

Word of Truth

(How to Study the Bible)

(Sermon Notes) By Warren Zehrung 12/30/2017

This is a sermon about the importance of **personal Bible Study**. Only the Bible contains the answers to mankind's vexing problems. We desire to be in God's Kingdom forever. We want our lives to change to be more like that of Jesus Christ. We want to be able to **apply** Biblical truth to our own lives.

Bible Study should never be burdensome and tiring. If it is arduous and taxing on you, you are going about Bible Study the wrong way. Bible Study should be **invigorating** and exciting. After all,

God speaks to us through His inspired Word of Truth – the Holy Bible. In turn, we speak to Him in prayer. Let's make that #1 in How to Study the Bible.

- Pray, "Show me what I really need to know."

What we wish to know, is... everything that God is making available to His Church brethren today. God says that the Bible is not a mystery to us – like it is to the world.

John 15:14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

John 15:15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant does not know what his master is doing: but I have called you friends; **for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.**

What an incredible Book we have in the Bible! Don't we want to know everything about God? How could we consider anything less? The Bible paints a **huge** picture for us or what is really going on. The Bible is all about the people of God – and God's dealings with His people. It is important to be able to make the distinction between who are God's people and who are not – Old Testament and New. God knows us, and we should want to know as much **about Him** as possible. Through Bible Study we come to know God better and draw near to Him. Why is Bible Study so important?

Answer, because our **salvation** is at stake. There are many themes and topics in the Bible. Start with those things you are truly interested in – what piques your interest? How about the subject of salvation? Jesus is our Savior who brings salvation.

- The Bible alone contains sufficient information for salvation by permitting those led by God's spirit to come to a full understanding of God's way for us.

Here in 2Timothy 3 Paul is telling Timothy - and us - Look, in these last days everything will be going to hell in a handbasket: "Going to hell in a handbasket," implies a destruction that is swift and sure.

2Timothy 3:2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

This world is:

2Timothy 3:7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

2Timothy 3:10 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience,

2Timothy 3:11 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

2Timothy 3:12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Brethren, things are getting worse and worse - and are about to get really bad...

2Timothy 3:13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

There is no subject matter more important than salvation. The Holy Scriptures contain everything we need to **attain to salvation**: Paul is telling young Timothy to consider the source of his Biblical training – “Where did you learn the Truth about God,” Timothy?

2Timothy 3:14 Continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;

2Timothy 3:15 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.

2Timothy 3:16 **All scripture is given by inspiration of God**, [God breathed] and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

2Timothy 3:17 That the man of God may be **perfect**, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Without the Scriptures we would know nothing of salvation, eternal life or the spirit world. Why is Bible Study so important? Answer, because it is, “The Bible is the inspired Word of God.”

- Study in context. Try to see the overall meaning of longer passages by studying the framework and circumstances being spoken of.

I’ve taken the **title** from here... God desires that we **study** what He has preserved for us in His **Word of Truth**:

2Timothy 2:15 **Study** to show thyself **approved unto God**, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the **Word of Truth**.

Brethren, do you love to **study** your Bible? While reading its pages do you feel a sense of connection with God? Do you love Bible Study? What is the correct way to go about studying the Bible? The Bible is the most read and least understood book on the face of the planet. Peter said that every word in the Bible was - long ago - “breathed” by God [that is what ‘inspired’ means]. The Bible was not conjured up by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2Peter 1:21). There are some prerequisites for spiritually profitable learning from the Scriptures.

- First of all, it is not possible to draw near to God unless we have proved for ourselves that **He exists** and rewards those who are diligently seeking Him (Hebrews 11:6).

There are easily a half-dozen ways to prove the reality of God for ourselves—not simply taking someone’s word for it. Can we believe the internal evidence and the mind-boggling claims made within the Holy Bible without knowing to the core of our being that it is the Word of God?

- The purpose of the Bible is to reveal the divine authority of God over mankind and to make known His universal plan of salvation, and how it is being achieved.

It is possible for us to prove for ourselves that the Bible is the Word of God by obeying its teachings and principles. As Jesus said:

Luke 11:28 Blessed are they that hear the **Word of God**, and **keep it**.

The key is putting into practice what God has shown us in our Bible study. We are blessed in that God is opening our minds to His Truth through the **study** of His Word. How does the truth affect our relationship with God? And, how does the truth affect our relationships with others? Most of the world is not privileged at this time to grasp the awesome truth of God.

False doctrines like the rapture, Trinity, Christmas, Easter, immortal soul, all men are being judged now, heaven and hell, and Sun-day worship have placed a **veil over man's eyes** in the past - but now the truth is being made known to those of us being called out of this dark world (John 6:44, 65).

- When Studying the Bible, remember that the Bible is written **to God's People** – and **not for the world**.

It will not be until the reign of Jesus Christ beginning in the Millennium that:

Isaiah 25:7 [Jesus] will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the **veil that is spread over all nations**.

Isaiah 44:18 They have not known nor understood: **for He has shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand**.

Speaking of **veils**:

- Paul's Pearls. Look for comparable thoughts that are sometimes far apart.

2Corinthians 3:13 And not as Moses, which put a **veil over his face**, [note that] that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished:

2Corinthians 3:14 But **their minds were blinded**: for until this day remaineth the **same veil untaken away** in the reading of the old testament; which **veil is done away in Christ**.

That means we – God's People - can see the Truth – the world cannot.

2Corinthians 3:15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the **veil is upon their heart**.

OK, it seems like Paul is finished speaking **about veils** - but it is still very much on his mind...

2Corinthians 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath **blinded the minds of them which believe not**, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

2Corinthians 4:5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

2Corinthians 4:6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in **the face of Jesus Christ**.

The point here is that Paul carries his case on for quite a while. We will not go there right now but in 1Corinthians Paul carries the theme about "divisions among you" from Chapter 1 to well past Chapter 11.

1Corinthians 1:10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be **no divisions among you**;

All the way through to:

1Corinthians 11:18 For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be **divisions among you**;

The amazing **thing to me** is that none of the bigger church organizations let that **clear Biblical teaching bother them at all**. It is as if this obvious **correction** directly from God was not in the Scriptures at all. Perhaps if more of the brethren were doing in depth Bible Studies and speaking out on what it plainly there—there would be less division between the church groups.

- When learning about God we never base our understanding on **anything but** God's Word because going **outside** of the Bible to arrive at conclusions will contradict what God says in His Word.

The true knowledge of God is been hidden from the world **but** it is being revealed to God's people. God has removed the scales from the eyes of His children and opened our ears to hear. Let's read a short section to see how many themes, lessons and meanings are contained in the Scriptures:

John 12:35 Then **Jesus said** unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that **walks in darkness** knows not whither he goes.

Bible Study helps us to come into the light.

John 12:36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spoke Jesus, and departed, and did hide Himself from them.

Jesus is not available to everyone.

John 12:37 But though He had done so many miracles before them, yet they **believed not** on Him:

John 12:38 That the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke, Lord, who hath believed our report? And **to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?**

John 12:39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again,

John 12:40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

John 12:41 These things said Isaiah, when he saw his glory, and spoke of him.

John 12:42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

John 12:43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

Isn't it incredible that 2000 after Jesus spoke these words men still follow the crowd—rather than standing for the Truth?

He has anointed us with His Spirit to lead us, and granted us the faith to believe—making us His Children even now (1John 3:2).

- Personal Bible Study is one of the ways God reveals His truth to us:

1Corinthians 2:9-10 God reveals those things that He has prepared for those who love Him by His Spirit: for the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

In our natural state our thoughts are not the same as God's thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9). That has got to change so that we begin to think just like God does. That is why we study God's Word:

Philippians 2:5 Let this **mind be in you**, which was also in Christ Jesus.

We have so **far to go** to even begin to know what God is willing to share with us.

Isaiah 55:8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

Isaiah 55:9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Bible Study helps us begin to **close the distance** between God and us.

Romans 12:2 Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the **renewing of your mind**, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

In today's sermon we are discussing the crucial importance of regular Bible Study. Nothing is more important for us than learning who and what God is – and what His Plan is for us. Study God's Word and you will come, not only to believe it, but also to love it!

- One way to study the Bible is to **cross-reference** Scriptures of a similar topic.
- Do not build doctrine on any unclear single verse.

I'll give you an example of that in John 2:

- Mark your Bible so that you can lump together the Scriptures you find in subsequent Bible Studies - on the same subject.

John 2:19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days **I will raise it up**.

As Worldwide was crumbling into ruin and apostasy – they built a doctrine on a part of that one verse.

They concluded – **Jesus Raised Himself**. It was a major heresy. In my opinion it was the most egregious, appalling, horrendous, atrocious, and abominable heresy of the lot... Because it denied that Jesus had really **died for our sins**. And it denied the abundant Biblical evidence that **God the Father raised Jesus in glory from the dead**.

I said to myself, "Self, that is a **good place** - John 2:19 - to **mark my Bible** with the Scriptures that prove **God the Father raised Jesus**.

You have to be able to remember **where** you marked your Bible. I have over two dozen Scriptures marked there that I can reference at any time.

- Let the Bible interpret the Bible. A little here and a little there is where you will gather the Truth of a subject.
- I do not recommend the use of commentaries for your Bible Studies – there is too much poison there.

The great majority of commentaries **are not good** – having been corrupted by the Trinity [which has greatly affected God's Church these days], Christmas, Immortal Soul, rapture, Easter, all men are being judged and saved now as the only day of salvation, heaven and hell, Sun-day worship, and the like. In the use of **commentaries** you would be fighting that Scriptural fraud and corruption all the time.

- Know what a difficult word means. Look it up in different places.

The Authorized King James Version is the Bible I prefer – the KJV - but it is riddled with **archaic English words** - hard to understand words which have become obsolete since its first publication back in 1611 – over 400 years ago!

Archaic English words like, Charity - for Godly Love, chambering, filthy lucre, shambles, Lasciviousness, Quaternion, Superfluity.

Here is an example that you should mark.

1Thessalonians 4:15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not **prevent** them which are asleep. The meanings of words change – Prevent here means **precede**.

- Do not worry when some Scripture does not make sense immediately.

Just work on the areas that are fuzzy when you go over them. Peter had difficulty understanding Paul: Paul says a lot of difficult things.

2Peter 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.

- Do not look for loopholes to get out of doing things God's way. Christianity is difficult!!!
- A good Bible Study will yield more questions.
- Ask yourself what do I not understand?

Plan your study – don't just hope for an opportunity. Set aside a time and a place to study.

- Get a good study Bible Companion Bible like E. W. Bullinger's. Born: December 15, 1837, Canterbury, United Kingdom. Died: June 6, 1913, London, United Kingdom. Education: King's College London.
- Ask questions Matthew 7:7 Ask, Seek, Knock...
- Look for the parallel in Scriptures – the New Testament quotes and paraphrases a lot of the Old Testament.

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which **takes away** the sin of the world.

Carry, borne, bear up

Compare to Old Testament verses ->

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned, each of us, to his own way; and the LORD **has laid on Him** [Jesus] the iniquity of us all.

Compare to Old Testament verses ->

Isaiah 53:4 Surely [Jesus] hath **borne** our griefs, and **carried** our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

Some have gotten confused enough to believe that Satan fulfills that role.

- Bible Hub – lots of translations...
- Online Bible is very good
- Bible groups - before and after Sabbath services.
- e-Sword is one of my favorites for ease and quickness
- The **Treasure of Scriptural Knowledge**. (downloadable to e-Sword)
- 26 translations, KJV ->NKJV
- Do not follow any man - but prayer fully ask God to show you.
- Use the methods that are most profitable for you.
- Read the Bible,
- Read the Bible daily

Acts 17:11 These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and **searched the scriptures daily**, whether those things were so.

- Mark your Bible
- Marking systems - your own method - > not chain reference (cumbersome)
- Look up words - every instance that Paul used that word to see what it meant to Him.
- Compare Old Testament and New Testament that quote the same sayings.
- Ask Yourself - after reading each verse - What does that mean - every word.
- The bible is not to be 'speed read.' - Read slowly.
- No need to memorize - until it comes naturally - ok to paraphrase in your own words - Example of Stephen in Acts 7.
- Choose a translation to use during your study. ... Observation—Believe

Brethren, do you realize that we are blessed to have more of the written word explained (WCG Booklets, Bible Correspondence course, doctrinal papers) than any people in history - and yet there is more to understand as we near the end.

Acts 8:29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.

Acts 8:30 And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest?

Acts 8:31 And he said, **How can I, except some man should guide me?** And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.

Acts 8:32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:

We have all the best teachers compiled for us.

- When there is a diversity of opinion on a matter. State your case - and listen when others state their case - not everything is meant to be understood perfectly at this time.

Matthew 10:16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

Matthew 10:17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

Matthew 10:18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

Matthew 10:19 But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

- If you have studied God's word diligently - **His Words will be in you** - but we are to become proficient in the use of them.

Matthew 10:20 For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

Matthew 10:21 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.

Matthew 10:22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

- We do not have a clearing house – a leader – one teacher... what do we do?

Where do we find the Truth these days? The Bible is the divinely inspired Word of God. Our understanding of God and what He has in store for mankind is limited to those things that are revealed in His Word. All of our doctrine, understanding, beliefs, and practices must be Biblically based on the entire Bible and **nothing but** the Bible. God is far more complex - his ways past finding out than most people imagine - our finite minds to understand fully.

Romans 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

God says that He calls those people into His church who are the weak and unlearned for the express purpose of putting to shame those who are the learned and wise of this world. It is not God's intent that we remain weak and foolish when it comes to His word.

1Corinthians 1:27-29 God has chosen the **foolish** things [us] of the world to put to shame the wise [worldly], and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.

- We must humble ourselves before the Word of God.

Our human minds are greatly limited, but God knows no bounds.

- Ask God to open our minds.

In Worldwide we were not supposed to have a Bible Study unless a minister was present. That was not Biblical approach. It was unspiritual mind control which taught members not to study, learn or think for themselves. The result was a lot of people who had to rely on being spoon fed – being unable to **prove** anything for themselves.

1Thessalonians 5:17-21 **Pray** without ceasing. In everything give **thanks**: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Quench not the Spirit. Despise not inspired preaching - prophesying.

- 1Thessalonians 5:21 **Prove all things**; hold fast that which is good.
- Believe God!
- Ask God to open your eyes
- HWA – wanted to prove wife wrong! And God turned him around to the truth of the Sabbath.
- Bible knowledge is revealed - Precept upon precept – we too build on what has been proven as we come to a better knowledge of the truth.
- Many times a supporting scripture is in the **center reference margin**.

And don't overlook the references already provided in the center column; simply mark or underline the ones important to you so they'll catch your eye. Consider the multi-color system of marking.

- "Good Verse" - Soon I found that some key Scriptures like Leviticus – were used in a lot of sermons! They were all "good verses."
- Use church booklets as a guide to certain subjects
- There's no need to re-do all the searching.
- The object is to come to a deeper understanding of the truth

Psalms 111 – a good understanding comes from living the truth.

- The Ambassador College motto engraved in a stone plaque in the Loma D. Armstrong Ambassador Hall reads, "The **Word of God** Is the Foundation of Knowledge." Without the written Bible, men would have no sure knowledge of the Creator God.
- The Bible is our Creator's instruction manual for His creation. Let's understand that the Bible is the very source of man's foundational principles.

The Bible provides vital answers to the big questions in our lives.

- God's prophecies are always fulfilled because He alone has the power to bring them about! Fulfilled prophecy is a proof of the Bible.
- The Bible is absolutely true. It contains the history of the world – written in advance and preserved over the many centuries. Archeology has never been able to disprove any Scripture, nor will it.
- Study God's Word and you will come, not only to believe it, but also to love it!

End: Word of Truth – How to Study the Bible