



# How to Study the Bible

## *The Study of a Phrase*

### I. APPLY THE PRINCIPLES FOR STUDYING A WORD

#### A. The Makeup of a Phrase

1. Phrases are made up of individual words. Therefore, in order to properly study any phrase, you must first be able to invest the time to study the individual words that make up the phrase.
2. The principles set forth in the lesson on the study of a word can be implemented to develop a definition for each word in the phrase.

#### B. The Ultimate Results Studying a Phrase

1. A study of a phrase could begin with the study of the phrase itself, yet this will not be the most honest Bible study.
2. It will take more time, but a willingness to study the individual words that make up the phrase will yield the ultimate results.

### II. FROM THE SCRIPTURES

#### A. Phrase Occurrence

1. Look the phrase up in Cruden's Concordance or in your Bible study software. Read through the references in the Bible in order to get a feel of the usage. Cruden's does not contain every phrase that would merit your study.
2. The Bible often gives hints of meaning in parallel words and phrases located in context of the phrase studied.
3. Variations of the phrase will also give hints as to the meaning of the phrase you are studying. Ask yourself the following:
  - a. Is there a phrase in the Bible that is similar except for the change of one word?
  - b. What word is changed?
  - c. How does the change of that word change the meaning of the phrase?
  - d. Does this variation actually give you a hint as to the meaning of the phrase you are studying?
4. Locate the first occurrence of the phrase. What is its significance?
  - a. The principle of the first and last occurrence of a phrase in scripture is not always of great significance. Be careful not to force meaning into this step.



- b. However, the first occurrence often gives a good hint as to how the phrase will be used later in scripture. Look for any helps in this matter.
5. Locate the final occurrence of the phrase. What is its significance?
6. Is it possible that your phrase is one that originated in the Old Testament, but is quoted in the New Testament? If so, consider the following:
  - a. Does the phrase change in the New Testament?
  - b. If there is a change, what does this change add to your understanding?

#### B. Phrase Location

1. Locate the foremost occurrence of the phrase—that is, the book, chapter and/or verse where the phrase occurs the most. What can you learn about the phrase from this passage or these passages?
  - a. Sometimes there are several prominent places where a phrase is used. Look for anything of significance.
  - b. The phrase *doctrine of Christ* is only found three times in the Bible and two of those times are in 2 John 1:9. This phrase is a key phrase in understanding John's second epistle.
2. How many times does this phrase occur in the Bible? How many times does it occur in the Old Testament versus the New Testament?
  - a. How a phrase is grouped in the sections of the Bible can be significant and can help to understand its meaning and usage.
  - b. The phrase *found grace* occurs eighteen times in the Bible and each time is in the Old Testament.
3. How many times does the phrase occur in the following sections of the Old Testament (Law, History, Poetry, and Prophets)? In what section or sections does it occur most? Why?
4. How many times does the phrase occur in the following sections of the New Testament (Gospels, Acts, the Epistles, and Revelation)? In what section or sections does it occur most? Why?

#### C. Phrase Association

1. What other words are often found with this phrase in the Bible? Why are these words found together?
2. If a particular word appears on numerous occasions alongside your phrase of study it would be worth making a note and considering why that word is used as a companion to your phrase.
3. Attempt to understand and explain why these words are connected to your phrase of study.
4. You are always looking for something that adds understanding to your study of the phrase.
5. By this time in your study, you are beginning to be immersed with the phrase and its usage in the Bible.



### III. FROM OTHER RESOURCES

#### A. Bible Dictionaries

1. Look the individual words up in a couple of Bible dictionaries. Do they make reference to the phrase that you are studying? What do they add to your understanding of the phrase?
2. This is a return to the dictionaries to see what you might have missed earlier.

#### B. Modern Versions (Perversions)

1. Check several passages where this phrase is used and compare it with three or four other versions of the Bible. Is the phrase changed? To what?
2. How does this weaken the passage?
3. Since the King James Bible is God's perfectly preserved word, any attempt to change it will weaken the meaning. This can often be seen after a phrase is studied in detail. Check out some of the modern versions and you may be able to see how the phrase, and what it teaches, is weakened.

### IV. PUTTING IT TO USE

#### A. Outline

1. Outline the particular uses of the phrase as it is found in the Bible. In other words, establish subdivisions of the meaning or application of the phrase and determine which references use the phrase according to its different subdivisions.
2. Now make a practical outline of the phrase that can be used for teaching or preaching.

#### B. The Questions Remaining

1. Write out some questions you still have about the phrase and its usage in the Bible.
2. The most basic level of Bible study is to ask questions about the Bible and seek to discover the answers.
3. Bible study is a never-ending process. Despite all you have learned from your study, you will have yet more questions that have not been answered. Write these out so that you may discover their answers at a later time.



\_\_\_\_\_ (phrase)

\_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_ (phrase breakdown)

**FROM THE SCRIPTURES**

*PHRASE OCCURRENCE*

- Number of References: \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of Occurrences: \_\_\_\_\_
- First Bible Reference: \_\_\_\_\_
- Last Bible Reference: \_\_\_\_\_

*PHRASE LOCATION*

- How many times is this phrase in the **Old Testament**: \_\_\_\_\_
- How many times is this phrase in the Law: \_\_\_\_\_
- How many times is this phrase in the History: \_\_\_\_\_
- How many times is this phrase in the Poetry: \_\_\_\_\_
- How many times is this phrase in the Prophets: \_\_\_\_\_
- How many times is this phrase in the **New Testament**: \_\_\_\_\_
- How many times is this phrase in the Gospels: \_\_\_\_\_
- How many times is this phrase in the Book of Acts: \_\_\_\_\_
- How many times is this phrase in the Epistles: \_\_\_\_\_
- How many times is this phrase in Revelation: \_\_\_\_\_
- Is there a certain book of the Bible where this phrase occurs most frequently: \_\_\_\_\_ If so, what book is it?: \_\_\_\_\_
- Is there a chapter of the Bible where this phrase occurs most frequently: \_\_\_\_\_ If so, what chapter is it?: \_\_\_\_\_

**FROM OTHER RESOURCES**

*MODERN VERSIONS (PERVERSIONS)*

- Is this phrase removed or changed some in modern versions: \_\_\_\_\_
  - How does the change weaken the passage: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_