



# Season 8 Podcasts

## **8 Rules for Bible Study**

**By**

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Whether you are a new Christian or have been saved for years, there's something you MUST do – learn how to study the Bible. I say that for at least three reasons:

1. Every Christian should study the Bible for themselves because it is God's Word. It teaches us what we should believe and how we should live out those beliefs – “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 2:16-17
2. Every Christian should study the Bible to love God and know His purposes for them – “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28
3. Every Christian should study the Bible so they can identify false teachers and avoid them – “O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and

contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge—by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith.” 1 Timothy 6:20-21 .... “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.” 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 .... “To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.” Titus 1:15-16 .... “For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.” Acts 20:29-30 .... “Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. For those

who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.” Romans 16:17-18

There are many other excellent reasons for Christians to learn how to study the Bible for themselves, but I guess those would be my personal top three. If you know how to study the Bible for yourself, you will be better informed about what's true about your worldview as a Christian and less likely to be led astray by false teachers.

## The First Four Rules

I developed eight rules for Bible study through years of doing it, so I'd like to share with you what's worked well for me. For the purpose of keeping this podcast brief, I'll share the first four now and the second four in the following section.

1. See Everything
2. Ask Everything
3. Answer Everything
4. Interpret Everything

To 'see everything' means to observe every word, every phrase, everything that can be seen in the Scripture you're studying.

To 'ask everything' means to ask every question you can think of about every word, every phrase, and everything that can be seen in the Scripture you're studying.

To 'answer everything' means to answer every question you asked about the Scripture you're studying.

To 'interpret everything' means to read out the author's intended meaning (*exegesis*) rather than reading into the text your own ideas (*eisegesis*). I can tell you from decades of listening to Christians and their teachers that most people 'eisegesists.' Instead of finding out what the author of Scripture (under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit) meant when he wrote, a large percentage of Christian believe and their teachers teach the Bible based on personal bias and presupposition. That's not how it's supposed to work and is a big reason why Christians are so confused about the Bible and why so many churches are divided (e.g. thousands of denominations that have different interpretations of the same Scriptures).

I will be the first to tell you that this process of seeing, asking, answering, and interpreting 'everything' is time-consuming. It takes a lot of personal commitment to knowing the truth to discover in God's Word. I've written a lot about this process through years of Bible study and will link below to other things I've written. Hopefully, you'll find the articles and eBooks helpful in your quest for the 'truth.'

## [Play Podcast #1](#)

I'll share the **Second Four Rules of Bible Study** in the next podcast.

## The Second Four Rules

1. Text
2. Within Context
3. From the Original Language
4. To the Original Readers

### Text

Text can mean one word or several words. It can be one sentence or several. Here's an example of a 'text' in Scripture:

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15

Each word in the 'text' and how it connects to other words in the 'text' are important to eventually interpreting the 'text.'

## Within Context

'Context' is what surrounds the 'text.' Using 2 Timothy 2:15 as our example we notice a few important things:

1. Our text is part of the Apostle Paul's second letter to Timothy.
2. Our text is in the second chapter of 2 Timothy, which has four chapters.
3. Our text is the 15th verse of the second chapter of 2 Timothy 2, which has 26 verses.

What that tells us is that our 'text' is surrounded by other text before and after the primary text. If you received a letter from a friend or family member, where would you begin reading? In the middle of the letter or at the beginning? At the beginning of course! What comes before gives us the 'context' to understand the 'text' we are studying.

The same is true with Scripture. If we pick a verse or verses to study without knowing what came before, we may miss some important context that would help us understand what we're reading. Here's a brief outline of the context in chapters one and two that leads to 2 Timothy 2:15 (courtesy New King James Version by Thomas Nelson):

- Greeting
- Timothy's Faith and Heritage
- Not Ashamed of the Gospel
- Be Loyal to the Faith
- Be Strong in Grace
- Approved and Disapproved Workers

The verses and sections that 'follow' your text are also important to note. They often help you understand where the writer was heading and why he wrote what he wrote the way he wrote it. Continuing with our example from 2 Timothy beginning with chapter three:

- Perilous Times and Perilous Men
- The Man of God and the Word of God
- Preach the Word
- Paul's Valedictory
- The Abandoned Apostle
- The Lord Is Faithful
- Come Before Winter
- Farewell

Knowing the primary structure of a Book that leads to verses you are studying will always help you better understand the context and should lead you to a correct interpretation. If you skip the context, you could make an incorrect interpretation. I see many pastors make that mistake regularly from their pulpit, which then can lead members of their church to misunderstand the true meaning of God's Word.

## From the Original Language

The Old Testament was written primarily in Hebrew. Several portions were written in Aramaic for reasons based on the person or persons being spoken or written to:

- Daniel 2:4b–7:28
- Ezra 4:8–6:18; 7:12–26
- Jeremiah 10:11
- Genesis 31:47

The New Testament was written primarily in Koine Greek (Common Greek). However, several verses contain Aramaic words. For example:

- Mark 5:41
- Matthew 27:46
- Acts 9:36
- Romans 8:15

- 1 Corinthians 16:22

I recommend that all Christians familiarize themselves with the basics of Hebrew, Aramaic, and Koine Greek. However, I know that learning those languages well enough to study them takes a lot of time. Hopefully, your pastor learned them in Bible college and seminary, but it's still good for Christians to know enough to recognize whether their pastor knows how to use the original languages in his sermons. Two of my early pastors were also seminary professors who taught Hebrew, Aramaic, and Koine Greek. If you are fortunate enough to have pastors who also teaching ancient languages in college or seminary, be sure to take advantage of every opportunity to learn from them.

I do encourage Christians to learn as much about Koine Greek as they can since that's the language of the New Testament. I wrote a short eBook a few years ago to help Christians with the basics. Its title is – [‘It's Greek to Me!’](#) I think you will find it helpful in your own study of the New Testament.

The reason I included 'From the Original Language' as one of the **8 Rules for Bible Study** is because translations can sometimes miss important aspects of how a word should be understood. Greek grammar, for example, has differences from English grammar, French grammar, Spanish grammar, Japanese grammar, or whatever language translation you're using to study the New Testament. Being able to grasp the meaning of the original Greek words used by apostolic writers will enhance your understand and ability to 'rightly divide the word of truth.'

## To the Original Readers

If you receive a letter from a friend or family member and the letter is addressed to you, then you are the original reader. However, if you open mail addressed to someone else, you are not the 'intended' original reader. You are reading someone else's mail. The writer of the first letter had you in mind when he or she wrote it. The writer of the second letter had someone else in mind when he or she wrote it. Even if the second letter (the one written to someone else) may have information you find interesting or helpful, that doesn't mean you should do what the writer told someone else to do.

The same is true when studying Scripture. We know that – “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). All of God's Word benefits us in many ways, so we should know it well. However, when it comes to specific commands and promises, we should be careful to

note to whom the commands and promises were made. Were they written to Jews or Christians? Were they written to Israel or the Church? If you get that wrong, there's a good chance you'll make an incorrect interpretation at some point in your study. I give the same advice to pastors and other Bible teachers as well.

It's also good to know how people living during 'Bible times' would understand various wording in the Scriptures. They lived thousands of years ago, which means the way they lived and how they viewed the use of words and phrases may have been different than the way we would understand them now. I spent years studying the manners and customs of people living in the 1st century AD (for the New Testament) and the manners and customs of people living in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd millenniums (for the Old Testament). I found that information extremely helpful when I came across things in the Bible that didn't fit with the way we lived in the 20th century AD or how we live now in the 21 century AD.

I was fortunate to have access to some great historical books in the 1970's and 80's that helped me understand manners and customs of ancient people. Internet searches today give Christians even more options to learn – though I would recommend caution in trusting some sources. Not everyone who writes a book or puts something up on the Internet should be trusted. Check them out carefully before relying on them for your own Bible study.

## Summary

There we have it – my **8 Rules of Bible Study**. Keep in mind that these are rules I developed during years of studying God's Word. Putting them into two groups of four rules helps me remember how I should study the Bible every time I open God's Word. Feel free to come up with your own rules, but make sure they comport to proper study and correct interpretation.

1. See Everything
2. Ask Everything
3. Answer Everything
4. Interpret Everything
5. Text
6. Within Context
7. From the Original Language
8. To the Original Reader

Play Podcast #2

## **Bible Study Resources**

How To Study God's Word

Rightly Dividing The Word Of Truth

All Scripture Is Profitable

Teaching Notes On The Word Of God

What Is God's Word? Why Study It?

Why Study God's Word?

In Christ's Love and Grace,

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GraceLife / Faith and Self Defense / Grace Martial Arts /  
Substack

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