

# How to Study the Bible

Ask the following questions as you read each verse, chapter, and book of the bible:

1. Who wrote/spoke the passage and to whom was it addressed?
2. What does the passage say?
3. Are there any words or phrases in the passage that need to be examined?
4. What is the immediate context?
5. What is the broader context in the chapter and book?
6. What are the related verses to the passage's subject and how do they affect the understanding of this passage?
7. What is the historical and cultural background?
8. What do I conclude about the passage?
9. Do my conclusions agree or disagree with related areas of Scripture and others who have studied the passage?
10. What have I learned and what must I apply to my life?

God uses His Word, The Bible to speak to us, teach us and reveal Himself to us. The Bible is timeless and is alive for all generations regardless of background, geography, language or race. Most important, the Bible is understandable and accessible to everyone who opens their heart to Jesus and allows the Holy Spirit to bring revelation.

However, we must be careful to know the difference between interpretations and translations of the bible. Interpretation involves human opinion and sometimes human error. It is often subject to the personal experiences, depths of knowledge and prejudices of the one interpreting.

Translation on the other hand is simply conveying meaning from one language to another. For instance when an English speaking person says "Hello", the translation to a Spanish speaking person would be "Hola." The meaning and intent of the word never changed, just how it was communicated to the end user.

There are many people that use the Bible incorrectly, claiming their interpretations are correct. Many times, however, the interpretations will differ dramatically and in some cases be contradictory. We must remember though that the Bible is not the problem, rather, the problem lies in those who interpret and the methods they use. Thank God though, for He gave us a Helper who will "lead us into all truth." The Bible tells us that the Holy Spirit will reveal ALL truth of God's Word.

Due to our sin nature we are limited in our ability to interpret God's Word perfectly all the time. The Bible tells us God's word is un-searchable, and will be fresh and new every time we study it. We need to approach His word with care, humility, reason and reliance on Him to help us. After all, the Bible is inspired by God and has the specific purpose of guiding and equipping His people.

With that we wanted to offer some “tracks to run on” that we hope will help you as you study the Word and gain understanding. Keep this list readily available ([click here to print/save a copy to put in your bible](#)) and carefully go through the list as you read.

This is a basic strategy and certainly the exhaustive “how to list” of biblical interpretation. But it does give a direction and a way to gain traction as you dig into God’s Word. As always, pray before you read and invite the Holy Spirit to lead you. Read His word. Then do the best you can to humbly apply these questions until you gain an understanding of the passage.