basic Approach to Bible Study and Interpretation

Now that we have the basic principles of Bible study in mind, what is the approach that we should use to make sure we are allowing the Holy Spirit to teach us?

There are rules of Bible study that can guide us

No matter what field of study interests you there are rules that you must learn to be successful. Whether it is the government, medicine, engineering, sports, or even cooking, if you do not follow the rules, people suffer, bridges fail, sports teams win unfairly, and your latest kitchen creation ends up being fed to the dogs.

If we think about it, why did God give the law or commandments in the Old Testament? Was it to make our life miserable? To make sure everyone was obedient? Or, was it to demonstrate to us that we are not perfect, which makes us sinners in need of a Savior? (Read also 3:19-31; Romans 6). Hopefully you know the answer. However, if you do not, we would be happy to speak with you about sin and salvation and what Jesus did for us to deliver us from the penalty of sin.

For the purposes of this course we will learn about rules or factors to keep in mind when we study the Bible. These *rules* of Bible study will enable us to learn from the Holy Spirit how to *understand* or *interpret* what the Bible teaches.

Proper Bible study enables us to receive proper Biblical interpretation

Remember, we learned that "no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation...prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:20-21). What did these men do to keep from coming up with their own ideas about what they heard from the Holy Ghost? Simply stated, they also used basic principles and rules to assure that what they spoke or wrote were God's Words, not their own.

Likewise, they relied upon the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to teach them as well as the supernatural ability from the Spirit to remember what happened. Jesus promised them that the Holy Spirit would do this after He left:

John 14:23-27. "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. 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. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

When it comes to proper Biblical interpretation, the rules and principles used form what many call the science of hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is a man-made term for the practice of engaging the techniques and principles required to prevent us from creating our own interpretation of the Bible. Like anything else man made, *hermeneutics* is not a perfect science, but if it is used consistently while faithfully relying on the Holy Spirit to speak to us through the Word of the Bible, we see that many students of God's Word will come to the same *conclusions*.

This reality is spoken of in Scripture where God talks about how multiple believers can provide safety and surety when making plans and decisions as follows:

Proverbs 11:14. "Where no counsel *is*, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors *there is* safety."

Proverbs 24:3-6. "Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established: And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches. A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength. For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors there is safety."

Matthew 18:18-20. "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

This reality should also demonstrate to us that while we should study to show ourselves approved by God, it is good to regularly study with others so that we can sharpen our knowledge and help one another to learn. (Read also Proverbs 27:17; 2 Timothy 2:15). Likewise, when we study and learn the Bible together with others, we can also *share* with one another how God's Word, the Bible, can be applied to make *changes* in our lives.

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Studying together not only strengthens us as individuals, but helps us to grow stronger as a *local church* body of believers. (Read also Ephesians 4:1-14). May God bless us as we move forward and share what we learn with others.

End of session checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session, please complete the requirements listed for this session's checkpoint. Checkpoint answer keys can also be found in the back of this workbook in the Appendix. When you have successfully completed this checkpoint, then you may move on to Session 3. May God bless you in your study.

Instructions: Fill in the blanks for each question.

1. We place ourselves in great _____ when we rely on _____ written about the Bible and not spend the time and effort to rely on what the Bible says about _____.
2. Many people think that there must be some sort of _____ or _____ meaning in the Bible and that the only way they can learn is if someone teaches them.
3. It is important to understand that the Bible is not the Words of mere _____, it is the Word of _____.
4. While anyone can get a _____ knowledge of the Bible, to *understand* what the Bible teaches, requires the Holy Spirit to _____ it, not man.
5. God wrote the Bible to reveal _____, not _____ it.
6. What you learn from the Bible depends on your _____ upon the Holy Spirit to be your teacher through _____.

7. _____ of Bible study will enable us to learn from the Holy Spirit how to _____ or _____ what the Bible teaches.
8. Like anything else man made, _____ is not a perfect science, but if it is used consistently while faithfully relying on the Holy Spirit to speak to us through the Word of the Bible, we see that many students of God's Word will come to the same _____.
9. When we study and learn the Bible together with others, we can also _____ with one another how God's Word, the Bible, can be applied to make _____ in our lives.
10. Studying together not only strengthens us as individuals, but helps us to grow stronger as a _____ body of believers.

[END OF SESSION]

Session 3

The 15 Rules or Factors of Bible Study (Rules 1-2)

In our last session we learned how the Bible can change your life. We considered how we place ourselves in great *danger* when we rely on books about the Bible and not spend the time and effort to rely on what the Bible says about *itself*. We also learned how some people think there is some sort of secret or hidden meaning in the Bible that requires someone to teach them, not realizing that God wrote the Bible to reveal *truth*, not *hide* it.

We found that the Bible is not the words of mere *men*, but it is the Word of *God*. However, while anyone can get a *working* knowledge of the Bible and understand what it teaches, it requires the Holy Spirit to *interpret* it, not man. With this in mind, what we learn from the Bible depends on our *reliance* upon the Holy Spirit to be our teacher through *faith*.

We discovered how *rules* of Bible study enables us to learn from the Holy Spirit how to *understand* or *interpret* what the Bible says. These rules, called *hermeneutics*, make up a manmade science that can be used consistently to help us to study the Bible and come to the same *conclusions* about what it teaches. With this in mind, we can study together with others and *share* with each other how the Bible can be applied to make *changes* in our lives. Finally, we discovered how studying together strengthens us and helps us to grow stronger as a local church body of believers.

Rules or factors of Bible study

While we understand that the rules or factors of Bible study are manmade, it is important that we understand that the rules can help provide life application of God's truth to how we should study. Since the Bible is timeless and applies to real life situations, these rules are not the final list of what can be done to study the Bible. In fact, in your studies you may learn other rules or methods that help you to better understand what the Holy Spirit is teaching you or new ways that the Word of God can be applied to your life. Therefore, if you see another rule or application that can apply, write it down in your workbook so that you can share it with others.

Rule #1: The context factor

The first rule we will look at is called the context factor. We cannot understand the Bible without the proper understanding of *context*. To understand context, think of a time when you have heard or read something that is out of context. For example, if someone said they were going to pocket this week's church offerings we might immediately think they are stealing from the church.

However, you later learned that they were the church treasurer and they routinely counted and documented the offerings after the service and put the offerings in a bank deposit envelope. They then put that envelope in their coat pocket for safe keeping until they could take it to the bank the next day. Suddenly what you thought was a bad situation

was not anything more than hearing part of the story out of context. You came to the wrong conclusion because you did not have the full context.

We can see how it is important that we *study* every verse and every passage of the Bible in light of its *context*. The Bible even teaches that man is notorious for taking God's Word out of context as we see in the following verses:

Psalms 56:5. "Every day they wrest my words: all their thoughts are against me for evil.

Jeremiah 23:36. "And the burden of the LORD shall ye mention no more: for every man's word shall be his burden; for ye have perverted the words of the living God, of the LORD of hosts our God."

Matthew 22:29. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God."

2 Peter 3:17 KJV "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.

(Read also 2 Corinthians 11:3-4; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; 1 Timothy 1:19).

Using the context factor to study the Bible helps us to see how God sheds light upon a subject through either passages that are near the text we are reading or remote details in other areas of the Bible. Therefore, we must always look at Scripture keeping in mind the passages that come *before* and *after* what we are reading as well as other areas in the Bible. Putting the verses in the proper context then reveals to us a common *theme* of what we are reading.

If we fail to consider the context factor, we will give a *meaning* to Bible verses that God *did not* intend. For example, look at Deuteronomy 28:17, which says, "Cursed *shall be* thy basket and thy store." If we do not consider the context of this verse, we could conclude that God does not want anyone to use a shopping basket in a grocery store! While this may sound silly, there are people that will come up with all sorts of strange teachings by taking verses out of context.

In this case, if you read the context of this verse in the chapter you find that it is one of dozens of things that God will curse in a person's life if they fail to do what God has told them to do. Specifically, in this situation, anything the Israelite buys at a store and brings home in a basket will be cursed. No purchase of an extended warranty would help, even if there was such a thing in those times.

When establishing context, we must keep in mind the *near* context and *remote* context to help us keep things in perspective.

- The near context:

- The verses right before the verse or verses in question
- The verses right after the verse or verses in question
- The passages before and after the verse(s)
- The chapters before and after the verse(s)

Example: Matthew 7:1-5. “Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.”

Typically, Matthew 7:1 is quoted by people who do not want to hear anyone telling them that what they are doing is wrong. Some parents even think this verse teaches they can never tell their children not to do something that they once did. However, in context it teaches us how to judge and approach a fellow believer that is in error. (Read also Matthew 18:15-22)

- The remote context:

- How that book fits into the theme of the entire Bible
- The theme of the book of the Bible where the scripture verse is located
- How the passage fits into the theme elsewhere in the Bible

Example: Luke 2:33-35: “And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.”

Some denominations teach that this passage says that Jesus' mother, Mary, would have a broken heart when he would later be crucified. In context, these verses teach that Mary's heart would be judged by the Word of God like everyone else's heart, which will determine if she would “rise or fall”. Look at Hebrews 4:12-13:

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

Example: Read Hebrews 6:1-6 and consider how it is "impossible" "If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance..." Then compare this with Hebrews 6:9; Hebrews 10:14-18; and 1 Corinthians 3:11-15. Are they losing their salvation or rewards and why?

Rule #2: The people factor

The second rule we will look at is called the people factor. There is no correct understanding of the Bible without understanding that the Bible is written to three types of *people*. This is often called the "ethnic division principle," which demonstrates that all people in the Bible fall into one of three divisions: *Jews*, *Gentiles*, and the *Church of God*. We see this mentioned in 1 Corinthians 10:32, "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:"

Notice the three groups mentioned, Jews, Gentiles, and the church of God. It is important to consider to whom the passage was written. When we do this, we can see that the entire Bible is written directly and indirectly to these three people groups. If you break it down a little further, these three people groups can be categorized as people that are unsaved and people that are saved:

- Unsaved or lost: those whom have not trusted Christ as their Savior
 - Jews: peoples born as descendants of *Abraham*

Examples:

Hebrews 2:16-17. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."

Matthew 3:7-9. "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up

children unto Abraham.”

- Gentiles: peoples not born as descendants of *Abraham*

Examples:

Acts 13:48. “And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.”

1 Corinthians 1:22. “For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks (Gentiles) seek after wisdom.” (Emphasis added)

- Saved: those whom have trusted *Christ* as their *Savior* (Saved *Jews* and *Gentiles*)

- The *Church* of God:

Examples:

1 Corinthians 12:12-13. “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”

1 Thessalonians 1:1. “Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, *unto the church* of the Thessalonians *which is* in God the Father and *in* the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

1 Peter 1:18-19. “Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:”

When we consider the context of what we are reading and to whom the passages are written, we are able to narrow down our possibility of errors in understanding what God is teaching us. This will help us to discern many passages of Scripture that people base wrong interpretations of meaning, which are in direct contradiction to other Scripture written to specific people.

End of session checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session, please complete the requirements listed for this session’s checkpoint. Checkpoint answer keys can also be found in the back of this workbook in the Appendix. When you have successfully completed this checkpoint, then you may move on to Session 4. May God bless you in your study.

Instructions: Fill in the blanks for each question.

1. We cannot understand the Bible without the proper understanding of _____.
2. It is important that we _____ every verse and every passage of the Bible in light of its _____.
3. We must always look at Scripture keeping in mind the passages that come _____ and _____ what we are reading.
4. If we fail to consider the context factor, we will give a _____ to Bible verses that God _____ intend.
5. When establishing context, we must keep in mind the _____ context and _____ context to help us keep things in perspective.
6. There is no correct understanding of the Bible without understanding that the Bible is written to three types of _____.
7. All people in the Bible fall into one of three divisions: _____, _____, and the _____ of God.
8. Jews: peoples born as descendants of _____.
9. Gentiles: peoples not born as descendants of _____.
10. Church: those whom have trusted _____ as their *Savior* (Saved _____ and _____).

[END OF SESSION]

Session 4
The 15 Rules or Factors of Bible Study (Rules 3-4)

In our last session we learned about the first two rules of Bible study: The Context Factor and the People Factor. We found that We cannot understand the Bible without the proper understanding of *context*. Therefore, it is important that we *study* every verse and passage of the Bible in light of its *context*. We must also look at the verses that come *before* and *after* a passage. If we fail to consider the context, then we could give *meaning* to Bible verses that God did not *intend*. Furthermore, we must keep in mind the *near* context and *remote* context to help us keep things in perspective.

In addition to context, we must consider the people that are involved in the passage. Likewise, we must keep in mind that there is no understanding of the Bible without considering it was written to three types or divisions of *people*. All the people in the Bible fall into one of three divisions: *Jews*, *Gentiles*, and the *Church*. Jews are generally considered to be born as descendants of *Abraham* and Gentiles are not considered to be born as descendants of *Abraham*. Both are also members of a group that is not saved. However, if *Jews* or *Gentiles* trust *Christ* as their Savior they are saved members of the Church.

Rules or factors of Bible Study continued

As we mentioned before, we will learn 15 rules or factors of Bible study. Now we will look at the third and fourth rules of Bible study – the time factor and the application factor.

Rule #3: The time factor

Most people are aware that the Bible was written over a period of many years. In fact, when you look at the Old Testament, the final book was written just only about 2400 years ago. This means that Adam and Eve and Noah and Moses did not have the Psalms or the Proverbs to meditate upon. Likewise, many people that lived while Jesus walked the earth did not have the book of Revelation to read. Therefore, it is important to realize that there are divisions in the Bible that are specific to the times that the people lived.

For example, when the Israelites left Egypt, they were instructed to start the observance of the Passover to remember that the Lord passed them over for death because of the sacrificial blood applied to the top and sides of their doors. Later in Scripture we learn that John the Baptist called Jesus the Passover Lamb that taketh away the sins of the world.

Jesus spoke of this during His last Passover Supper with the disciples, where He taught that the unleavened bread and unfermented grape juice were representative of His body and blood, broken and poured out for the remission of sins. Despite all of this, it is clear that we do not sacrifice Passover lambs anymore, because Jesus was the last Passover Lamb to be sacrificed, ending the practice. Therefore, in this present time, we no longer sacrifice Passover Lambs because the time for that practice has ended. (Read also Colossians 2; Hebrews 10).

With this in mind, we can understand that the Bible has *divisions of time* when certain passages applied to the people of that day. Therefore, we must properly consider these divisions to properly understand the message applying to that time. A key verse that further explains this is 2 Timothy 2:15 as follows: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

In this verse we see four things to consider any time we see divisions in the Bible:

1. What are we commanded to do? Study
2. Why are we commanded to study? To show ourselves approved unto God. (Not man).
3. What should be our practical reason to study? To apply what we learn to our work for the Lord so that we are not ashamed of boldly serving Him
4. How do we study? Rightly dividing or separating verse or passages based on time, people, and other factors. (Versus wrongly dividing)

Consider the following bunched up words: GODISNOWHERE. What does it say? God is nowhere? Or God is now here? In light of Philippians 4:4-5, what is the answer?

"Rejoice in the Lord always: *and* again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand."

It is clear that for believers, the Lord Is Now Here! Praise God! Therefore, when you are having a hard day, you can be confident that the Lord is with you and will never leave you nor forsake you as He holds us tightly in His hand. (Read also Genesis 28:15; Isaiah 43:2; Matthew 28:20; John 10:25-29; John 14:15-20).

When it comes to time divisions in the Bible, some people call these divisions *dispensations*. A dispensation is a word that means economy, stewardship, administration, household order, or procedure. Some say a dispensation describes how God *dispenses* His grace and truth in *portions* during specific times in history. We see this in the following verses:

- 1 Corinthians 9:17. "For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me."
- Ephesians 1:10. "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:"
- Ephesians 3:2. "If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:"
- Colossians 1:25. "Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;"

The most important thing to consider with the time factor is what is happening during this time, not the time period itself. Too often people get too focused on the *time* and start giving too much *meaning* to the time period. A common example of this is when people try to predict the return of Christ based on time. Sadly, many people have been led astray by those whom claim to have special knowledge of when specific prophetic events will occur.

Often, we can see certain things that apply to divisions of time in the Bible. For example, we can see that there are special interactions between man and God at certain times:

1. God gives man a certain *responsibility*
2. God determines what constitutes a *failure* of man's responsibility
3. God determines what *judgment* will result from man's failure
4. God determines the *time period* each dispensation will last

So, we see that it is more important to consider that the time factor helps us to keep in mind that God has certain time periods when He dispensed His truth in different ways.

In the Old Testament, God dispensed His truth through the *law*. While Jesus walked on this earth, God dispensed His truth through *Jesus Christ*, the living Word. (Read also John 1:1, 14; Hebrews 1:1-2). Now, God dispenses His Truth through the *Bible*, His *Written Word*. (Read also Proverbs 30:5-6; John 20:30-31; 2 Timothy 3:14-15; Romans 10:17-18).

Depending on whom you talk to, there are about seven names commonly used that define some of these time periods or dispensations of history (Nine if you count Eternity Past (Genesis 1:1-27) and Eternity Future (Revelation 21-22)).

1. INNOCENCE: Genesis 1:28-3:6- The time (possibly less than one year) before Adam and Eve's fall
2. CONSCIENCE: Genesis 3:8-8:14- Approximately 1656 years; from the fall to the time of the Noah and the flood
3. HUMAN GOVERNMENT: Genesis 8:15-11:9- Approximately 436 years, from Noah and the flood to the time of Abraham
4. PROMISE: Genesis 11:10-Exodus 18:27- Approximately 430 years, from Abraham to the time of Moses
5. LAW: Exodus 19-John 14:30- Approximately 1526 years, from the time of Moses until the death of Christ on the cross
6. CHURCH: John 19:30-Revelation 3:22- Estimated to last about 2000 years from the death of Christ on the cross until the rapture of the church
7. MILLENNIAL: Revelation 4:1-20:15- Approximately 1007 years from the rapture of the church until the Great White Throne Judgment after Christ's millennial reign

Keeping the time factor in mind will help us keep in context certain events and doctrinal applications. Not considering the time factor, will lead to some pretty big doctrinal errors. For example, look at the following pairings of verses and note how the message changed with time:

1. Does God want us to be vegetarian?

Genesis 1:29. "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat."

Genesis 9:3. "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things."

2. Should baby boys still be circumcised?

Leviticus 12:2-3. "Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean. (3) And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised."

Galatians 5:1-6. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love."

There are many more examples that can be found, but one thing is certain. Like context, if we do not consider the events of that time and the times before and after, we can wrongly divide the Word of truth.

Rule #4: The application factor

One of the most important things to understand about the Bible is that it always has a *life application*. If it didn't, it would not change lives. Likewise, wrongly considering the fourth rule, the application factor, will lead us to wrong application and counsel from God's Word. All Scripture has three basic applications:

1. Historical application: All Scripture has an obvious meaning rooted in the context of *history* and literary usage, which gives us a literal *historical* application
 - A. Important key: The Bible is unlike any other book of religious writings in that it is primarily a book of history and its history is true. God has chosen to work within

the framework of time and space. It is important to note that the Bible has never been proven to be historically incorrect

- B. Every person, place, and event is real. Everything we read actually took place (or will take place) and existed historically, unless God tells us otherwise. An example would be parables or symbolic types
- C. When we consider the people and the time in which they lived we find several things to consider about the history of a passage:
 - 1. The Bible characters were real people
 - 2. They lived in specific places
 - 3. They lived at a certain point in time
 - 4. They had certain experiences in their lives

In consideration of these facts, we can understand the history of any given passage, which will give us the ability to properly comprehend other basic applications. If you misunderstand the history, you will violate the obvious and literal meanings of Scripture.

- 2. Spiritual application: In addition to the Bible teaching us about real people in real places experiencing real things during their lives, all Scripture has *Spiritual* application. For example, in 1 Samuel 16:1-13 we learn the story of when the Lord told Samuel to go to Bethlehem to a man named Jesse and anoint one of his sons as the new king over Israel. When Samuel arrived, and saw the oldest boy, he thought for sure he must be the one because of his stature and appearance. But instead, God told Samuel that he was not the one because the Lord does not see as man does – man looks upon the outside, but God looks upon the heart (1 Samuel 16:6-7).

We see two applications here. We see the historical application of an event that literally happened. But, we also see a Spiritual application in how God looks upon man for righteousness – He looks at our hearts. It is what is in our heart that matters to God, not what we look like. (Read also Psalms 16:7; Psalms 26:2; Isaiah 11:5; Romans 8:26-28; Romans 10:9-10).

- 3. Devotional application: Finally, all Scripture has a devotional application. This means that we should study Scripture and memorize it. We should always be seeing and testifying how Scripture affects the daily events in our lives. When we *devote* ourselves to studying and *memorizing* Scripture it serves several purposes:
 - A. God becomes personal to us. We see how God speaks to our personal situation through His Word. Often this can be seen by people that are new to reading the Bible. If they read a chapter of the book of Proverbs each day of the month, they see verses that literally stand out to them because of what is going on in their lives.

This also stimulates our interest to read more and to devote more time to reading to see what God is saying to us. Before long, we see these things as “object lessons” or examples to teach us as follows:

1 Corinthians 10:6. "Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted."

1 Corinthians 10:11. "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

B. God gives us hope. When we see how God has delivered on His promises to others we have confidence He will deliver on His promises to us as follows:

Romans 15:4. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."

Ecclesiastes 1:9. "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun."

Ecclesiastes 3:15. "That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past."

When we put all three together we can see how a passage of Scripture has three applications:

- Cain and Abel (Genesis 4)
 - Historical application: Cain kills his brother Abel in a fit of rage
 - Spiritual application: The brothers set the stage for a series of pairs in Scripture illustrating the battle between Christ and the Anti-Christ
 - Devotional application: Many things can be learned about why God wants us to do things His way such as salvation by grace versus the human works
- The brass serpent (Numbers 21:4-9)
 - Historical application: This is a true story that really happened that demonstrated the supernatural power of God
 - Spiritual application: Those who look upon Christ and what He did upon the cross will be saved
 - Devotional application: During times of stress and trouble, we can have hope if we steady our eyes upon God's Word and pray for God's wisdom and strength. (See also Romans 5:3-5; Philippians 4:4-13; James 1:1-8)

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Finally, we must remember that the Bible is not a book of hidden meanings that requires special insights to understand it. Scripture is not like the abstract art you see in a gallery that people see and come away with their own bizarre interpretations and opinions of what they think the artist was trying to say.

Likewise, the Bible is not a book of allegorical statements. By this we mean that every verse does not have a symbolic meaning or is interpreted through our feelings, which leaves us guessing as to what it says. The Bible says what it *means* and *means* what it says. Anytime we apply the three basic application factors to Scripture: historical, spiritual, and devotional, we must allow God's Words to dictate the clear meaning.

End of session checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session, please complete the requirements listed for this session's checkpoint. Checkpoint answer keys can also be found in the back of this workbook in the Appendix. When you have successfully completed this checkpoint, then you may move on to Session 5. May God bless you in your study.

Instructions: Fill in the blanks for each question.

1. We can understand that the Bible has _____ of _____ when certain passages applied to the people of that day.
2. When it comes to time divisions in the Bible, some people call these divisions _____.
3. Some say a dispensation describes how God _____ His grace and truth in _____ during specific times in history.
4. Too often people get too focused on the _____ and start giving too much _____ to the time period.
5. In the Old Testament, God dispensed His truth through the _____.
6. While Jesus walked on this earth, God dispensed His truth through _____, the living Word.
7. Now, God dispenses His Truth through the _____, His _____.

8. One of the most important things to understand about the Bible is that it always has a _____.
9. All Scripture has an obvious meaning rooted in the context of _____ and literary usage, which gives us a literal _____ application.
10. In addition to the Bible teaching us about real people in real places experiencing real things during their lives, all Scripture has _____ application.
11. When we _____ ourselves to studying and _____ Scripture it serves several purposes.
12. The Bible says what it _____ and _____ what it says.

[END OF SESSION]

Session 5

The 15 Rules or Factors of Bible Study (Rules 5-7)

In our last session we learned about the third and fourth rules of Bible study: The Time Factor and the Application Factor. We learned that the Bible has *divisions of time* when certain passages applied to the people of that day. Some people call these divisions *dispensations*, which, describe how God *dispenses* His grace and truth in *portions* during specific times in history. We also considered that too often people get too focused on the *time* and start giving too much *meaning* to the time period. In doing so, they might miss the fact that God dispensed His truth through the *law* in the Old Testament; through *Jesus Christ* in the New Testament; and through the *Bible*, His *written word*, today.

We also looked at how the Bible has different applications. We saw how the Bible always has a *life application*. Looking at the times and lives of the people in the Bible, we find that the Bible has an obvious meaning rooted in the context of *history* and literary usage, which gives us a literal historical application. When considering that real people in real places experience real things during their lives, we then can understand that all Scripture has *Spiritual* application. Therefore, when we *devote* ourselves to studying and *memorizing* Scripture it serves several purposes. This is because the Bible says what it *means* and *means* what it says.

Rules or factors of Bible Study continued

Now we will look at the fifth, sixth, and seventh rules of Bible study – the individual word factor, the comparison factor; and the creation factor.

Rule #5: The individual word factor

It is no secret that words have meanings. For example, if someone said, “The boss told the cleaning crew that the last 10 feet of the warehouse is the buffer zone,” they would think that the last 10 feet served as buffer, or space, between two separate areas. However, if you consider the original meanings of the word buffer and the context, it could mean that the last 10 feet was the area that the floor buffers were stored. Or, it could mean that the last 10 feet is where used parts were buffed clean before they were rebuilt. The difference is that the word buffer could have been used to describe the location of the zone, the areas where buffers were stored, or the work that was done there. In any case, the word buffer has a specific meaning in light of the context and other factors.

When we consider this, we see that God has chosen every *event* and every individual *word* in the Bible for a specific purpose. Therefore, we can also understand that every word of the Bible is needed to understand God’s *intended* thoughts, message, concepts, and ideas. Consider this as you look at the following verse:

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Proverbs 30:5-6. "Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar."

We can see that if every word of God is pure, then we can have confidence that His Words mean what they say and He will protect us when we put our trust in Him. Likewise, since His words are pure, then it is important that we do not change His Words or else He will accuse us as liars or find fault with us for what we did. We can understand this meaning because the word reprove means to accuse or blame. (Read also Deuteronomy 6:6-9, 8:3; Psalms 19:7-11; Psalms 33:6; Psalms 119:130; Psalms 138:2; Matthew 4:4,7,10; Luke 9:26; Acts 17:11).

At the same time, we must also consider that there are some things that God has *not chosen* to put in the Scriptures:

John 20:30-31. "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

John 21:24-25. "This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen."

Opinions are not pure: God does not want us to add or subtract or *change* His perfect Words! Unfortunately, many people today believe that the thoughts or *opinions* you have when you read a passage of Scripture are what really counts. One person may say that they believe that a passage means this. Another may say that they believe a passage means something else.

Unfortunately, this leads to each person coming up with their own opinion that becomes their own standard of truth. Sadly, this has tragic consequences when presenting God's Biblical truth to a non-believer because they will immediately discount everything a believer says by simply saying, "Well, that's your opinion not mine." On the other hand, if we say, "The Bible says...", then we are presenting what God actually said, not our opinion of what He said. Then if someone says that's not what they believe, then we can actually show them what is written, In doing so, then it is a matter of their opinion against what God actually wrote.

Each Word has a purpose: Another thing to consider is the purpose of each word that God uses. For example, Psalms 119 is known as an "acrostic" psalm. Acrostic means it has an acronym where each letter represents a certain word or concept. For example, in Psalms 119 there are 22 sections with eight verses per section. Each section is labeled with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet. There are many opinions of why God did this, but

when you consider the theme of Psalms 119, you see that each section presents different aspects of God's Word.

Jesus mentioned the importance of the biggest to the smallest words when He spoke about *jots* and *tittles* in Matthew 5:18: "For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Jots and tittles are tiny parts in Hebrew writing that give the letters or words meaning. An example of a jot in English would be the dot of the letter "i." or the letter "j." An example of a tittle would be the horizontal line in the letter "t."

Manuscript copies used to translate are important. Abandoning precise words to focus on the flow of thoughts and concepts for readability's sake makes the Bible *unreliable*. Remember, God did not write a Bible that anyone could understand, only those who are indwelt by His Spirit. For example, if you use a manuscript that removes the words "without a cause" in Matthew 5:22 it makes Jesus a sinner when compared with Mark 3:5:

Matthew 5:22. "But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

Mark 3:5. "And when he [Jesus] had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other."

Likewise, removing the entire verse of 1 John 5:7 and splitting 1 John 5:8 to make two verses eliminates a clear proof text for the trinity:

1 John 5:7-8 "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one."

These are real examples of how some copies of manuscripts were changed by people that deviated from the true message of God's Word and it cause problems today. For example, when copies of manuscripts are used that have errors, the wrong prophet, Isaiah, is sometimes quoted in Mark 1:2 when compared with Malachi 3:1.

Mark 1:2. "As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." (Note: Some Bibles substitute the name Isaiah for "the prophets.")

Malachi 3:1. "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way

before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts."

God has promised to *preserve His Words*. Many people do not know that God originally promised that He would *preserve His Word* and also committed the preservation of His Word to the *Jews*. Therefore, we should approach the Bible with the attitude that every Word is important and He will make sure that we will always have every word available to us as the true Word of God.

Psalms 12:6-7. "The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever."

Isaiah 59:21. "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever."

Romans 3:1-2. "What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God."

John 6:68. "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

Rule #6: The comparison factor

We learned before that no part of Scripture is of any *private* interpretation. All interpretations are done by *comparing* Scripture with scripture. Therefore, it is important that we *compare* the Scripture to other verses in the Bible to be clear about what God is saying. Consider the following verses:

2 Peter 1:20-21. "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

As we mentioned before, this proof text silences those who say, "That is just your interpretation," teaching that everyone can interpret the Bible any way one wants. At issue is who is doing the interpreting, the Holy Spirit, or us? Think about it, if someone writes you a letter, who best can describe what it means, you, or the person who wrote the letter?

Interpretation is also done by comparing Spiritual things with Spiritual things. Man's *wisdom* is not God's *wisdom* and the *deep* things of God are revealed by His Holy Spirit.

It is the Holy Spirit that also teaches us.

1 Corinthians 2:4-7. "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:"

1 Corinthians 2:9-14. "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us 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. But 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."

Beware of commentaries. Anyone can understand history, grammar, or language, but the truth of the Bible is spiritually discerned as we *compare* Scripture with Scripture. Therefore, we must beware when we read commentaries to determine what the Bible is teaching. Remember this, the only reliable Bible *commentary* is the Bible itself. Commentaries are just that, someone's *comments* on what they think the Bible says. Commentaries are not *inspired* by God; thus, they are unreliable.

This is not to say that commentaries cannot be useful if used the right way. Too often, students of the Bible do not want to take the time to study the Bible properly so that the Holy Spirit shows them the meaning of what God is saying. Instead, they will read a passage and not fully understand it, so they pull out a commentary to read what it says it means.

Instead, the student of the Bible should use a concordance or another tool to see where similar words or phrases are used in the Bible. When doing so, looking at the context and other rules of Bible study, you should have a clearer understanding of what God is saying as you compare the words and verses. Then, if there is a desire to see if there are other words or verses, looking at a commentary to see if the author found other passages is safer. However, if you look at a commentary and several words or verses you find are not mentioned or other words and verses are mentioned that contradict the ones missing, be very careful as the author may have a theological point of view they are trying to promote.

Rule #7: The creation factor

Another rule of Bible study that is quite interesting is the creation factor. Often the creation factor demonstrates to us things about God or other things related to *creation* and the *Creator*. This enables us to better understand the invisible things of God by the *creation*, which He made. For example, the Bible clearly says that the *heavens* declare God's glory and righteousness and even testify of His existence to humanity:

Psalms 19:1. "To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David. The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork."

Psalms 97:6. "The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory."

Romans 1:18-20. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:"

We see several things when we use the creation factor:

- We know there is a God that we cannot see based on the physical, *visible* things of *creation* we can see.
- God's eternal *power* is seen in creation by everyone
- Those who deny God's existence are without excuse and will be subject to God's wrath as listed
- Creation reveals to us that God is all powerful (omnipotent); all knowing (omniscient); and always present everywhere (omnipresent)

When we consider the very act of creation, we see the Trinity of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit not only in Scripture directly, but in other factors of creation:

Matter (examples): Solid (ice), liquid (fluid water), and gas (humidity or steam)

Fire: Heat, fuel, oxygen

Time: Past present, future

Reality: Space, matter, time

Matter: Solid, liquid, gas

Man: Body, soul, spirit

(Read also Genesis 1:1-3; Genesis 1:26; Genesis 2:2-7; Exodus 20:11; Job 38:1-4; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 11:1-3).

Now that we have learned about the individual word factor, the comparison factor; and the creation factor, you should start seeing that there are many considerations and advantages to knowing and applying these rules. We are nearly half way through our How to Study the Bible course and we hope that you are seeing some results in your study. As we move on through our study, you should be more confident that you are learning exactly what God wants you to learn through His Word.

End of session checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session, please complete the requirements listed for this session's checkpoint. Checkpoint answer keys can also be found in the back of this workbook in the Appendix. When you have successfully completed this checkpoint, then you may move on to Session 6. May God bless you in your study.

1. God has chosen every _____ and every individual _____ in the Bible for a specific purpose.
2. We can also understand that every word of the Bible is needed to understand God's _____ thoughts, message, concepts, and ideas.
3. At the same time, we must also consider that there are some things that God has _____ to put in the Scriptures.
4. Many people today believe that the thoughts or _____ you have when you read a passage of Scripture are what really counts.
5. Jesus mentioned the importance of the biggest to the smallest words when He spoke about _____ and _____ in Matthew 5:18.
6. Abandoning precise words to focus on the flow of thoughts and concepts for readability's sake makes the Bible _____.
7. Many people do not know that God originally promised that He would _____ His Word and also committed the preservation of His Word to the _____.
8. It is important that we _____ the Scripture to other verses in the Bible to be clear about what God is saying.

9. We must beware when we read _____ to determine what the Bible is teaching as the only reliable Bible _____ is the Bible itself.

10. The creation factor demonstrates to us things about God or other things related to _____ and the _____. This enables us to better understand the invisible things of God by the _____, which He made.

[END OF SESSION]

Session 6
The 15 Rules or Factors of Bible Study (Rules 8-9)

In our last session we learned about the fifth, sixth, and seventh rules of Bible study: The Individual Word Factor, the Comparison Factor, and the Creation Factor. We learned that God has chosen every *event* and every individual *word* in the Bible for a specific purpose. We can also understand that every word of the Bible is needed to understand God's *intended* thoughts, message, concepts, and ideas.

At the same time, we must also consider that there are some things that God has *not chosen* to put in the Scriptures. Many people today believe that the thoughts or *opinions* you have when you read a passage of Scripture are what really counts. Jesus mentioned the importance of the biggest to the smallest words when he spoke about *jots* and *tittles* in Matthew 5:18. Therefore, abandoning precise words to focus on the flow of thoughts and concepts for readability's sake makes the Bible *unreliable*. Many people do not know that God originally promised that He would *preserve* His Word and also committed the preservation of His Word to the *Jews*.

It is important that we *compare* the Scripture to other verses in the Bible to be clear about what God is saying. We also must beware when we read *commentaries* to determine what the Bible is teaching as the only reliable Bible *commentary* is the Bible itself. Finally, we learned that the creation factor demonstrates to us things about God or other things related to *creation* and the *Creator*. This enables us to better understand the invisible things of God by the *creation*, which He made.

Rule #8: The Apparent Contradiction Factor

It never ceases to amaze me how many people will make the comment that the Bible is full of errors and contradictions. Yet, when asked to give an example, nearly every single person cannot provide any references to the errors or contradictions. Yet in the rare case they do, they have not even considered any *context* much less any of the other *rules* of Bible study that we have learned so far. For example, if you compare Exodus 32:14 and Numbers 23:19, there seems to be an apparent contradiction.

Exodus 32:14. "And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people."

Numbers 23:19. "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

If you look at the context of these two verses and the meaning of the individual word *repent*, it is clear that these are two separate uses of the word *repent*. In Exodus 32:14, Moses had been on the mountain with God receiving the law. While he was there, the people waiting down below thought that he was not coming back so they literally engaged in a drunken hedonistic creation and worship of pagan deities.

God told Moses what they were doing and how He was going to destroy the Israelites. Moses immediately pleaded with God not to destroy them, pointing out how it would appear to the heathens after God had delivered them from bondage. It was at this point that God repented, or changed His mind, about the action He was going to take against the Israelites and let Moses go down to deal with what was going on.

As Moses left, he carried with him the Ten Commandments, etched in stone by the finger of God. When Moses neared the camp, and saw what was going on, he was angered and smashed the tablets of stone. He then entered the camp and confronted them about what they did. Their response was a ridiculous story about how they tossed gold into the fire and miraculously a golden calf came out.

Moses then challenged them to choose whom they would follow, God, or the other deities. The people made their choice and the Levites came forward and stood with Moses. Moses then commanded them to put to death those that did not stand with them in choosing to follow God. The Levites did so and Moses then told the survivors to consecrate themselves to the Lord so that He would bless them.

The next day, Moses went to the Lord and confessed that the people sinned and asked that if God would not forgive them to instead strike his name out of the Book of Life and to spare the people. God then held back His wrath, but still plagued them for allowing this to happen in their culture.

What we learn from this is not that God had repented from sin, but instead changed His mind or plan of action when certain conditions were met. Moses pleaded with God to let him intervene. Moses dealt with the situation on behalf of God by giving them the chance to repent of their sin and choose to follow God. Those that did not were executed, those that did were still guilty of sin, which needed to be addressed.

Moses, offered himself to be sacrificed from the Book of Life for the sins of the people. God accepted his offer, but did not carry out the punishment on Moses, but instead plagued the people for allowing this to happen amongst them. The whole story is a picture of the guilt of man, the confrontation of sin and offer of a sacrifice for sin by Jesus Christ, and the redemption of those whom repented, or changed their minds about their sin.

Numbers 23:19 carries this idea a bit further in that a prophet, Balaam, was asked by a heathen king, Balak, to curse God's people. In the account, Balaam explained to Balak that God keeps His promises and does not sin like man does. Therefore, God does not need to repent of sin, because He does not sin. This is simply another example of the use of the word, repent, in a different context. Therefore, this may seem to be an apparent contradiction, but upon looking at all the facts, is proved to be not a contradiction at all.

We learn several things from this account. There are no *contradictions* in the Bible, only "*apparent* contradictions." Apparent contradictions do not mean the Bible is *wrong*, it means that you have not *studied enough* to understand what God is teaching us.

Therefore, it is important to realize that we do not prove what we *believe* to God, God proves what He *believes* to us. We must rightly divide the Word of truth so that God's truth is *understood*. We should consider the following when dealing with apparent contradictions:

1. Deciphering apparent contradictions requires *exercising* our faith. Faith is the substance we need through which God demonstrates the evidence that shows us what God is doing and teaching us.

Hebrews 11:1. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

2. Apparent contradictions can result in different *outcomes*

- a. To give the skeptic a lie to believe

2 Peter 2:1. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction."

- b. To confirm our preconceived ideas. If we come to God trying to confirm our own ideas without earnestly seeking what God says, God will allow us to believe a lie.

Colossians 2:8. "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."

- c. To reveal truth to the believer in ways that the unbeliever cannot understand.

Matthew 13:10-11. "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." (Read also 1 Corinthians 2:6-13).

Other apparent contradiction examples:

1. Which came first, the animals or Adam?

Genesis 1:25-26. "And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

Genesis 2:19 "And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof."

ANSWER: Genesis 1 is a chronological narrative of creation. Genesis 2 is a topical narrative of creation.

2. When was Jesus nailed to the cross?

Mark 15:25. "And it was the third hour, and they crucified him."

John 19:14-18. "And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar. Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away. And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: Where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst."

ANSWER: Jesus was crucified the third hour according to Mark. This is because the time in Mark is recorded using Jewish time. The Jewish hours of the day start at what we know as 6:00 a.m. The third hour in Jewish time would place the crucifixion at 9:00 a.m.

The time in John is recorded using Roman time. The Roman hours of the day start at midnight (like ours today). The sixth hour in Roman time would be 6:00 a.m. Therefore, Jesus was on trial before Pilate at 6:00 a.m. After the trial, Pilate delivered Jesus to be crucified and by 9:00 a.m., the same time He was crucified according to Mark.

We must always remember to always have a right heart attitude toward the Word of God. Always approach the Bible with the attitude of finding the answer to apparent contradictions. Likewise, remember, every apparent contradiction has a solution, even though we may not be Spiritually *mature* yet: John 16:12 "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."

Rule #9: The Consistency Factor

One thing that upsets a lot of people is when things are not consistent. For example, how many times have you ordered something, but each time you order it, if someone different takes the order, the results are not the same? While change may be called the spice of life, for some it proves to be a hot sauce they do not like.

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

The same applies to the Bible. We must consider that the Bible has to be understood in the light of God's *consistency*. In the Bible, it is very common for the first *mention* of something to establish a *truth* or *pattern* that is consistently *followed* throughout the entire Bible. This is often referred to as the "*Law of first Mention*." First mentions are not always in the form of a word. They can come in different forms of the word or a subject.

Likewise, we can see this as a figure, picture, or conceptual truth that is established by God throughout the Bible. When He does this, He does not vary from it. What is true is always true, because God's truth is *absolute*. This does not mean that God sometimes does things differently at different times because of the dispensation of time or chronological sequence of events. God's Word is consistent because God's nature is consistent. Consider the following verses:

Hebrews 13:8. "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

James 1:17. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

Malachi 3:6. "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

Numbers 23:19. "God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"

The Consistency Factor is important when it comes to Bible study. Most of the first mentions found in the Bible can be seen in the Book of Genesis. Consider for a moment the following first mentions

1. The Trinity

Genesis 1:26. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." (Read also Genesis 1:1-3).

1 John 5:5-7 King James Version. "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? This is he that came by water and blood, *even* Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word [Son], and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

(Read also Isaiah 9:6 [Father, Son]; Zechariah 12:1 [Father God, Son] John 14:15-20 [Son, Spirit]; John 17:11 [Father, Son].)

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

2. Satan's attack on the Word of God.

Genesis 3:1. "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?"

3. Satan's denial of the penalty for sin, the shedding of blood.

Genesis 3:4. "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:"

Genesis 3:21. "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them."

We can see that when we add the Apparent Contradiction Factor and Consistency Factor to our study, we hone our Bible study skills even finer so that we can have better success in rightfully dividing the Word of God.

End of session checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session, please complete the requirements listed for this session's checkpoint. Checkpoint answer keys can also be found in the back of this workbook in the Appendix. When you have successfully completed this checkpoint, then you may move on to Session 7. May God bless you in your study.

1. When someone claims there is an apparent contradiction in the Bible they have not even considered any _____ much less any of the other rules of Bible study.
2. There are no _____ in the Bible, only "_____ contradictions."
3. Apparent contradictions do not mean the Bible is _____, it means that you have not _____ to understand what God is teaching us.
4. It is important to realize that we do not prove what we _____ to God, God proves what He _____ to us.
5. Deciphering apparent contradictions requires _____ our faith.
6. Apparent contradictions can result in different _____.

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

7. Remember, every apparent contradiction has a solution, even though we may not be Spiritually _____ yet
8. We must consider that the Bible has to be understood in the light of God's _____.
9. In the Bible, it is very common for the first _____ of something to establish a _____ or _____ that is consistently _____ throughout the entire Bible.
10. When it comes to Biblical consistency, what is true is always true, because God's truth is _____.

[END OF SESSION]

Session 7

The 15 Rules or Factors of Bible Study (Rules 10-13)

In our last session we learned about the eighth and ninth rules of Bible study: The Apparent Contradiction Factor and the Consistency Factor. We considered that when someone claims there is an apparent contradiction in the Bible they have not even considered any *context* much less any of the other rules of Bible study. Keeping in mind the factors of Bible study we can know there are no *contradictions* in the Bible, only "*apparent* contradictions." Even though we might think we see apparent contradictions, they do not mean the Bible is *wrong*, it means that we have not *matured enough* to understand what God is teaching us.

We also learned how it is important to realize that we do not prove what we *believe* to God, God proves what He *believes* to us. Deciphering apparent contradictions requires *exercising* our faith. Without doing this, apparent contradictions can result in different *outcomes*. We must remember, every apparent contradiction has a solution, even though we may not be Spiritually *mature* yet. We must also consider that the Bible has to be understood in the light of God's *consistency*. Likewise, we learned that in the Bible, it is very common for the first *mention* of something to establish a *truth* or *pattern* that is consistently *followed* throughout the entire Bible. Finally, when it comes to Biblical consistency, what is true is always true, because God's truth is *absolute*.

Rule #10: The Literal Factor

We mentioned in our last session that it is common that the first mention of something in the Bible commonly established a truth or pattern that is followed throughout the entire Bible. We could say the same about the literal factor in that there are certain standards or patterns that God follows in the Bible. The Literal Factor is one such standard in that we should always take a passage *literally* unless it is impossible to take it literally or we have clear instruction from the Bible that we are dealing with *symbolism*.

We take passages literally because very few passages are symbolic. We learned in the Application Factor that some may say that the Bible has to be understood through symbolic meanings or interpreted through our feelings, which leaves us guessing as to what it says. However, in the symbolic passages that do exist, God usually sets up or defines the symbolism in the immediate or near context of the passage. In the cases where it is not set up this way, it is defined elsewhere in the Bible by comparing Scripture with Scripture.

Many people refuse to use the literal factor because they can then say that it is subject to the *interpretation* of the *reader* so they do not have to *agree* to any interpretations they do not like. Others also do the same as an excuse to justify their lack of understanding or unwillingness to study. Some examples of established symbolism can be found and defined as follows:

1. As defined in parables

Matthew 13:3. "And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow..."

We see from this verse that the passages to follow Matthew 13:3-53 are stories known as parables that illustrate theological truths. One section symbolically illustrates what happens with different people when they hear the Word of God. A second section symbolically illustrates how the Kingdom of Heaven starts like a grain of mustard seed, but grows to provide refuge for many others. A third section illustrates how the Kingdom of Heaven is like a bit of leaven used in baking that starts with a small hidden amount and with time, grows to affect the whole loaf. A fourth section illustrates different responses of how people receive the truth of salvation shared in the Word of God. Finally, other symbolic parables are given that describe how the Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure, a priceless pearl, a fishing net, and is valued by those who are taught about it so that they do great things because of it.

2. As defined in the symbolism of stars and candlesticks

Revelation 1:19-20. "Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches."

We see from this passage that the symbolism of stars and candlesticks are defined as referring to angels of churches and the churches themselves.

3. As defined in the symbolism of body parts

Ezekiel 37:11-14. "Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel: behold, they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost: we are cut off for our parts. Therefore prophesy and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, And shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land: then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD.

We see from this passage that bones are symbolic of the resurrection of the nation of Israel to whom God will give new life.

4. As defined in figures of speech
 - Genesis 4:10 – The voice of a brother’s blood crying out from the ground
 - Leviticus 18:25 – The land vomiting out its inhabitants
 - Numbers 14:9 – People of the land being like bread to the Israelites
 - Joshua 24:27 – A stone being a witness that hears their words
 - Proverbs 18:2 – Lack of desire to understand so that one’s heart may discover itself

5. As defined in sarcasm – cutting down or taunting remarks used to point out those that reject truth
 - Judges 9:7-15, 10:14 – Talking trees that mock those whom reject God
 - 1 Kings 18:27 – Mocking excuses for why God was not responding to the calls of others
 - 2 Corinthians 11:16-19 – Mocking those that accept the company of fools over those that tell the truth

6. As defined in hyperbole – exaggerated nonliteral statements used for effect
(Read also Genesis 33:10; Deuteronomy 1:28; Judges 7:12; 2 Kings 19:24; 1 Corinthians 13:1-2; 2 Corinthians 7:14).

7. As defined in satire – a literary work in which irony, derision, or wit is used to expose folly or wickedness
(Read also Genesis 37:19; 1 Samuel 17:41-44; Ecclesiastes 2:1-11; Matthew 23:1-33)

8. As define in sanctimony – using a pretense of piety or of a “holier than thou” attitude
(Read also Job 33:9; Isaiah 58:2; Revelation 3:17)

We see that each of these examples communicate a symbolic meaning that illustrates a topic in a different way. This helps us understand the truth of what God is showing us when it deviates from the normal literal meaning in our Bible Studies.

Rule #11: The Attitude Factor

Too often, we approach Bible study with a predetermined *attitude* because of what we have been *taught* or have *believed*. Then, when we encounter something in the Bible that contradicts what we have been taught or believe, we are not willing to accept what the Bible says. An example of this can be seen in Philippians 4:6 where we are told ow to pray in certain situations:

Philippians 4:6. “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.”

In this verse we are told that we should not be anxious, but instead take all our concerns to God in prayer and supplication with thanksgiving. The word supplication has at its root the word supple. When we think of supple skin, we think of skin that is soft, flexible, and moldable to outside influences. In the same way, when we pray, we are told that our minds should be soft, flexible, and moldable to what God's Word says. If we are willing to do this, then our attitudes are softened so that we may receive the message that God wants us to receive during our Bible study.

Therefore, we must always be ready to *examine* what we have been taught in light of Scripture and *change* what we believe. We must always line ourselves up to what the Bible clearly says and never make the Bible line up with what we say and believe. We can do this by following the rules of Bible study before believing something that would ultimately be unbiblical. We are told this in Proverbs 14:15. "The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going." Always use the Bible as your standard for how things are to be taught, believed, or done.

Rule #12: The Clarity Factor

Many times, people will approach a *difficult* passage of Scripture by trying to find other passages of Scripture that support what they *think* it means. While comparing Scriptures with other passages is a good practice, discounting other passages that contradict or disagree with what we think a passage means is not a good practice. Therefore, we should never violate a *clear* passage of Scripture when we are trying to understand an *obscure* passage of Scripture.

The Bible tells us that there are some passages that are difficult to understand and some people will do this and it will lead to their own destruction. This is because they have a wrong understanding of Scripture that leads them to ignore other critical passages.

2 Peter 3:16. "As also in all his [speaking of Paul, see verse 15] epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."

We must keep in mind that whatever a passage means when standing alone, it will be simple, rather than more complex; clearer, rather than obscure; and obvious, rather than more mysterious when understood in light of all the passages of the same topic. Therefore, whatever the *meaning* is of a Scripture passage, it will never *contradict* other Scriptures and the meaning will always be *simpler* than *originally* thought once it is evaluated in the light of the rules of Bible study.

Rule #13: The Question Factor

Sometimes, people will take a passage of Scripture and try to apply a question based solely on that passage that leads some to assume a truth that is not there. For example,

if someone tells how sometimes their dog upsets them because it chews up things in the house, we could come to assumptions about what they do to their dog that are not true. In this case, we would naturally think that the person must get awful mad at their dog for doing this so we might assume that they severely punish their dog for doing it. Then the next time we see them we might flippantly say, "So, are you still beating your dog for chewing up things?"

By our questions, we have assumed that the person beats his dog because the question assumed meaning that was not intended in the passage. Therefore, we must keep in mind in Bible study that *questions* are used to investigate, interrogate, or expose ideas for further *study* to find the *answer* to what the passage might be saying.

Some strange and heretical *doctrines* are based on passages that are *assumed* statements of fact questions and not *clear* statements of Scripture. Some examples are found in the following passages:

- Question: Is God still unrighteous?

Malachi 1:1-3. The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi. I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? *Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob, And I hated Esau*, and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness.

Some say this presents to us a question that assumed God is unrighteous in that He hated Esau. However, when examining this passage as referenced elsewhere, we see it was not Esau personally that God hated, it was what his descendants would come to be and do as a nation in history. (Read also Genesis 25:23; Genesis 28:8-9). To state otherwise, would be to ask if God was unrighteous as clarified in Romans 9:13-14 as follows: "As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid."

- Question: Did James teach that works were necessary for salvation?

James 2:21-22 KJV "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?"

Some say that James said there is a need of faith and works as a requirement for salvation. However, when examining faith and works elsewhere we see that faith is the substance of salvation through which God saves us. After we are saved, the Holy Spirit then produces the evidence through works, or fruit of the Spirit, in the believer. When the believer experiences the fruit of the Spirit, it produces more faith for them to even do more works because of their increased trust in God even more on a daily basis. Likewise, because they are saved, they also love God

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

because of what He did for them, which inspires them to do even more works. (Read also Hebrews 11:1; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 2:8-9; Luke 3:7-8; Romans 4:2-4; 1 John 4:19; 1 Peter 1:3-9). To state otherwise, would be to presume that works are necessary for salvation and even for keeping our salvation.

Now that we have learned about the Literal Factor, the Attitude Factor, the Clarity Factor, and the Question Factor we should have a very high understanding of how many of the factors work together as strong defense in understanding the Bible when we study. Each of these works *together* and *reinforce* one another so that we are not led to a wrong conclusion at the expense of the *truth* in Bible study.

End of session checkpoint

Before you move on to the next session, please complete the requirements listed for this session's checkpoint. Checkpoint answer keys can also be found in the back of this workbook in the Appendix. When you have successfully completed this checkpoint, then you may move on to Session 8. May God bless you in your study.

1. The Literal Factor is one such standard in that we should always take a passage _____ unless it is impossible to take it literally or we have clear instruction from the Bible that we are dealing with _____.
2. Many people refuse to use the literal factor because they can then say that it is subject to the _____ of the *reader* so they do not have to _____ to any interpretations they do not like.
3. Too often, we approach Bible study with a predetermined _____ because of what we have been _____ or have _____.
4. We must always be ready to _____ what we have been taught in light of Scripture and _____ what we believe.
5. Many times, people will approach a _____ passage of Scripture by trying to find other passages of Scripture that support what they _____ it means.

6. We should never violate a _____ passage of Scripture when we are trying to understand an _____ passage of Scripture.
7. Whatever the _____ is of a Scripture passage, it will never _____ other Scriptures and the meaning will always be _____ than _____ thought once it is evaluated in the light of the rules of Bible study.
8. We must keep in mind in Bible study that _____ are used to investigate, interrogate, or expose ideas for further _____ to find the _____ to what the passage might be saying. Page 57
9. Some strange and heretical _____ are based on passages that are _____ statements of fact questions and not _____ statements of Scripture.
10. We should have a very high understanding of how many of the factors work _____ and _____ one another so that we are not led to a wrong conclusion at the expense of the _____ in Bible study.

[END OF SESSION]

Session 8
The 15 Rules or Factors of Bible Study (Rules 14-15)
Course Conclusion

In our last session we learned about the 10th, 11th, 12th, and 13th rules of Bible study: The Literal Factor; The Attitude Factor; The Clarity Factor; and The Question Factor. We mentioned in our last session that we should always take a passage *literally* unless it is impossible to take it literally or we have clear instruction from the Bible that we are dealing with *symbolism*. We also discussed how some people will say the Bible is subject to the *interpretation* of the *reader* so they do not have to *agree* to any interpretations they do not like. Or, some will approach Bible study with a predetermined *attitude* because of what they have been *taught* or have *believed*.

We learned how some people will approach a *difficult* passage of Scripture by trying to find other passages of Scripture that support what they *think* it means. We should never violate a *clear* passage of Scripture when we are trying to understand an *obscure* passage of Scripture. Therefore, whatever the *meaning* is of a Scripture passage, it will never *contradict* other Scriptures and the meaning will always be *simpler* than *originally* thought once it is evaluated in the light of the rules of Bible study.

We also learned that we must keep in mind, in Bible study, that *questions* are used to investigate, interrogate, or expose ideas for further *study* to find the *answer* to what the passage might be saying. They are not to be used to support some strange and heretical *doctrines* are based on passages that are *assumed* statements of fact questions and not *clear* statements of Scripture. Finally, we discovered that we should have a very high understanding of how many of the factors work *together* and *reinforce* one another so that we are not led to a wrong conclusion at the expense of the *truth* in Bible study.

Rule #14: The Confirmation Factor

We learned in Rule #12, The Clarity Factor, that some people will approach a *difficult* passage of Scripture by trying to find other passages of Scripture that support what they *think* it means. On the other hand, others will take a single verse or passage and try to create an entire doctrine or belief on that one verse or passage. When we do this, it disables us so that we cannot see *clearly* what the passage or verse actually *means*. For this reason, we must consider The Clarity Factor when we study the Bible.

Remember, we are to always use the rules or factors of Bible study when studying the Bible. In most cases when people tend to base a doctrine of belief on one verse or passage it is especially important that we look at the *context* of a passage (Rule #1: The Context Factor) and compare *Scripture with Scripture* (Rule #6: The Comparison Factor). Several examples of false doctrines or beliefs are as follows:

1. False belief: When humans die they become angels

This is based on what the Bible says about marriage (Mark 12:24-25) and immortality (Luke 20:34-36) when it uses the example of angels when it comes to marriage and immortality.

Mark 12:24-25. "And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven."

Luke 20:34-36. "And Jesus answering said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage: But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage: Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

Notice that these two passages are not saying that humans will become angels: they are saying that humans will become "as [like] the angels" or equal "unto the angels" when it comes to marriage and immortality. It is comparing humans to angels, not creating a doctrine or belief that humans become angels when they die.

The Bible also tells us that angels are created beings that are separate from humans (Ezekiel 28:13-15; 1 Corinthians 6:2-3; Hebrews 1:4-7; Hebrews 2:7-9, 17). When you look at how angels are described, it is clear that they are not human at all (Isaiah 6:2; Ezekiel 10). Finally, the term for angels is masculine and all angels have male names.

2. False belief: We can be baptized for dead people to have the opportunity to get saved
Some people believe that they can be baptized for others whom were not baptized before they died. They believe that baptism saves and so when they get baptized it can count for someone else. This is based on 1 Corinthians 15:29: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?"

This is also reinforced by the belief that Jesus taught that baptism was required for salvation as follows:

John 3:3-6 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto

thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

When you look at the near context, you see that this passage was not talking about being baptized, it was talking about being born as a human when the amniotic fluid (water) accompanies the birth and being born of the Spirit at the moment of salvation. The near context is comparing being born of the flesh and being born of the Spirit. Likewise, the far context tells explicitly that water baptism does not save us. Being born of the Spirit saves us the moment we trust the gospel of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the remission of our sins:

1 Peter 3:20-21. Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God.) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: (Read also Ephesians 1:9-14; Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).

3. False belief: We are all God's children

Many people, including believers, believe and say that we are all God's children, referring to all humans. If they quote any Scripture at all, they will refer to Genesis 1:26-27 as follows:

Genesis 1:26-27. "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them." (Read also Genesis 9:6).

Likewise, the Bible is very clear about who are God's children and who are not:

- Galatians 3:26. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."
- 1 John 2:22-23. "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also."

- 1 John 3:9-10. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."
(Read also Romans 3:21-22; Romans 4:5; Philippians 3:9).
- 1 John 4:2-3. "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."
- 2 John 1:7. "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."

We can see from these three simple examples that we cannot base a doctrine or belief on a single verse or passage. There are many others and we should always test every doctrine or belief based on the entire Word of God.

Rule #15: The Maturity Factor

The Bible tells us that it is God's will that we be *conformed* to the image of *Christ*. Therefore, we must spend time in study, and in prayer, and in worshipping and learning with other believers about Him. The more we *study* and apply God's Word to our lives, the more we *mature* in our faith and the more we will exhibit Christ-like *behaviors* and *wisdom* in our everyday lives. This is known as The Maturity Factor.

The Maturity Factor is developed by also looking to those that are mature Christians to help us in our growth. However, no matter how mature a believer may be in Christ, we must remember that none of us are as wise as God. Therefore, we must always look to *Christ*, the *Word of God*, as our ultimate source of *wisdom*. Consider the following verses:

Isaiah 55:8-9. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."

1 Corinthians 1:30. "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:"

2 Timothy 2:2. "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

We also can see that when we do not invest the *time* and effort to *study*, we cannot have the *maturity* to understand deeper *Spiritual* truths. Consider the following verses:

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

John 16:12. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now."

1 Corinthians 3:1-2. "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able."

Ephesians 4:13-15. "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:"

1 Peter 2:2. "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"

2 Peter 3:18. "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

As we mature in Christ, we must also consider that there are many that would benefit from the grace and wisdom that Christ has given us. Therefore, we must be willing to help teach others to grow in their maturity. (Read also Ephesians 4:11-16; 2 Timothy 2:1-7).

Now that we have learned about the Confirmation Factor, and the Maturity Factor we should have solid working knowledge of how to use the factors together and in day to day activities as we encounter the beliefs of others, both believers and unbelievers. We should be better enabled to defend our own faith using what the Bible says and not what we heard or thought it says. Finally, we should be able to help train others to do the same.

End of session checkpoint

Before you move on to the course conclusion, please complete the requirements listed for this session's checkpoint. Checkpoint answer keys can be found in the back of this workbook in the Appendix. When you have successfully completed this checkpoint, then you may move on to the Course Conclusion. May God bless you in your study.

1. When we take a single verse or passage and try to create an entire doctrine or belief on that one verse or passage it disables us so that we cannot see _____ what the passage or verse actually _____.
2. In most cases when people tend to base a doctrine of belief on a one verse or passage it is especially important that we look at the _____ of a passage

Romans 10:17 (KJV) "So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

(Rule #1: The Context Factor) and compare _____ with _____ (Rule #6: The Comparison Factor).

3. The more we _____ and apply God's Word to our lives, the more we _____ in our faith and the more we will exhibit Christ-like _____ and _____ in our everyday lives.
4. We must always look to _____, the _____ of _____, as our ultimate source of _____.
5. When we do not invest the _____ and effort to _____, we cannot have the _____ to understand deeper _____ truths.

Course Conclusion

We hope and pray that this course has been a blessing to you and has helped immensely to mature in your faith. We believe that these 15 rules of Bible study will help to ensure that you are not deceived in your knowledge and understanding of God's Word. Remember, you must actively use these rules until they become a routine part of your study.

Also remember, that if you know the normal, the abnormal stands out. Therefore, the more you know about the normal theology and beliefs that are taught in God's Word, the less you have to study about abnormal theology and beliefs taught in the cults. Whenever you hear something that is not in keeping with God's Word, the Holy Spirit will bring Bible verses and passages to mind. Then you can use these verses and passage in the moment you are encountering those that say such things.

Using these rules or factors of Bible study will clarify the two most important things we should learn in the Bible, the knowledge of salvation through Jesus Christ and how to become more like Him. May God bless you in your lifelong studies. Amen.

[END OF SESSION AND COURSE]

Appendix
Session Checkpoints Answer Key

Course Preview: Checkpoint answer key

1. What do you hope to learn of gain from this course?

Answer written in your own words. Page 6

2. What is your personal commitment to Jesus Christ for this course?

Answer written in your own words. Page 7

Session 1: Checkpoint answer key

1. The Bible is not a book of **fairy tales** and **legends**. Page 8
2. The Bible is **timeless** in its application. Page 10
3. The Bible clearly still **applies today**. Page 14

Session 2: Checkpoint answer key

1. We place ourselves in great **danger** when we rely on **books** written about the Bible and not spend the time and effort to rely on what the Bible says about **itself**. Page 15
2. Many people think that there must be some sort of **secret** or **hidden** meaning in the Bible and that the only way they can learn is if someone teaches them. Page 15
3. It is important to understand that the Bible is not the Words of mere **men**, it is the Word of **God**. Page 17
4. While anyone can get a **working** knowledge of the Bible, to *understand* what the Bible teaches, requires the Holy Spirit to **interpret** it, not man. Page 18
5. God wrote the Bible to reveal **truth**, not **hide** it. Page 19
6. What you learn from the Bible depends on your **reliance** upon the Holy Spirit to be your teacher through **faith**. Page 20
7. **Rules** of Bible study will enable us to learn from the Holy Spirit how to **understand** or **interpret** what the Bible teaches. Page 20
8. Like anything else man made, **Hermeneutics** is not a perfect science, but if it is used consistently while faithfully relying on the Holy Spirit to speak to us through the Word of the Bible, we see that many students of God's Word will come to the same **conclusions**. Page 21
9. When we study and learn the Bible together with others, we can also **share** with one another how God's Word, the Bible, can be applied to make **changes** in our lives. Page 21-22
10. Studying together not only strengthens us as individuals, but helps us to grow stronger as a **local church** body of believers. Page 22

Session 3: Checkpoint answer key

1. We cannot understand the Bible without the proper understanding of **context**.
Page 24
2. It is important that we **study** every verse and every passage of the Bible in light of its **context**. Page 25
3. We must always look at Scripture keeping in mind the passages that come **before** and **after** what we are reading. Page 25
4. If we fail to consider the context factor, we will give a **meaning** to Bible verses that God **did not** intend. Page 25
5. When establishing context, we must keep in mind the **near** context and **far** context to help us keep things in perspective. Page 26
6. There is no correct understanding of the Bible without understanding that the Bible is written to three types of **people**. Page 27
7. All people in the Bible fall into one of three divisions: **Jews**, **Gentiles**, and the **Church** of God. Page 27
8. Jews: peoples born as descendants of **Abraham**. Page 28
9. Gentiles: peoples not born as descendants of **Abraham**. Page 28
10. Church: those whom have trusted **Christ** as their *Savior* (Saved **Jews** and **Gentiles**). Page 28

Session 4: Checkpoint answer key

1. We can understand that the Bible has **divisions** of **time** when certain passages applied to the people of that day. Page 31
2. When it comes to time divisions in the Bible, some people call these divisions **dispensations**. Page 31
3. Some say a dispensation describes how God **dispenses** His grace and truth in **portions** during specific times in history. Page 31
4. Too often people get too focused on the **time** and start giving too much **meaning** to the time period. Page 32
5. In the Old Testament, God dispensed His truth through the **law**. Page 32
6. While Jesus walked on this earth, God dispensed His truth through **Jesus Christ**, the living Word. Page 32
7. Now, God dispenses His Truth through the **Bible**, His **written Word**. Page 32
8. One of the most important things to understand about the Bible is that it always has a **life application**. Page 33
9. All Scripture has an obvious meaning rooted in the context of **history** and literary usage, which gives us a literal **historical** application. Page 33
10. In addition to the Bible teaching us about real people in real places experiencing real things during their lives, all Scripture has **Spiritual** application. Page 34
11. When we **devote** ourselves to studying and **memorizing** Scripture it serves several purposes. Page 34
12. The Bible says what it **means** and **means** what it says. Page 36

Session 5: Checkpoint answer key

1. God has chosen every **event** and every individual **Word** in the Bible for a specific purpose. Page 38
2. We can also understand that every word of the Bible is needed to understand God's **intended** thoughts, message, concepts, and ideas. Page 38
3. At the same time, we must also consider that there are some things that God has **not chosen** to put in the Scriptures. Page 39
4. Many people today believe that the thoughts or **opinions** you have when you read a passage of Scripture are what really counts. Page 39
5. Jesus mentioned the importance of the biggest to the smallest words when He spoke about **jots** and **tittles** in Matthew 5:18. Page 40
6. Abandoning precise words to focus on the flow of thoughts and concepts for readability's sake makes the Bible **unreliable**. Page 40
7. Many people do not know that God originally promised that He would **preserve** His Word and also committed the preservation of His Word to the **Jews**. Page 44
8. It is important that we **compare** the Scripture to other verses in the Bible to be clear about what God is saying. Page 41
9. We must beware when we read **commentary** to determine what the Bible is teaching as the only reliable Bible **commentary** is the Bible itself. Page 42
10. The creation factor demonstrates to us things about God or other things related to **creation** and the **Creator**. This enables us to better understand the invisible things of God by the **creation**, which He made. Page 43

Session 6: Checkpoint answer key

1. When someone claims there is an apparent contradiction in the Bible they have not even considered any **content** much less any of the other rules of Bible study. Page 46
2. There are no **contradictions** in the Bible, only “**apparent** contradictions.” Page 47
3. Apparent contradictions do not mean the Bible is **wrong**, it means that you have not **studied enough** to understand what God is teaching us. Page 47
4. It is important to realize that we do not prove what we **believe** to God, God proves what He **believes** to us. Page 48
5. Deciphering apparent contradictions requires **exercising** our faith. Page 48
6. Apparent contradictions can result in different **outcomes**. Page 48
7. Remember, every apparent contradiction has a solution, even though we may not be Spiritually **mature** yet. Page 49
8. We must consider that the Bible has to be understood in the light of God’s **consistency**. Page 50
9. In the Bible, it is very common for the first **mention** of something to establish a **truth** or **pattern** that is consistently **followed** throughout the entire Bible. Page 50
10. When it comes to Biblical consistency, what is true is always true, because God’s truth is **absolute**. Page 50

Session 7: Checkpoint answer key

1. The Literal Factor is one such standard in that we should always take a passage **literally** unless it is impossible to take it literally or we have clear instruction from the Bible that we are dealing with **symbolism**. Page 53
2. Many people refuse to use the literal factor because they can then say that it is subject to the **interpretation** of the **reader** so they do not have to **agree** to any interpretations they do not like. Page 53
3. Too often, we approach Bible study with a predetermined **attitude** because of what we have been **taught** or have **believed**. Page 55
4. We must always be ready to **examine** what we have been taught in light of Scripture and **change** what we believe. Page 56
5. Many times, people will approach a **difficult** passage of Scripture by trying to find other passages of Scripture that support what they **think** it means. Page 56
6. We should never violate a **clear** passage of Scripture when we are trying to understand an **obscure** passage of Scripture. Page 56
7. Whatever the **meaning** is of a Scripture passage, it will never **contradict** other Scriptures and the meaning will always be **simpler** than **originally** thought once it is evaluated in the light of the rules of Bible study. Page 56
8. We must keep in mind in Bible study that **questions** are used to investigate, interrogate, or expose ideas for further **study** to find the *answer* to what the passage might be saying. Page 57
9. Some strange and heretical **doctrines** are based on passages that are **assumed** statements of fact questions and not *clear* statements of Scripture. Page 57
10. We should have a very high understanding of how many of the factors work **together** and **reinforce** one another so that we are not led to a wrong conclusion at the expense of the **truth** in Bible study. Page 58

Session 8: Checkpoint answer key

1. When we take a single verse or passage and try to create an entire doctrine or belief on that one verse or passage it disables us so that we cannot see **clearly** what the passage or verse actually **means**. Page 60
2. In most cases when people tend to base a doctrine of belief on a one verse or passage it is especially important that we look at the **context** of a passage (Rule #1; The Context Factor) and compare **Scripture** with **Scripture** (Rule #6: The Comparison Factor). Page 60
3. The more we **study** and apply God's Word to our lives, the more we **mature** in our faith and the more we will exhibit Christ-like **behaviors** and **wisdom** in our everyday lives. Page 63
4. We must always look to **Christ**, the **Word** of **God**, as our ultimate source of **wisdom**. Page 63
5. When we do not invest the **time** and effort to **study**, we cannot have the **maturity** to understand deeper **Spiritual** truths. Page 63

