



How to Study the Bible

Believing Bible Study

I. THE PRINCIPLE DEFINED

A. Steps Set Forth by Others

1. The following is the method of studying the Bible as set forth in *Methods of Bible Study* by W. H. Griffith Thomas pages 101-102.
 - a. Textual criticism
 - (1) “The first stage of all study in relation to the Bible is that known as *Textual Criticism*—the discovery of the true text, the assurance that we have as nearly as is possible for us to obtain them the words of the sacred writers.”
 - (2) “But this stage of study is obviously only introductory. It is essential as the foundation, but it is only the foundation.”
 - b. Literary criticism—“The next stage is that which is known as *Literary Criticism*—the study of the Bible as literature, the consideration of its composition, authorship, date, style, and contents.”
 - c. Biblical exegesis—“The third stage of Bible study is concerned with *Biblical Exegesis*—that is, the true interpretation of the contents of the Bible, the exact meaning of passages, sections and verses.”
 - d. Biblical theology—“The fourth stage of our work with the Bible is occupied with *Biblical Theology*—the consideration of the religion revealed in the Scriptures, its doctrines, morals and duties.”
2. The following is the method of studying the Bible as set forth in *The Study and Teaching of the English Bible* by G. Campbell Morgan.
 - a. The preconceived limitations of scripture—taken from page 14
 - (1) “It will at once be conceded that it is necessary to recognize that this is essentially a Library of religious literature.”
 - (2) “It may incidentally contain scientific facts, or philosophic principles; but it is neither a scientific textbook, nor a philosophic treatise.”
 - (3) “For the present I am not concerned as to whether the teaching is true, for that is not at all the question at this point.”
 - (4) “We do not start with that assumption.”
 - b. The removal of preconceived biases—taken from pages 25 and 26
 - (1) “It is preeminently necessary that we come to the study of the Bible without prejudice either for it or against it.”
 - (2) “It is a grave mistake to demand this prejudice in favor of the Bible from a class, or an individual student, when its very existence may prevent the honest and profitable study of it.”



B. Steps Set Forth in This Class

1. We **MUST** approach the Bible with a preconceived bias—for it.
2. We **MUST** approach the Bible, believing that:
 - a. God gave His word by inspiration and it was exactly what He wanted it to be.
 - b. God began immediately to work on from the perspective of preservation so that each word would remain exactly what He wanted it to be.
 - c. God preserved His word somewhere in our language so that every word we have is exactly what God wants it to be. (Once the student learns the history and fruitfulness of the King James Bible, he will become convinced that this is found therein.)
 - d. God had no problem making a perfect translation seeing as how He was able to do this in the original manuscripts.
3. We **MUST** approach the Bible as though every word is the word God wanted it to be (1 Thessalonians 2:13).

II. THE PRINCIPLE REQUIRED

A. The Necessity of the Principle

1. In this course, we want to:
 - a. Learn how to do textual Bible study
 - b. Learn how to do biographical Bible study
 - c. Learn how to do geographical Bible study
 - d. Learn how to do topical Bible study
 - e. Learn how to do typological Bible study
2. If we do not have in our Bible exactly what God said, we cannot accurately study any of these.

B. The Protection of the Principle

1. Failure to believe the book in our hands means we must:
 - a. Learn Greek and Hebrew
 - b. Approach it in complete distrust, skepticism, and unbelief
2. Therefore, we must:
 - a. Ignore chapter and verse divisions, which will disallow the study of a verse or chapter
 - b. Check every word in a concordance or other original language resources to see if it was correctly translated
 - c. Keep an open mind to all of the possible renderings of any given Hebrew or Greek word as the possible true rendering
 - d. Declare that we do not and cannot have the perfect word of God
 - e. Throw out the idea of studying the scriptures to any real benefit



III. THE PRINCIPLE ILLUSTRATED

A. The Work of a Detective

1. Detective work typically requires a much research prior to any real leads. This work may or may not produce any “profitable” intel.
2. A detective must always keep his eyes open for evidence.
3. A detective must see everything as possible evidence.
4. Once a piece of information is found, the detective must follow up with more research to see if the evidence is valid or credible.
5. A detective must be willing to search out possible evidence even though many times it will end up leading nowhere.
6. A detective’s work is not completed until valid evidence is found. This evidence must be able to stand up in the court of law.

B. The Work of a Bible Student

1. The Bible student is going to have to be willing to put in a great deal of footwork through the scriptures without the necessity of finding something every time.
2. The Bible student must always keep his eyes open for evidence.
 - a. Our evidence is in the punctuation, letters, words, phrases and even in the omissions. Another term for letters is characters.
 - b. They are called characters, because they have personality and they give information.
 - c. As a detective, you must be observant to the smallest details of the word of God.
3. Once the Bible student sees something in the scriptures that stands out, he must be willing to follow through with the proper research.
4. The Bible student must be careful when submitting unfounded “evidence.”

IV. THE PRINCIPLE HINDERED

A. By Unbelief

B. By Previously Gained Knowledge

1. Of the inferiority of scripture
2. Of the meanings of Bible words
3. Of the interpretations of common passages
4. Of the doctrinal truths set forth by the scripture
5. Of distinctions or divisions within scripture

C. By Improper Study Tools

D. By Incorrect Order of Study Tools Usage