

Scripture Tools

How to read and understand the Bible

The Bible is the inspired word of God through which He continues to speak to us today. Bible reading is not an option but a vital ingredient for a vibrant spiritual life. Although we might know it is important to understand the amazing truths of God's Word, the idea of studying the Bible in-depth can be intimidating for many Christians. Sometimes when we read a particular passage of Scripture, we wonder what it means and how to find out.

Every Christ-follower can learn the basic skills for interpreting the message of the Bible accurately. In 2 Timothy 2:15, it says, "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth." While the skills are not complicated, it does require some discipline for us to take time to learn them. Once we have a basic grasp of these skills and Bible interpretation principles, we will be able to dive into the wealth of knowledge that the Bible provides us for the rest of our lives.

The following tools here will help you understand and interpret God's Word accurately. You can start with the first introductory tool and proceed through the rest, or simply pick one tool and try it out. Do this with at least 1-2 others.

Level 1

Option 1

Get together with 1-2 friends and watch the DVD of Pastor Kervin Raugust's sermon "The Good Life: Discovering and Experiencing God's Will" (preached on October 19, 2008 at CSC). This sermon provides a good example using Romans 12:1-2 of how to engage in inductive Bible study. Discuss together what you learned about studying God's Word effectively and how you will apply it.

Option 2

Read the following two chapters in the book How to Read the Bible for all its Worth by Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart:

- "Introduction: The Need to Interpret"
- "The Basic Tool: A Good Translation"

Discuss what you learned with 1-2 friends or people in your small group who have also read the material.

Level 2

Option 1

Register for the CSC Learning and Growth class "Getting the Truth Right: A Thinking Believer's Guide to Bible Interpretation". This will give you a basic

* Most resources are available through the Applesseed Resource Centre (library or bookstore).

introduction to accurate Bible interpretation. Check out www.cschurch.ca to find out the next time the class is offered.

Option 2

Find 1-2 friends who will read the booklet “How can I understand the Bible?”, available as free PDF download from:

<http://discoveryseries.org/discovery-series/how-can-i-understand-the-bible>

Discuss together what you learned and how you will read the Bible differently.

OR

Register for the free online class called “How to Study the Bible” (similar content to the booklet “How can I understand the Bible?”). There are five lessons in the course (audio or text versions available), and it is designed to be interactive with others who are taking it at the same time.

<http://christiancourses.com/courses/how-to-study-the-bible/>

Level 3

Register for the CSC Learning and Growth class “Effective Bible Study”. This will help you with leading a Bible study and teaching others to interpret the Bible.

Check out www.cschurch.ca to find out the next time the class is offered.

Going Deeper Resources

The Divine Mentor by Wayne Cordeiro

30 Days to Understanding the Bible by Max Anders

How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth – 2nd Edition by Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart (also, How to Read the Bible Book by Book)

How to Study Your Bible by Kay Arthur

Basic Bible Interpretation by Roy B. Zuck

Understanding and Applying the Bible by Robertson McQuilkin

Visit this website for some engaging articles on a range of issues related to Bible Interpretation: <http://www.crivoice.org/methods.html>

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