



Family Night

HOW TO STUDY YOUR BIBLE

NOVEMBER 15, 2023

HABITS:

- Have a group
- Attend regularly
- Be in the Bible**
- Invest faithfully
- Talk with God
- Share your story



JOINING US?
LET US KNOW

The Bible is God's inspired Word: living, active, authoritative, inerrant, sufficient and true. God's Word progressively reveals His person, His purposes and His plan for the world. Every Christian is on a journey of reading, understanding, teaching, preaching, and living out God's Word in his/her life.

The Goal - To highlight and understand the danger and destructive nature of misusing the Bible and provide a way to carefully interpret, understand, and apply the Bible as God intended.

It is as important as ever to read, understand, and know the Word.

Our pattern together helps us navigate dangerous currents, the correct current, and the need to swim.

1

A Struggle: We Read & Study the Bible for Information Instead of Transformation

- It's like reading about surgery or flying but never actually trying it, practicing it, putting your hands on it or going through the actual training necessary to do it.
- A classroom-Christianity mindset is developed. The classroom is part of it, but it's not all of it.
- Maturity is measured by knowledge, not conformity to the likeness of Christ.
- The head can become separate from the heart and soul.
- Wall Street/Main Street and The Ivory Tower/Everyday Life - Lots of studies have been done on church plants. Typically the higher the education of the pastor, the less likely that the church plant will be successful. Why would that be...?
- Maturity is measured differently from Christ's standard (**Mark 12:30-31**).
- We disconnect from mission and the world around us.

A proper response to God's Word includes:

- External and internal obedience (**Matthew 5-7**).
- Delight and meditation (**Psalms 1:2**). Action (**James 1:22, 1 John 2:6, Matthew 28:18-20**).
- "We proclaim Him, **admonishing** every person and **teaching** every person with all wisdom, so that we may present every person **complete in Christ**" (**Colossians 1:28**).
- A life of sharing the Word with those who don't know the Lord (**Romans 10:15**).
- Entrusting it to faithful people who will entrust it to others (**2 Timothy 2:2**).
- Faith-filled living (**Romans 14:23**). A heart filled with thankfulness and a life lived in the name of Christ (**Colossians 3:15, 17**).
- A life committed to the glory of God (**1 Corinthians 10:31**).

Our love for God is not demonstrated in our knowledge, but in what we do with our knowledge.

2 *A Truth: The Bible is Inspired and Illuminated By the Holy Spirit*

Inspiration - God-breathed (verbal, plenary inspiration of original manuscripts)

- **2 Timothy 3:16** - The Bible is fully inspired by God, God-breathed.
- **Matthew 5:17-18** - Jesus upholds the authority and eternal nature of the word as a whole and the nature and authority of each individual word.
- **Galatians 3:16** - Even single letters from the Old Testament are the basis for the New Testament (seed and seeds).
- **Hebrews 4:12** - They are more than words written on a page.
- **2 Peter 3:16** - Peter recognizes Paul's writings as Scripture.
- **Isaiah 55:10-11** - God's Word is used by God to accomplish His will.
- **Zechariah 7:12** - "The words which the Lord of Hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets."
- **2 Peter 1:21** - "...no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."
- **1 Corinthians 3:13** - "...which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit. combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words."

Methods of Inspiration - God did not use mechanical dictation as His method in writing the Bible through men. He used different ways at different times to accomplish His purpose.

Hebrews 1:1- "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and *in many ways...*"

"Instead of reducing the writers of Scripture to the level of machines or typewriters we have insisted that, while they wrote or spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit they nevertheless remained thinking, willing, self-conscious beings whose peculiar styles and mannerism are clearly traceable in their writings" (Boettner, 23).

- At times the Lord simply spoke and the author was to dictate, “Thus says the Lord...”
- At other times the author is called to compile, research, and determine what should be written (**Luke 1:1-3, John 20:31**), often with an intention and purpose in mind.
- The Lord may also have an author write what he sees, like John in the book of Revelation (**Revelation 1:11**).
- They also write as a witness to what they have seen, heard, and touched (**1 John 1:1-3**).

“To sum up: This variety of material demonstrates that God sometimes revealed things supernaturally and directly; sometimes He allowed the human writers to compose His message using their freedom of expression. But He breathed out the total product, carrying along the authors in various ways, to give us His message in the words of the Bible” (Ryrie, 71).

Illumination - The Holy Spirit is in the mind and heart of the believer to understand and apply God's Word.

- The Holy Spirit will remind, teach and guide Jesus’ disciples concerning His words (**John 14:26, 16:13**).
- Illumination is not the Holy Spirit teaching new words, but enlightening a person to grasp and understand the meaning of God’s Word.
- “For the word of God is *living and active*, and sharper than any two-edged sword, even penetrating as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”
Hebrews 4:12
- “**I keep asking** that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you *the Spirit* of wisdom and revelation, *so that you may know* Him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be *enlightened* in order that you may know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in His holy people, and His incomparably great power for us who believe. **Ephesians 1:17-19**

We pray! Time in God’s Word should be accompanied with prayer. Pray as you start, as you process, as you apply, as you think about it throughout the day...

3 *A Better Way: Rightly Interpreting the Epistles (Romans through Jude)*

There are three basic steps:

- **Historical Context** - Author, Audience, and Occasion
- **Literary Context** - What is the main point of the author and how is it communicated through the logical flow of the epistle?
- **Application** - How are the commands and principles taught in the original context, and how are they to be lived out in our context?

Historical Context

The first place we go is to the epistle itself to learn about the **author, recipient, and occasion**. Secondly we go to additional sources and tools for help. Study Bibles, Bible handbooks, Bible dictionaries and commentaries are terrific tools. The Bible Project (*BibleProject.com*) has also created a library of short, helpful videos that introduce the historical and literary context for each book of the Bible.

Let's Practice: Colossians (author, recipient, and occasion)

Mark everything you learn about the author, the recipients and the occasion.

1. **Circle** stuff about the author. Who is the author? Who is with him? Is there anything he says to describe himself or those with him?

COLOSSIANS 1:1-8

¹Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,

²To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae: Grace to you and peace from God our Father.

³We give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you,

⁴since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and the love which you have for all the

saints; ⁵because of the hope laid up for you in heaven, of which you previously heard

in the word of truth, the gospel ⁶which has come to you, just as in all the world also it

is constantly bearing fruit and increasing, even as it has been doing in you also since

the day you heard of it and understood the grace of God in truth; ⁷just as you learned

it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ

on our behalf, ⁸and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.

2. **Put a box** around stuff about the recipients. What does Paul say about them? How are they described?

3. **Underline** info about the occasion. Why has Paul written the letter? What has he heard about them?

Historical Background of Colossians

Author: Paul (Timothy is with Paul)

Date: 60-62 A.D.

Location: Colossae was a second-rate market town. It had peaked centuries before and was struck by a major earthquake and then became a very minor city even within its region. Located 100 miles east of Ephesus in the region of the seven Asian churches of Revelation. It plays basically no role in church history after the death of Christ. In size and demographic comparisons to its larger neighbors, it may have been much like a West Virginia of its day.

The Colossians: to the “saints and faithful brothers in Christ” (1:2)

- Paul has not personally met the Colossians, but he has heard about them from Epaphras (1:7-8). Paul had apparently not visited (1:4; 2:1). He may have visited later, but he was in prison when he wrote this Epistle (4:3, 10, 18).
- “Colossae was one of the least important places to which documents that were later canonized were ever sent” Pao, 24
- Colossians is often considered a sister letter to Philemon and a twin letter to Ephesians.
- Epaphras was from Colossae and was probably instrumental in evangelizing the area (1:7, 4:12-13).
- Archippus seems to have had a leadership role (4:17; Philemon 2).
- A congregation met in the house of Philemon, apparently a wealthy slave owner. Onesimus was his slave who ran away and was converted under Paul’s ministry (4:9, Philemon 10).

Occasion: The church was swimming in a culture of polytheism, mysticism and spiritualism while the church itself seemed to have a sect of Judaizers pushing for an adherence to Old Testament laws and rituals. They were facing issues from within and from without.

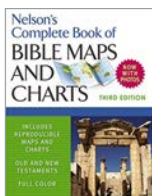
False teaching and syncretism (the squishing together of several religions) was eroding the person of Christ and the nature of Christian living (2:4). “It was apparently a religious system that combined elements from Greek speculation (2:4, 8-10), Jewish legalism (2:11-17), and Oriental mysticism (2:18-23). It involved a low view of the body (2:20-23) and probably nature as a whole. Circumcision, dietary regulation, and ritual observances were included in this system, which utilized asceticism (do not handle, do not touch), worship of angels and intermediaries, and mystical experiences as an approach to the spiritual realm” (Wilkinson & Boa, 412).

The Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to vehemently and uncompromisingly oppose this strange blend of religion and philosophy. It was a “self-made religion” (2:23), constructed by mere human wisdom (2:8). Paul contends that all fullness dwells in Christ and we have no need for any other mediator between us and God. Christ is the highest wisdom (2:2-3), and he is available to all people, not just an elite (1:26-28).

Broad Outline

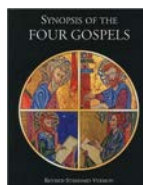
- 1:1-12** Greeting & Prayer
- 1:13-23** The Beauty & Supremacy of Christ
- 1:24-2:5** The Ministry of Paul
- 2:6-15** Christ Versus False Teachings
- 2:16-23** Christian Freedom Versus Self-Righteousness
- 3:1-11** Right Thinking and Right Acting
- 3:12-17** A Life of Love and Thankfulness
- 3:18-4:1** Christ in Our Relationships
 - 4:2-6** Sharing Christ
 - 4:7-18** Final Greetings / Peace Out

Books:



Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts

Does a great job overviewing the historical context and occasion of each book.



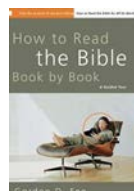
Synopsis of the Four Gospels by Kurt Aland

The Gospels are placed in columns with parallel passages beside each other—a great way to compare and contrast.



How to Read the Bible for All It's Worth by Fee & Stuart

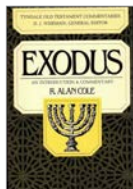
Walks through understanding the historical and literary context of a book.



How to Read the Bible Book-by-Book by Fee & Stuart

Each book of the Bible is discussed individually, incredibly helpful.

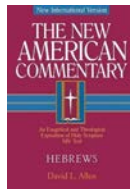
Commentaries - Below are commentaries that are in-depth, yet very accessible for every reader.



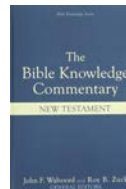
Tyndale Commentary Series



NIV Application Commentary Series



The New American Commentary Series



The Bible Knowledge Commentary

Walvoord & Zuck



and a study Bible

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