**Class 1 ~ January 7th**

**Introduction: Tips For Bible Reading & Study**

 “*“Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”*” (Jeremiah 31:31–34, ESV)

* **John Wycliffe** (c. 1329–1384), the most eminent Oxford theologian of his day, and his associates, were the first to translated the entire Bible from Latin into English. Wycliffe has been called the "morningstar of the Reformation" because he boldly questioned papal authority, criticized the sale of indulgences (which were supposed to release a person from punishment in purgatory), denied the reality of transubstantiation (the doctrine that the bread and wine are changed into Jesus Christ’s body and blood during Communion), and spoke out against church hierarchies.
* Even though John Wycliffe died peacefully at home in bed on New Year’s Eve, the Church exhumed his body 44 years later, burned his bones, and scattered the ashes in a nearby river. (Did You Know? Christian History Magazine-Issue 3: John Wycliffe: Bible Translator 1983 : n. pag. Print.)
* Again, he wrote: “Forasmuch as the Bible contains Christ, that is all that is necessary for salvation, it is necessary for all men, nor for priests alone. It alone is the supreme law that is to rule Church, State, and Christian life, without human traditions and statutes.” (Why Wycliffe Translated the Bible into English. Christian History Magazine-Issue 3: John Wycliffe: Bible Translator 1983 : n. pag. Print.)

He developed five rules for studying the Bible that we will elaborate upon.

“Obtain a reliable text, understand the logic of Scripture, compare the parts of Scripture with one another, maintain an attitude of humble seeking, and receive the instruction of the Spirit.”

* Finding a Reliable Text
* Understand the Logic of Scripture
* Compare parts of scripture with other parts
* Continue to Humbly Seek the Truth
* Receive the instruction of the Spirit
* **Finding a Reliable Text**

Classifications of English Bible Translations, Use a number of them, especially from different categories of translating philosophies.

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**Strictly Literal**

NASB

**Literal**

NKJV/KJV

RSV/ESV

New American Bible

**Literal with Idioms**

NRSV

**Thought for Thought**

NIV

New Jerusalem Bible

**Dynamic Equivalent**

Today’s English Version

**Paraphrase**

The Living Bible

We want to remember the original prophecies were from God, not the translator’s words, but we can use their combined expertise to understand, to the best of our ability, the meaning of God’s message:

 “*Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away. But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, “What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him”— these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.*” (1 Corinthians 2:6–13, ESV)

**Class 2 ~ January 14th**

* **Understand the Logic of Scriptures**

I think of this suggestion as understanding why God created scripture for us and remembering God’s warnings for us in how we use his scriptures.

Why did God create scripture for people? Note what you learn from each passage below.

All Scripture is given by God to instruct us in every good work

2Tim 3:16-17

Scripture came through the Spirit

2Peter 1:20-21

1Cor 2:10-13

It gives us all things that pertain to life and godliness.

2Peter 1:3-4

Deuteronomy 29:29 ~ Not everything possible

The words of God will judge us.

John 12:44-50

**Class 3 ~ January 21st**

* **Understand the Logic of Scriptures (cont.)**

How should we use the scriptures? Note what you learn from each passage below.

We need to be careful how we handle the word of truth

2Tim 2:15

Gal 1:6-9

1Cor 4:6

Commandments are given to obey

1John 5:2-3

Examples are written for our learning

1Cor 10:1-11

John 13:15; 1Pet 2:21

Sometimes using clear direct language

John 16:29-30

And sometimes language hard to understand

Matt 16:5-12

Matt 13:10-13

2Pet 3:14-16

**Class 4 ~ January 28th**

* **Comparing Scripture**

Psalm 119:160 “*The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever.*” (ESV)

2Tim 3:16-17 “*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.*” (ESV)

What do the above passages teach us about understanding the truth of God’s Word?

Let’s look at two examples and try to apply the principles from the above passages:

How to respond to a fool:

Pro 26:4 “*Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him yourself.*” (ESV)

Pro 26:5 “*Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.*” (ESV)

What should we conclude when we look at these two teachings of God about responding to fools?

What to do about Judging:

Matt 7:1-2 “*“Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.*” (ESV)

Rom 14:13 “*Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.*” (ESV)

John 7:24 “*Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.”*” (ESV)

1Cor 5:9-6:6 ~ The Apostle Paul elaborates on judging

After reading the above passages how should we understand judging?

**Class 5 ~ February 4th**

* **Humbly Seek The Truth**

1Peter 5:6 “*Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you,*” (ESV)

Jeremiah 5:1 “*Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, look and take note! Search her squares to see if you can find a man, one who does justice and seeks truth, that I may pardon her.*” (ESV)

We should read and study God’s scriptures with humility and seek the truth of God.

Let’s look at the importance of truth: Note what you learn from each passage below.

John 8:31-59 ~ The Truth sets us free

John 4:21-26 ~ We worship God in Truth

John 18:37 ~ Jesus testifies of the Truth

Eph 3:1-21 ~ Read and Understand, Know the Love of God

1John 4:7-5:5 ~ To Love God is to Know Him and do His commandments

**Class 6 ~ February 11th**

* **Receive the Instruction of the Spirit**

John 14:26 “*But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.*” (ESV)

To whom did Jesus say the above words? And what does that imply for us?

Note what you learn from each of the passages below.

John 16:5-15 ~ He guides into all truth by speaking the things which God wants us to know.

Romans 8:12-16, 26-27 ~ The Spirit helps us in many ways

James 1:5 “*If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.*” (ESV)

Approach truth with the right spirit

John 4:24 “*God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”*” (ESV)

Joshua spoke something very similar to Israel in Joshua 24:14 “*“Now therefore fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness. Put away the gods that your fathers served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the Lord.*” (ESV)

1Tim 1:5 “*The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.*” (ESV)

2 Tim 2:22 “*So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.*” (ESV)

**Class 7 ~ February 18th**

* **How to do a Word Study (in English, not original languages) in the Bible**

The goal of a word study is to learn as much as possible about specific words used throughout the bible. We are focusing just on doing this in English but these steps could be taken in the original languages as well with some more study aids. We will find the definitions, occurrences, and uses of particular words.

**Some Tools:** (use as many as you can or have available to you)

Most of these can be found online or in bible apps on phones or computers as well as book form.

Bibles – several translations (you can see what words different translators used)

An Exhaustive concordance

A Bible Dictionary

A Bible Encyclopedia

Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words or

Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words

 An English Dictionary

**7 Simple Steps for a Word Study:**

1. Choose your word and its various forms
2. Find its English definition(s)
3. Find its occurrences in the Bible – use an exhaustive concordance
4. Compare all the passages using different translations
5. Write out the meaning(s) you discovered in the bible
6. Write out any applications you discovered of the word
7. List the reference books you used

**Class 8 ~ February 25th**

* **Review the Word Study Homework on “Meditate”**
1. Word to research: mediate, (s), (tion)
2. Write out the English Definitions for meditate:
3. List the occurrences in the bible:
4. Compare translations of these passages and write down anything you discover, such as did another translation use a different English word than meditate
5. Write out what you think the biblical meaning(s) of the word is based upon its use in the listed passages.
6. Write out how you should apply this teaching in your life.
7. List the reference books you used.

**Class 9 ~ March 4th**

* **How to do a Topical Study (in English, not original languages) in the Bible**

The goal of a Topical study is to trace a bible subject through a letter, the Old Testament, the New Testament, or the Entire Bible to discover what God has taught on that subject. A topic will often have many related words and themes. The Topical method can be used to study to a doctrine, an idea, a phrase, or essentially any subject mentioned in scripture.

**Some Tools:** (use as many as you can or have available to you)

Most of these can be found online or in bible apps on phones or computers as well as book form.

Bibles – several translations (you can see what words different translators used)

An Exhaustive concordance

A Topical Bible

A Bible Dictionary

A Bible Encyclopedia

**6 Simple Steps for a Topical Study:**

1. Compile a list of all the words related to the topic.

Make a list of all the related words (synonyms and antonyms), phrases, events, and anything else that could have something to do with your topic.

1. Collect all the Bible references.

Use your reference tools and gather all the verses you can using the words listed in step 1. Look at each verse and make a list of the passages that apply to your topic.

1. Consider each verse individually.

Using the list created in step 2, read each passage carefully and note your observations. Be sure to check to context (surrounding verses) carefully when studying a verse. You may have to define key words in the verse you study.

1. Compare all the references with one another.

Next compare the verses you have studied above and group them into categories of similar meaning.

1. Condense your findings into an outline.

Using the categories from step 4, arrange the categories into an outline with a logical pattern.

1. Conclude by summarizing and applying the topic.

First, summarize what you learned from studying all these passages and second write out a practical application of your conclusions.

**Class 10 ~ March 11th**

* **Review the Topical Study Homework on “Prayer”**
1. Compile a list of all the words related to the topic:
	* Prayer, Supplication, Intercession, Thanksgiving
2. Collect all the Bible references. (Limit references to New Testament)
3. Consider each verse individually. (On a separate paper list every verse above and write down your observations next to each verse.)
4. Compare all the references with one another. (Below, write out the categories you made from all the references you studied.)
5. Condense your findings into an outline. (Write the Outline below.)
6. Conclude by summarizing and applying the topic. (Write a summary paragraph below and then and application from your findings.)

**Class 11 ~ March 18th**

* **How to do a Bible Book Survey Study**

A book survey study is used to get an overview of an entire book of the Bible, It involves reading the whole book through quickly a number of times, then getting some background about the book, such as the writer, recipient, location and time frame.

**Some Tools:** (use as many as you can or have available to you)

Bibles – several translations (you can see what words different translators used)

A Study Bible

Nelson’s Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts

A Bible Dictionary or Encyclopedia

**5 Simple Steps for a Bible Book Survey Study:**

1. Read the Book.

In one sitting, read through the book rapidly. Ignore the chapter breaks and don’t refer to any commentaries or study notes before reading.

1. Make Notes of your Initial Observations.

Read through the book a second time, still ignoring other commentary and the chapter divisions, but this time write down your thoughts and observations. Note the following items: 1) What kind of book is it, history, poetry, prophecy, a personal letter? 2) What is your first impression of the book, what is the writer’s purpose for writing it? 3) Do you notice any key words used often? 4) Is there a key verse that pops out to you? 5) What is the tone of the book, joyful, angry, sad? 6) Do you notice a specific theme to the book? 7) Who are the main people in the book?

1. Do a Background Study.

Using a Bible dictionary/encyclopedia, a study Bible, or Nelson’s Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts find the following information about the book:

Writer of Book, and information about him.

Date the book was written.

Where the book was written.

To whom the book was written, who and where they were.

Any other background or geographical information.

1. Create an outline of the book.

From your notes and possibly from study tools outline the book into logical sections.

1. Write out a personal application.

Even though this study is general in nature, write out a personal application for yourself from what you learned.

**Class 12 ~ March 25th**

* **Review the Book Survey Study Homework on “Philemon”**
1. Read the book through quickly in one sitting.
2. Read the book through a second time making notes of your thoughts and observations.
	1. What kind of book is it, history, poetry, prophecy, a personal letter?
	2. What is your first impression of the book, what is the writer’s purpose?
	3. Do you notice any key words used often?
	4. Is there a key verse that pops out to you?
	5. What is the tone of the book, joyful, angry, sad?
	6. Do you notice a specific theme to the book?
	7. Who are the main people in the book?
3. Background study.
	1. Writer of Book, and information about him.
	2. Date the book was written.
	3. Where the book was written.
	4. To whom the book was written, who and where they were.
	5. Any other background or geographical information.
4. Create an outline of the book.
5. Write out a personal application.