

# Discipleship In Bible Study

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We often underestimate the desires of people to impose on themselves their own religious beliefs. Because we are religious by nature, it is the natural thing to do. When we do this, we often go to the Bible with the intention of finding some justification for our own beliefs and behavior. The result of this practice in Bible study is that we often find it difficult to objectively study the Bible.

Our desire to justify ourselves leaves us handicapped. It leaves us handicapped in discovering the great principles that God wants us to know in serving Him. It often deprives us of having the abundant life that His Son promised every disciple would have who would follow Him.

However, such does not have to be the case. God wrote the Bible to common people who were hungering and thirsting after His instructions. The Bible was not written just for Bible scholars and scribes. It was written for the common people of the world, and thus, it can be understood if we will come to its pages with an open mind and a desire to seek the will of God.

All that God desires that we do in order to be saved and live a great life is clearly communicated in the Bible. The Bible is thus easily understood in order that we know and obey the will of God. But in the present, we have the blessing of living in a better relationship with our fellow citizens.

All that God has revealed will bring unity among those who seek to serve Him in fellowship with fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. **All that is necessary to make us complete and furnished unto every good work is in the word of God.** It is for this reason that we must be objective students of the

Bible in order that we be productive in carrying out God's will in our lives.

## ~ Living In A Challenging World ~

We live in a world that is seeking moral and religious leadership. It is a world that is searching for answers and standards of behavior by which individuals can guide their lives through the moral chaos of a world that seems to be falling apart. People of faith, who fall under the banner of religion, have offered little to deliver us out of the quagmire of religious confusion. On the contrary, religionists have often given us contradictory answers to our questions concerning stable standards for human behavior. This is especially true in reference to what we personally need at this time in our lives.

To an unbelieving world, the divided voice of the protestant world is both confusing and hypocritical. The unity for which Jesus prayed in **John 17:20,21** can never be manifested under the umbrella of religion that is so prevalent throughout the world today. **A religious world that promotes and condones religious division cannot claim that the Bible is the word of God that brings unity among believers.** Jesus prayed the following at the end of His earthly ministry:

*I do not pray for these [apostles] alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word, **that they all may be one**; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be one in Us, **so that the world may believe that You sent Me.***

Shackled with the burden of human religious traditions, people of faith often portray a religiosity to the non-Christian world that is inconsistent with the Bible we profess to understand and obey. The inability of many to understand the Bible alike has tarnished their plea as a suitable and consistent answer to a world in search of timeless answers to life's problems. Division has brought reproach upon the Scriptures, and to a great extent, nullified the plea of a

unified people of faith to preach the gospel to an unbelieving world.

The religious world proclaims that every person has a right to choose his or her own direction to heaven. At the same time, those who believe in the Bible lead others to be confused because they are often confused themselves about the Bible bringing people together in a common unity of faith. If we have a right to choose our own way, then God's way means little or nothing. **If the Bible is the word of God, then it is the only way through which we must go in order to find eternal life.**

### ~ Church: A Beacon Of Unity ~

The church of our Lord Jesus Christ stands as a beacon for unity that is based upon a united understanding of the gospel. However, this illustration of unity—the church—has often been tarnished by the legalistic nitpicking of those who would rather quibble over nonessential opinions and traditions than maintain a unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. The lack of forbearance among some has led to unnecessary division and a mockery of the unity for which Jesus prayed. We have often left the religious world confused by our hypocritical plea for unity. Therefore, we are somewhat hypocritical when we plead for unity when we divide over senseless issues. Such is an inconsistent presentation of our faith in One who called for unity among all those who believe in Him.

**We must believe that God did not reveal His will to us in a manner that would cause division.** Division occurs when fundamental truths of the gospel are questioned or denied. If they are denied, then division must occur. Those who refuse to believe and obey the fundamental truths of the gospel must be separated from those who believe and obey the gospel. This division is necessary. It is what separates the church from a religious world that seems to be more set on propagating religion other than the gospel.

Division within the ranks of a brotherhood of believers that is caused by selfish ambition is sinful. The division that may be caused among believers through the establishment of traditional opinions and interpretations must be challenged. When believers become fragmented, there must arise a challenge among us as to why such is so. When two brothers who agree on fundamental beliefs are divided over matters of opinion, then we must challenge ourselves concerning the reasons for the division.

### ~ Focusing On Problem Solving ~

In Bible study, division is often generated from one of two sources. (1) The problem is either with the attitude of the interpreter, or (2) with his or her approach to understanding the Scriptures.

**We must assume that God expects us to interpret the Scriptures in a manner that will cause brotherhood between God-fearing individuals.** If there is division, then we must first look to ourselves and to our approach of understanding God's communication through His word. We must consider our attitude toward the Scriptures, as well as the saints in general. **We must never assume that God communicated His will to us in a manner that would cause division among His people.**

We must firmly believe that we can understand the Bible in order to bring brotherhood to a religiously divided world. To behave as a united church of Bible students before the unbelieving and religious world, we can offer hope to those who are seeking the truth of the gospel. As believers in Christ, therefore, our zeal must lead us to seek for oneness based upon the authority of the Scriptures. We must study in order to discover God's message of unity among all those who believe in Jesus.

### ~ Simple Message To Simply People ~

There is no systematic method of Bible study revealed in the Scriptures. Therefore, no methodology of hermeneutics (Bible study principles) must ever

be made a doctrine. **The Bible was not written in a manner that did not need a special revealed system of Bible study in order to be understood.** It was written to common people. Anyone with common abilities of study, therefore, can understand its simple message.

If great scholarship and Bible study principles are needed to discover every detail of what is assumed to be essential truths that are necessary for salvation, then we question whether the details of the essential truths are necessary for salvation. **Those truths that are essential for salvation are easily understood by the most novice interpreter.** God did not cover those things that are necessary for salvation in language that would take years of study to discover. God does not play interpretation games with us in order to see if we can discover what is necessary for our salvation.

God never intended to make His communication to us difficult to understand. Therefore, those things that are fundamental to our salvation are easily understood.

In order to study any subject, we must be motivated to do so. It is the same with studying the Bible. One must be motivated to study God's word by hungering and thirsting after truth. Without sufficient motivation, one's goal to be an effective Bible student will not be reached.

1. **T or F:** When we study the Bible we must not expect to find solutions to the problems that prevail in our lives.
2. **T or F:** If people of faith live in division among themselves, then those who do not believe in Jesus as the Son of God will question the standard, the Bible, by which we live.
3. **T or F:** If the Bible is the word of God, then certainly we must conclude that it will bring people together in unity.
4. **T or F:** The Holy Spirit inspired the Bible to be written to people who understood common principles in a common language.
5. **T or F:** Division among those who believe and teach the gospel must never exist.

## Chapter 1

### ~ The Call For Bible Study ~

**If one claims to be a Christian in any way, he or she has placed himself or herself in the position**

**of having to consult the Bible as the major influence in his or her life.** This is true because Christianity originated from Jesus **and the Bible tells us who He is.**

The gospel is revealed in the Bible. And thus only in the Bible can we discover the heart of God. If one says he or she is a Christian, then he or she must have the Bible as one's center of life. If one ignores the Bible, then he or she is forced to base his or her faith on some other individual, or even feelings, or on human religious traditions. All such foundations are constantly changing. They are unstable.

If one strays from a Bible-based faith to a tradition-based religion, then he or she gives up the right to be referred to as following the faith that is based on the Bible (See Jd 3). However, if one eventually becomes frustrated with either experiential emotions or traditions as a religious foundation, then the Bible is always there for study. **Without the word of God, we have nowhere to go for answers to the deepest questions of our lives.** Therefore, only through God's revelation will we find the one true and living God, and answers to our problems of life. This is why sincere people are driven to the Bible for answers.

**6. T or F:** The religious tradition of our forefathers will not be a stable foundation upon which to base our faith, because traditions change.

### A. The Need For Bible Study

This world would be a better place if there were more people who enjoyed daily Bible study. The religious world would be less confusing if more people would want to learn how to study the Bible in a more effective manner. In fact, it would be a less confusing world if more people would simply study the Bible in a correct manner.

We live in a morally confused world. Peter called out to a similar generation of people as ours with the plea, ***“Be saved from this perverse generation”*** (At 2:40). In a society of crime and violence, sincere people seek answers. In a world of religious

confusion and religions that are based on fear, guilt and superstition, sincere people seek for answers to religious conflicts and an escape from fear. We can find solutions to life's greatest problems only if we come to the Bible. Therefore, we must have confidence that the Bible has all the answers to provide *"the peace of God, that surpasses all understanding"* (Ph 4:7).

We live in a world where people live in both political and moral conflict with one another. Many people often live immoral lives. Drunkenness, immorality, deceit and rebellion are seen everywhere in the world today. Those who see the lost state of humanity seek answers in order to bring the lost into the fold of God. Truth seekers want answers to questions that will bring peace and contentment to their lives in a world of power struggles and strife. In countries of political unrest and war, people seek solitude and tranquility. The Bible has answers that men and women throughout the world need to know. It can bring peace of mind, solitude and tranquility of soul. This is why we should be motivated to study the word of God.

James 1:21 expresses the greatest reason why we need to study the word of God. James wrote, *"Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls."* Peter expressed the same thought in 1 Peter 1:22: *"Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth [of the gospel] through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart"* (See Ps 19:7-11). It is through the Bible that we discover how to save ourselves from physical death. The Bible reveals to us how we can escape this mortal world of death in order to obtain a better world in a new heavens and earth that is yet to come (See 2 Pt 3:13). But we must keep in mind that God gave us the Bible in order to live the best we can in this world until the next world comes.

People often find it difficult to live among themselves without some final authority other than our-

selves. The reason for this is that people have often failed to establish consistent moral laws. We must keep in mind that **it is not the work of the scientist to establish moral laws**. It is not within the scientific method of study to determine if nuclear power is to be produced to supply electricity for hospitals and houses or to supply nuclear bombs to destroy hospitals and houses. It is therefore true that we need God to give us a final answer on these matters.

Underdeveloped countries often look to developed or industrial countries as a place of personal peace and hope. However, the development of the financial or economical power of a country does not bring inward contentment to its citizens. In fact, one might say that economic development produces inward worries that add to the frustrations of the individual. In financially developed countries, citizens eventually understand that money and things are not a guarantee for happiness. A wealthy man without God is just as unhappy as a poor man without God. We must recognize that the true answer to the inward trials of every individual is God. And God communicates to us today through His word. Paul said, *“And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified”* (At 20:32).

In a world of moral chaos, there is hope only in the revelation of God who delivers unto us the means by which we can have life. Not only can we have eternal life through Jesus, we can also enjoy the abundance of this present life. *“I have come,”* Jesus said, *“that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly”* (Jn 10:10).

7. Who proclaimed that he lived in a perverse generation?  
(A) Paul, (B) Peter, (C) Jude, (D) John
8. **T or F:** It is true that the riches of this world will bring one peace of mind.

## B. Reasons For Bible Study

The Bible teaches that there are reasons for study-



ing the Bible. The following passages express God's instructions to us concerning our need to investigate His communication to us through His word of revelation. These reasons are considered practical simply because in the application of Bible principles to our living, we will experience the abundant life about which Jesus promised in John 10:10.

### **1. Study to rightly apply the word of God.**

We must study the Bible in order to understand and correctly apply Bible teachings that were meant for everyone in his or her time to obey. Paul wrote this to Timothy: *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”* (2 Tm 2:15). One studies the Bible, therefore, in order to determine what is applicable to his or her life. Some things in the Bible were written to be applied to the lives of people who lived millennia ago. Other things were written to be applied to the lives of all Christians until Jesus comes again. In order to understand what is applicable to our lives today, therefore, we must study the Bible.

- 9. T or F:** Every command of God that is written in the Bible must be obeyed until Jesus comes again.

### **2. Study to discover the truth of the gospel.**

We must study the Bible in order to be considered noble before God. We study in order to test the truth of those who teach the Bible. Luke wrote a very profound statement concerning the spiritual nature of the Berean Jews, *“These [Jews] were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so”* (At 17:11).

When Paul and Silas preached the gospel to the Bereans, the Bereans searched the Old Testament Scriptures in order to confirm the truth of the message they were preaching. Subsequently, which Luke wrote of their spiritual nature, the Holy Spirit af-

firmed that these people were “fair-minded” **because of what they did in their search of the Scriptures**. They did not discard what was preached because it disagreed with what they formerly believed. On the contrary, they had a heart to learn more.

The Bereans first wanted to know if what was preached was according to the prophecies of the Old Testament. In this way, therefore, they were fair-minded and sincere in their desire to know what the Bible taught in reference to the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies concerning Jesus of Nazareth.

**10. T or F:** God would consider one noble, or fairminded, if he or she studies the Bible in order to make sure that preachers and teachers were teaching the truth of the gospel.

### **3. Study to discover God’s moral laws.**

We must study the Bible because it is not wise to establish trust in our own moral rules. Solomon wrote, **“He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered”** (Pv 28:26; see Pv 3:5).

Since it is impossible for us to establish timeless moral laws that are based on the concept to loving one’s neighbor as himself, it is imperative that we seek for authority in moral laws that are above ourselves. Since God’s moral laws have existed since the beginning of time, it is reasonable to search the Bible for His moral principles in order to direct our ways in this modern age.

**11. T or F:** Because it is not possible for people as a whole to establish consistent moral principles for themselves, they must resort to moral instructions that come from their Creator.

### **4. Study to establish God’s moral laws.**

We must study the Bible because we often seek to construct our own moral codes of living after our own desires, and according to the common behavior of our own society. But Jeremiah warned, **“O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man who walks to direct his own steps”**

(Jr 10:23). This point is absolutely true. Solomon added, *“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death”* (Pv 16:25).

If we seek to establish our own moral codes by which to live, then we would not live in a world of peace. This is true because societies with different moral codes often live in conflict with one another. The fact that societies have forsaken the universal moral codes of God in order to follow after their own desires reveals the point that we cannot establish moral laws that do not violate the human rights of others. The Bible is perfectly clear on this point. It is not in us to direct our own paths. Since God, who created us, made this statement about us, then we accept this principle without question. **God did not make us with the ability to establish an unchanging moral code that would apply to all societies of this world.** Therefore, He had to reveal to us that which would guide us while on this earth. That direction is in the Bible.

**12. T or F:** Since societies throughout the world can establish constitutional law by which to live in harmony with one another within a society, then there is no need that humanity live by the moral codes of the Bible.

## **5. Study to discover assurance.**

We must study the Bible because through a knowledge of it we can be assured of God’s moral values and our own sonship. John wrote, *“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments”* (1 Jn 5:2). When we study the Bible, we learn God’s commandments, and thus, we know when we are walking in His commandments. John also wrote in reference to those who obey God, *“We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one”* (1 Jn 5:19). The only way we can know that we are of God is if we know and do the will of God. Our assurance of knowing that we are God’s children is not based on our feelings, or on our religious traditions. **Our assurance is based on the word of God.**

**13. T or F:** Self-assurance as a child of God comes through a knowledge of the will of God that is recorded in the Bible.

## 6. Study to avoid deception.

We must study the Bible in order not to be deceived by the lies of false teachers who often promote erroneous moral standards. Paul warned,

*... and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness* (2 Th 2:10-12).

When one does not know the Bible, then he or she will construct a religious belief after his or her own imagination. He or she will either follow one's emotions or traditions. In ignorance of the word of God, both will lead one away from God. Therefore, we study the word of God in order not to be led astray from the truth (See Ep 4:11-16).

**14. T or F:** If we do not love the truth, God will allow us to believe that which is not true.

## 7. Study to know God's will.

Since we live in a world of religious confusion, we must study the Bible in order to know the truth that has been revealed by God. When we know God's will, we guard ourselves against sin. John wrote, *"Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness"* (1 Jn 3:4). We study the Bible in order to know God's will, and thus guard ourselves against lawlessness.

Those who do not love the truth, or know the truth, will always seek to lead others astray by the teaching their own humanly devised religious beliefs. John warned those to whom he wrote about this problem:

*But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction* (1 Pt 2:1).

We study the Bible, therefore, in order that we know God's will, lest we sin against Him. It is not that the Christian will not sin. The fact is that his knowledge of God's word gives him the opportunity to know when he does sin.

**15. T or F:** We study the Bible in order to discover “destructive heresies” that are often taught by those who deny the gospel.

## **8. Study to teach our children.**

Moses commanded the Israelites that they instruct their children in the law of God. He wrote,

*And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up* (See Dt 6:1-9; 11:18-21).

Paul also wrote, *“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord”* (Ep 6:4). Solomon said, *“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it”* (Pv 22:6).

As parents, we must study the Bible in order to know how to train our children in eternal moral principles. We must know the word of God in order to be able to teach these principles to our children. Parents who do not know the Bible, will not be able to instill within their children the word of God, nor the principles of truth that will guide them throughout their lives.

**16. T or F:** It is the responsibility of Christian parents to study the Bible in order to instruct their children in the ways of God.

**17. T or F:** It is possible for parents to train up their children to go in the right ways of God without studying the Bible.

## **9. Study to be instructed in righteousness.**

Paul said that the word of God must be preached and heard in order that people receive reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness for everyday living. He wrote, *“All Scripture is given by inspiration*

*of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness”* (2 Tm 3:16). When one is willing to allow God to direct his or her life, then the word of God is able to direct one’s life according to the will of God.

**18. T or F:** Regardless of one’s knowledge of the Bible, one can still walk in the way of God unto eternal life.

### **10. Study to understand true faith.**

We study the Bible in order to understand the relationship that God demands of us for righteous living. James wrote of these things in **James 1:22-27**. He wrote, *“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”* **If one does not know the word of God, then certainly he will not know if he is a “doer of the word.** James continued, *“But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”* It is imperative, therefore, that one study the word of God in order to be blessed in what he or she does. James concluded, *“Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.”*

We would not know what to do in order to have “pure religion” if James had not revealed such in this statement. We would not know how to keep ourselves unspotted from the world if we were not directed by the word of God. Therefore, the student of God’s word is motivated to study the Bible in order to know what God would require of him.

**19. T or F:** One can be blessed by God even though he or she does not know the word of God.

**20. T or F:** We cannot know how to keep ourselves unspotted from the world if we do not know the Bible.

### **11. Study to remain faithful to God.**

The Jews of Jesus’ day had created a religion after the religious traditions of their forefathers. Jesus subsequently condemned such in His judgment

against the religious leaders who bound humanly invented religious traditions on the people. In their zeal to keep their traditions, the religious leaders even went so far as to reject the commandments of God. Jesus said of them,

*Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. **And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.**' For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men (Mk 7:6-9).*

We study the Bible, therefore, **in order to distinguish between what is Bible and what is simply religious tradition.** It is not wrong to do things traditionally. However, when the traditional way of doing something moves us to ignore or reject the word of God, **then the traditional way of doing something becomes wrong.** The Jews had moved away from the word of God to the point that they were more diligent to keep their religious traditions than the commandments of God.

We study the Bible today, therefore, in order to maintain our respect for the commandments of God. If we become ignorant of the word of God, then we will be destroyed in our own religiosity of false worship. Hosea said such of Israel when the nation fell away unto false religions because of their ignorance of the word of God.

***My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children (Hs 4:6).***

- 21. T or F:** When we teach as religious doctrine those things that are founded upon the religious traditions of our fathers, then we are living in religious hypocrisy.
- 22. T or F:** The Israelites were eventually rejected by God because they had forgotten the word of God.

The preceding principles for Bible study are very important for the Christian to remember. It must be remembered also that one of the most important

reasons why we need more Bible study is because God has commanded us to be diligent students. True nobility in the sight of God comes by searching the Scriptures. In Acts 17:11 Luke recorded that the Bereans did not accept anyone's preaching without first studying the Scriptures for themselves. We learn from this that every individual has a right to study the Scriptures for themselves.

Another imperative for Bible study is based on the fact that we often think that what we are doing is right when sometimes it is actually contrary to the word of God. Many people today make the mistake of trusting their own hearts. However, we must continue to remember that our emotions and feelings will lead us astray if such are not guided by the word of God.

The presence of evil in the world today proves that people are unable to direct their own ways. Because people have tried to direct their own ways, the world lies in a wicked and condemned state. The devil has truly sought out and gained many who have determined to direct their own lives with immoral principles that are often contrary to the word of God. We must study the Bible, therefore, in order not to be deceived by the lies of Satan.

One of the greatest reasons for the Christian to study the Bible is that he or she better teach others. We must keep in mind that people are lost in sin. It will take knowledgeable Bible students who are qualified and knowledgeable in the word of God to teach the lost of the world.

Most important of all, we must study the Bible because through its pages God has revealed Himself and the gospel. It is His book of revelation, and if we want to know God and the gospel, we must study His book. If we want to know how He would have us behave in our relationships with others, then we must allow Him to direct our lives through His word.

God created us to be religious. If we reject God's direction in our beliefs, therefore, religions will be created after our own desires and traditions. For this



reason, it is very important to be diligent students of God's word, as well as obedient students to what the Bible teaches.

### C. Spiritual Reasons For Bible Study

The following are added reasons for Bible study. We would call these spiritual reasons simply because they have a direct application to our spiritual growth, and thus, our peace of mind in the this environment until Jesus comes again.

#### 1. Study to know the Father and the Son.

Jesus said, *“And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent”* (Jn 17:3). We can know the Father by studying the life of the Son. Jesus said, *“But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me”* (Jn 7:29). Because the Father and the Son are one (See Jn 10:30), the Son reveals the Father to us (See Lk 10:22,23). If anyone seeks to understand the Father, therefore, he or she must study the life of the Son. Jesus said, *“He who has seen Me has seen the Father”* (Jn 14:9). The word “see” is used metaphorically to reference to the spiritual nature of God, not to some physical form we may suppose He has. We “see” God through the inspired record of Jesus' life. Therefore, in order to know the Father through the Son, we must know the record of the Son's life (See 2 Pt 3:18).

**23. T or F:** It is not possible to know God, without first knowing His Son who is revealed through the Bible.

#### 2. Study to know the truth of the gospel.

Jesus said, *“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”* (Jn 8:32). He also said, *“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth”* (Jn 17:17; see 1 Pt 1:22,23). Therefore, in order to know the truth by which we are sanctified, we must study the word of God.

**24. T or F:** Not all truth is revealed in the Bible, but all truth in reference to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is revealed in the Bible.

### 3. Study to grow in faith.

The Bible is still our source of faith. *“So faith comes by hearing,”* Paul wrote, *“and hearing by the word of God”* (Rm 10:17). Concerning his purpose for writing, John stated,

*And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name* (Jn 20:30,31).

Without faith it is impossible to be pleasing to God (Hb 11:6). Therefore, we must study the Bible in order to grow in faith, especially faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

**25. T or F:** It is possible to have faith, but to have faith that is based on the fact that Jesus is the Christ and Son of God, our faith must be based on the word of God.

### 4. Study to know the judgment standard.

At the final judgment, we will not be judged by the religious creed books or rules of man. Jesus said, *“He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day”* (Jn 12:48). For those who live in this dispensation of time, the word of Jesus will be the standard by which we will be judged. When people realize that they will be judged by the word of Jesus, they will be motivated to study it (See Rv 20:11-15).

**26. T or F:** The standard by which everyone will be judged is by their good works, regardless of our knowledge of and obedience to the word of Christ.

### 5. Study to be wise unto salvation.

Of Timothy, Paul wrote *“that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus”* (2 Tm 3:15). It is not possible for one to know how to be saved today except through the Bible. The Old Testament prophets wrote con-

cerning this salvation. They diligently searched what they wrote by inspiration because this salvation at the time they wrote was a great mystery. Of them and their writing Peter stated,

*Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and **searched diligently**, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, **searching what**, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow (1 Pt 1:10,11).*

This salvation has now been revealed to us today through the New Testament. In order to discover it, we must study the Bible. In other words, we today could never know of the cross of Jesus and His resurrection except through the written word of God.

**27. T or F:** The Old Testament prophets who prophesied concerning the gospel, knew every aspect of the gospel.

## **6. Study to know what saves.**

We study the Bible because the word of God is able to save our souls. It is the medium unto salvation because it reveals what is required of us to be saved. The gospel is God's power unto salvation (See Rm 1:16). This gospel is revealed in the New Testament. When we discover the gospel in the word of God, and are obedient to it, **it is then that we save our souls**. This is why James wrote, *"Receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls"* (Js 1:21). Those who meekly implant to the word of God in their hearts will save their souls by their obedience to that which God requires of us.

The most important reason for studying the Bible is because it is actually the word of God. In realizing this, we study the Bible because we seek God's guidance in our lives. The Bible will guide us to a greater spiritual life when we are obedient to its inspired principles. Through obedience to God's will, we will thus save our souls.

The Bible has eternal answers to man's greatest

problems. It has the answer to our greatest problem of life, that is, our condemnation because of our own sins. The greatest answer to this problem is the gospel of salvation. We study the Bible, therefore, in order to prepare ourselves for eternity through obedience of the gospel.

We live in a world where religious people have fabricated almost every type of religion that can be conceived. When we think that no new religion can be invented, along comes another invention of the misguided spiritual wanderings of some zealous religionist. There seems to be no end to the religions that can be generated by the misguided religious yearnings of the human spirit.

Would the God who created us condemn us because of our own misguided religiosity? Certainly! Those who profess any allegiance to Christ, but ignore the Scriptures as the final authority of truth about God and the gospel, **have condemned themselves through their own religious inventions.** It is for this reason that we are diligent Bible students.

**28. T or F:** For all those who do not obey the gospel, Jesus will judge and save according to their good works.

**29. T or F:** The word of God is able to save our souls because in it we discover the gospel which we must obey in order to be saved.

## Chapter 3

### ~ God Expects Bible Study ~

In John 17:20,21, and quoted previously, Jesus prayed that His disciples *“may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.”* It is obvious from this prayer of Jesus that He affirmed that one of the greatest evangelistic evidences to the world concerning the truth of the gospel would be the unity of His disciples.

Jesus’ prayer is answered in the lives of those who know and obey the truth of the gospel. However, there is a great number of people in the world today who state that they believe in Jesus, but have

no intention of living in unity with others who also believe in Him. Many of those who claim that Jesus is the Son of God live an example of division before the world. Because of this division, many conclude that it is not possible to live in unity if one believes in Jesus.

But contrary to what many have been led to believe in this matter, we can understand the teaching of the Bible that explains Jesus.

### A. Christians Expect To Know Gospel

We are expected to know and understand the truth of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said that His disciples would know the truth of the gospel, and that this truth would set them free. It would bring them together into a united body. He stated, *“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”* (Jn 8:32).

The Bible reveals the truth of the gospel. And this truth can be known when we study our Bibles. Since it is the truth of the gospel that will set us free from sin and the religious traditions we create for ourselves, then the truth about which Jesus spoke in John 8:32 **must be able to be known in order that we be free.**

Jesus did not give us a futile promise. He knew that honest truth seekers of the world would be able to know the truth of the gospel in order to be set free. Therefore, God has revealed the truth of the gospel in His word in order that we be set free.

John wrote in order to produce faith in the hearts of those to whom he wrote. He concluded the book of John by saying, *“And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe”* (Jn 20:30,31). The Bible was written in order that we might understand that Jesus is the Christ and Son of God. By understanding this, we can believe. Our faith is increased.

God did not instruct the Bible to be written in a manner that would make it difficult to understand the

fundamental truths that one must know and obey in order to be saved. It is for this reason that God expects us to understand His word because He did not reveal it to us in a manner that is difficult to understand.

The fact that God will not save all those who believe in the Bible is evidence that God expects us to learn the truth of the gospel from the Bible in order that we may obey the gospel (See 2 Th 1:7-9). If God had revealed the truth of the gospel in the Bible in a manner that was difficult to understand, **then He would be unjust in His condemnation of those who did not understand the Bible.**

**30. T or F:** Since Jesus affirmed that the truth of the gospel would set us free, then we correctly assume that we can discover this truth in the Bible about which He spoke.

**31. T or F:** If the truth of the gospel could not be easily understood in the Bible, then God would not be a just God in condemning those who did not understand and obey the gospel.

## B. God Expects Spiritual Growth

As His people, God expects us to grow in faith that is based His word. His word is the source and foundation of our faith. God meant for it to be such. This is what Paul meant in **Romans 10:17**: *“So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* This is why every Christian is commanded to be diligent to present yourself *“approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”* (2 Tm 2:15). Peter added, *“Grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ”* (2 Pt 3:18). Therefore, if we could not understand the Bible, how could we grow in faith? How could we understand Jesus? The Bible promises that if we will read and study it, our faith will grow.

The Holy Spirit wrote in Hebrew 11:6: *“But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”* Since faith is a requirement for coming to and pleasing God, then we must assume that God would reveal Himself

and His will to us in a manner by which we can grow in faith. For this reason, therefore, we must assume that it is possible for people to understand the Bible in a manner by which it will produce faith.

**32. T or F:** Since our faith is based on the word of God, then we must assume that we will grow in faith as we study the word of God.

### C. God Expects Us To Understand

As stated above in 2 Timothy 2:15, Paul expected Timothy to be diligent to *“rightly divide the word of truth.”* In order for one to do this, he or she must first be able to understand the word of truth. How could God expect us to correctly apply the Bible if He had communicated His word to us in a manner that could not be understood? It would certainly be an injustice on the part of God if He expected us to rightly apply His truth to our lives, and yet, have it communicated to us in a manner that was difficult to understand. The fact that God demands that we correctly apply the truth to our lives is evidence that we can understand the Bible in a manner that is pleasing to Him.

**33. T or F:** Rightly dividing the word of God assumes that it was communicated to us in a manner that we could understand.

### D. God Expects Us To Know Mystery

Paul wrote,

*For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles—if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I wrote before in a few words, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) (Ep 3:1-4).*

The mystery Paul discusses in the above statement is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. This mystery was revealed through the historical events of the incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension and coronation of Jesus. Paul wrote to the Ephesians and stated that they could understand this mystery

when they read his epistle. Therefore, Paul wrote the letter of Ephesians in order that we might understand the essential nature of the gospel of Christ. In other words, when we read the New Testament we can understand God's gospel message to us. We can understand the mystery, and by understanding it, be grounded in faith (See Ep 3:17). This is why the New Testament was written.

Those who say that we cannot understand the Scriptures are actually saying that God could not communicate the gospel to us in a way that we could understand it. This is an accusation against God the Holy Spirit, and thus attacks the omnipotence of God to communicate to His creation. What one is actually saying is that it is not possible for God to make known to us today through written revelation what He requires of us to do in order to be saved.

We must be cautious about blaming God for something that is our own fault. In other words, it is our own fault if we do not understand the mystery of the gospel that was recorded by Paul and the other New Testament writers. **We must not blame God for our personal laziness in Bible studying in order to discover the gospel.** Neither should we blame the Holy Spirit for inspiring the New Testament writers to write in a manner that we could not understand. We must assume that God will hold every person responsible for his or her knowledge of the word of revelation as to what one must do to be saved.

- 34. T or F:** Paul wrote concerning the mystery of the gospel, but he did not expect us to understand the gospel.
- 35. T or F:** If one does not understand the gospel, then it was fault of the Holy Spirit not to communicate the gospel in words that we could understand.

### E. God Expects Nobility

In this context, we must again refer to the diligence of the Bereans in their Bible study. Of the Bereans, Luke wrote, *“These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scrip-*



tures **daily** to find out whether these things were so” (At 17:11). The *New International Version* reads, “Now the Bereans were of more **noble character** than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.”

The Bereans were noble, or fair-minded, people because they diligently studied the Scriptures. Paul preached to them, but they did not accept his words alone. They studied their Old Testament Scriptures in order to see if what Paul was saying was true. But why would they search the Scriptures and be considered noble for doing such if they really could not understand the Bible? The fact is that God the Holy Spirit inspired all the Bible to be written in a manner that would allow it to be understood if studied. The Bereans knew this.

**36. T or F:** We must learn from the Bible study of the Bereans that they discovered that Paul’s preaching concerning the gospel was validated by the Old Testament Scriptures

We must remember that Jesus said we would know the truth. That truth would make us free. And by knowing it, we can be made free from religious traditions that work contrary to open-minded Bible study. When we study the Bible we grow in faith. God gave us the Bible so that when we study it, our faith will be increased. Because of this common goal we all have, God guided special men as Paul to write letters to Christians in order that they might understand the truth of the gospel. We can understand this truth if we will search the Scriptures.

Many people have the mistaken idea that they can understand the Bible by an occasional reading of it. However, understanding the Bible is the result of serious study. Someone once said, “The Bible writers received the truth by inspiration. We must receive it through perspiration.” If we desire to understand the Bible, then we must spend many hours of study in it. We must remember that the Bible nowhere promises that the Holy Spirit will guide us to understand the

Bible. **God will not do for us what He expects us to do for ourselves.** And He expects us to search the Scriptures in order to understand the gospel, and thus find the way of salvation for our souls.

## Chapter 4

### ~ The Bible Can Be Understood ~

One might ask, “Can I understand everything in the Bible?” The answer to this question is that we cannot. We cannot fully understand everything that God has revealed in the Bible. The average person certainly does not have that amount of time to study, nor can he or she have such great insights into the supernatural world of God. There are those things concerning God, eternity and life hereafter that are only partially revealed in the Scriptures. We are given only a hint of things beyond our world. There are also those prophecies concerning the final coming of Jesus that we do not fully understand.

It is generally true that **prophecy is never fully understood until after its fulfillment.** This was true of the Jew’s understanding of Old Testament prophecies concerning the coming kingdom and Messiah. It is also true of our understanding concerning some things that are yet to come. We certainly cannot understand all the future events of the Bible if they are only revealed to us in part. God does not expect us to completely understand those things that He will explain to us after the end of the world. God said through Moses to Israel, **“The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law”** (Dt 29:29).

Everyone has had difficult times in understanding various portions of the Bible. Even the apostle Peter may have been frustrated with some things that were written by Paul. Notice what he said of some of Paul’s writings in 2 Peter 3:15,16:

*And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—*

*as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, **in which are some things hard to understand**, which those who are untaught and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.*

In verse 16 Peter stated that some of Paul's writings are "hard to be understood." Notice that they were hard even for even Peter to understand. Now Peter was an inspired writer in those things he wrote. If some of Paul's writings were difficult for Peter to understand, then certainly some concepts of Scripture will be difficult for us to understand.

It is interesting to note here also that **Peter did not pray for an understanding of these hard-to-be-understood passages of Paul**. Neither did he give us a command to pray for inspired interpretation of the Scriptures. Though Peter was inspired to write Scripture; **he was not inspired to understand Scripture** (See 2 Pt 3:15,16).

We must notice also that only "some things" were hard for Peter to understand, not all things. Peter did not say that they were impossible to be understood. **Those hard things to be understood can many times be understood through serious Bible study**. We must always remember this. God expects study, diligent study. In fact, if one is not willing to give himself or herself to diligent Bible study, then he or she will probably not be able to understand many portions of the Bible in a correct manner. If one does not personally study the Bible, his or her understanding of the Bible will always be subjected to the interpretations of other people.

We must be assured, however, that if we are willing to give at least an hour a day to diligent Bible study we will be good Bible students and competent interpreters of the Scriptures. Those who are willing to make this commitment will be able to understand the Bible in a way that will lead them to God.

It is not only possible to understand the Bible, but it is possible to understand it in a way that will cause

unity among the disciples of Jesus. There will always be those portions of Scripture where we will have differences of opinion. God never expected us to agree on everything. However, on matters of fundamental, or salvational truth, **He expects us to have perfect harmony.** We must never cause division over interpretations of the Bible that do not involve fundamental teachings concerning our salvation.

**The fundamental teachings of gospel are easily understood.** We must firmly believe that all disciples of Jesus can be united upon the foundation of simple New Testament teachings concerning the gospel. Though there are areas of interpretation where people will disagree, we must firmly believe that we can stand united upon the fundamental teachings of the gospel.

- 37. T or F:** Because something is recorded in the Bible means that we can understand all that is written.
- 38. T or F:** Simply because some things in the Bible are hard to understand does not mean that they are impossible to understand.
- 39. T or F:** The Bible clearly teaches the doctrine of inspired interpretation.
- 40. T or F:** Division among the disciples must never be caused by statements in the Bible that God does not intend for us to fully understand.

The following are reasons why God expects us to be able to understand alike the fundamental teachings of the New Testament:

### A. God Expects Unity

Remember this statement of Jesus? *“I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me”* (Jn 17:20,21). Jesus prayed for unity among His followers in this prayer. He would not have prayed for unity **if it were not possible for unity to exist.** We must assume, therefore, that all the disciples of Jesus can be united upon the gospel.

The New Testament is the word of Jesus for all His disciples. Therefore, all believers can be united into one fellowship by standing firm upon the fundamental teachings of the gospel. **The events and purpose of the gospel is the foundation upon which all believers in Jesus can be united** (See 1 Co 1:10; 15:1-4; Ep 4:4-6; Ph 1:27). For this reason, we must be committed to believing in the events of the gospel, and that through the gospel salvation was revealed to the world.

**41. T or F:** Though Jesus prayed for unity among His disciples, then we must assume that such unity can exist.

**42. T or F:** Unity among those who believe in Jesus can be realized when believers all accept and obey that truth of the gospel.

### B. Christians Must Speak In Unity

In **1 Corinthians 1:10** the apostle Paul wrote a very profound commandment for all Christians:

*Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*

In this statement Paul was inspired to write that we and the Corinthians speak the same thing and that we not be divided among ourselves in our beliefs concerning the gospel. He commanded that we be perfectly joined together in the same mind and same judgment. How could God expect Bible believers to be united in this way if they could not understand alike what the Bible teaches concerning the truth of the gospel? The point is that even though we might have differences of opinion on some points of interpretation in the Bible, we must be united together on the essential or fundamental teachings concerning the gospel.

**43. T or F:** The fact that Christians can be commanded to be perfectly joined together assumes that Christians can believe the same gospel events, and why they occurred in history for our salvation.

### C. Our Common Faith

Paul wrote, *“To Titus, my true son in our common faith”* (Ti 1:4). In this statement Paul wrote to Titus and spoke of a **common faith**. “Common” means one, or united faith. In other words, Paul, Titus and all other Christians should have this common faith. They are to be united upon this faith. But if we cannot understand the gospel alike, then we cannot have this common faith. **Because God expects us to have a common faith is evidence that He expects us to understand the gospel alike.** Therefore, we can have that one united faith when we base our faith solely upon the gospel. We must lay aside human religious traditions, prejudices and divisive attitudes in order to unite upon the fundamental teachings of the gospel.

The fundamental teachings concerning the gospel, therefore, will unite those who believe in the gospel. At the same time, in matters of opinion, differences are allowed. In **Acts 15:36-41** Paul and Barnabas had a difference of opinion over a personality or method of work, depending upon whose perspective through which we view the disagreement. Nevertheless, though these two faithful workers disagreed over a particular method in ministry, they continued the fundamental purpose for which they were called. **Their differences in work did not encourage differences in understanding the message of the gospel.** They maintained their unity in preaching the gospel regardless of their differences in methodology.

While in Corinth at different times, Paul, Apollos and Peter likewise expressed different opinions in matters of work. Because of their sectarian attitudes and pride, however, some Corinthians wanted to follow after the different personalities of either Paul, Apollos and Peter (See 1 Co 1:12,13). But such thinking and behavior was carnal (See 1 Co 3:4). In the context in which Paul identified the Corinthians’ sectarian attitudes in reference to personalities, he

exhorted them to be one (See 1 Co 1:10).

There were two sisters in the church of Philippi who evidently had a personality clash (See Ph 4:2,3). However, they were exhorted to be at peace with one another and continue on with their unit that was based on the gospel. God thus expects us to understand our fundamental purpose as it is established by His word. Though we may have different personalities that clash, He expects us to continue our unity that is based on the one gospel.

In **Titus 3:9-11** Paul exhorted Titus not to become involved in arguments over matters of opinion. Such arguments often lead to debates, which debates cause hard feelings and division. **Disciples of Jesus must know the Bible well enough to judge something to be a matter of opinion, and thus something over which debate should never occur.**

Disagreements over matters of work, opinions and personalities will occur. God allows disagreements over matters of opinion without the souls of those involved being in danger of condemnation. In other words, Christians can disagree in love without endangering their souls. With the right attitude in matters of opinion, there is allowance for disagreement among the disciples. However, in matters of disagreement in the area of fundamental gospel teaching concerning salvation, the condemnation of false teachers is very clear in the Bible.

**44. T or F:** Christians are never allowed to have differences of opinion, but must be as a cult where everyone is forced to have the same opinion and behavioral practices.

**45. T or F:** Because God commands unity that is based on a common belief of the gospel, means that such can exist among the disciples.

## D. Our Common Salvation

The word “common” is also used in **Jude 3** in the same sense as it is used in reference to our “common faith” by Paul in Titus 1:4. In other words, when we have something in common, we agree upon a point of reference. We are united because all of us

as a group subscribe to a particular belief. Jude wrote,

*Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints* (Jd 3).

The fact that Christians can have this common salvation is proof that we can study our Bibles and be in agreement concerning the essential facts of the gospel, and obedience thereof. **God never revealed in the Scriptures any requirement for salvation that was obscure.** He never required us to obey any essential commandment that was hard to understand. He did not give us difficult teachings upon which He demanded unity.

**Everything that one must do in order to be saved is clearly revealed in the Bible and is clearly understood.** If we cannot understand these essential teachings concerning our salvation, then we are probably suffering from one of the hindrances to understanding the Bible that have been listed in this book.

People often wonder why the Bible is not understood in the same manner by those who believe in it. There are several reasons for this. **(1)** People do not understand the Bible because they simply do not study. **(2)** People often go to the Bible with a closed mind or with the prejudices of traditional religious practices that they do not want to change. **(3)** Some do not have a love for the truth of the gospel. **(4)** Some simply use the Bible to prove a point.

Everyone must understand the fundamental teachings of the Bible in a manner that will result in unity among all believers. If there is disunity, the problem is not in the Bible. **The problem is with Bible interpreters.**

God had the Bible written in a manner that made it understandable. If one is searching for the truth of the gospel, he or she will find it in the pages of the Bible. **Truth searched for is truth found.** There-



fore, one of the principle conditions upon which one's understanding of the Bible is based is whether he or she is hungering and thirsting after truth.

The mystery of the gospel was delivered to humanity in a simple manner. **Fundamental truths of the gospel are easy to understand.** God expects all believers to be united upon an understanding of these fundamental truths. However, believers cannot be united unless they can understand the Bible. It is reasonable to believe, therefore, that God would reveal His will to us in a manner that would produce unity among believers. Those who are truly seeking God through His word, therefore, will come to a unity of the faith that is based on their common love of God's word. The word of God is thus their common foundation for unity.

**47. T or F:** When there is division among those who believe in Jesus, the problem is not with the Bible, but with those who study the Bible with divisive prejudices.

**48. T or F:** If one is seeking unity among all believers, then he or she will find in the gospel the foundation upon which unity can be realized.

### CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

1. What should be our primary reason for studying the Bible?
2. What did Paul mean when he wrote to "rightly divide" the word of truth?
3. Why were the Bereans noble minded in their Bible studies?
4. Why is it not possible for each society of humanity to establish moral behavior for all societies of the world?
5. Why do the unique moral codes of different societies often lead societies to be in conflict with one another?
6. What was the "destructive heresies" about which John wrote in 1 John 2:1?
7. Why did Jesus judge the Jewish religious leaders for being religious hypocrites in their keeping the traditions of their forefathers?
8. As opposed to religious fanaticism, why is it important to study the Bible in order to know the gospel?
9. How can one "see" God through the Lord Jesus Christ?
10. How would the truth of the gospel set us free?
11. Why is that prophecy is never fully understood until it is fulfilled?
12. Why can all Bible students be united on the events of the gospel, how one must obey the gospel, and what results come from obedience to the gospel?

13. Why is the church not a cult in reference to the behavior of the members in reference to the gospel?



## ABBREVIATIONS

### OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis - **Gn**, Exodus - **Ex**, Leviticus - **Lv**, Numbers - **Nm**, Deuteronomy - **Dt**, Joshua - **Ja**, Judges - **Jg**, Ruth - **Rt**, 1 Samuel - **1 Sm**, 2 Samuel - **2 Sm**, 1 Kings - **1 Kg**, 2 Kings - **2 Kg**, 1 Chronicles - **1 Ch**, 2 Chronicles - **2 Ch**, Ezra - **Er**, Nehemiah - **Ne**, Esther - **Et**, Job - **Jb**, Psalms - **Ps**, Proverbs - **Pv**, Ecclesiastes - **Ec**, Song of Solomon - **Ss**, Isaiah - **Is**, Jeremiah - **Jr**, Lamentations - **Lm**, Ezekiel - **Ez**, Daniel - **Dn**, Hosea - **Hs**, Joel - **Jl**, Amos - **Am**, Obadiah - **Ob**, Jonah - **Jh**, Micah - **Mc**, Nahum - **Nh**, Habakkuk - **Hk**, Zephaniah - **Zp**, Haggai - **Hg**, Zechariah - **Zc**, Malachi - **Ml**

### NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew - **Mt**, Mark - **Mk**, Luke - **Lk**, John - **Jn**, Acts - **At**, Romans - **Rm**, 1 Corinthians - **1 Co**, 2 Corinthians - **2 Co**, Galatians - **Gl**, Ephesians - **Ep**, Philippians - **Ph**, Colossians - **Cl**, 1 Thessalonians - **1 Th**, 2 Thessalonians - **2 Th**, 1 Timothy - **1 Tm**, 2 Timothy - **2 Tm**, Titus - **Ti**, Philemon - **Pl**, Hebrews - **Hb**, James - **Js**, 1 Peter - **1 Pt**, 2 Peter - **2 Pt**, 1 John - **1 Jn**, 2 John - **2 Jn**, 3 John - **3 Jn**, Jude - **Jd**, Revelation - **Rv**

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