Exploring the Bible, The Word of God

**I) To Explore**

**A)**  **To explore** is to seek, to go out of your way, to go where you have not been before. 1. It also means to open up one’s mind and think differently than you have in times past. 2. The greatest obstacle the Bible faces is a closed mind.

**B) Exploring means**

1. Doing something, to go out of your way, to exercise effort. **Matthew 6.33**

2. Man has often sought out new worlds, new things, new technologies, etc. **Psalm 105.3-4**

**II) What Are We Exploring?**

**A) The Bible**

1. **Genesis 1.1** begins the journey by proclaiming the God of creation.

a. Important to note that God spoke the world into existence “and God said”.

b. God spoke to man in the Garden of Eden and still speaks to us today.

b. God does not communicate through feelings or some other nebulous force but through His word.

2. The Bible is the product of God, **2 Timothy 3.16-17.**

a. Inspiration is the means of revelation.

b. Enlightenment is the result of revelation.

3. The God over 4000 years of time revealed His will to 40 different people.

a. The result is what we call the Bible or the books, there are of course 66 of those books.

b. They harmonize, there is no contradiction is the Bible.

**B) The mind of God, 1 Corinthians 2.6ff.**

1. No one knows the mind of God without revelation.

2. We do not “feel” God unless it is through His word.

**III) The Bible Was Given So Mankind Can and Will Know God**

**A) No One Inherently Knows the Will of God**

1. We might look at the universe and understand there is a Creator, **Psalm 19.1-6.**

2. But only through His word do we know about His character, His power, His will. **Ps. 19.7-11**

a. Only through His word do we know what sin is and how to receive forgiveness.

b. Only through His word do we know how to approach God and worship Him.

**B) Unfortunately many today do not know God**

1. We see men searching for some type of deity, some type of salvation, they are like the people at Mars Hill, **Acts 17.21**

2. The Bible and only the Bible is the inspired word of God—no creed book, no commentary, no work of man is inspired.

**C) Each generation must explore (learn) the Bible for themselves.**

1. Imagine discovering an island. It has the best fruit, trees, fish, caves, the perfect place to live.

2. Now imagine you live there long enough to die. Who will know about this island?

3. Each generation has to explore the Bible for themselves.

a. Think of the children of Israel, **Exodus 19.8**. The had the word of God.

b. However there came a generation that knew not God, **Judges 2.10.**

c. They lost the word of God in the temple**, 2 Kings 22.8.**

d. The generation who came back from captivity had to learn the word of God, **Nehemiah 8.14**

**IV) How Do We Explore The Bible?**

**A) Read it, Acts 17.11; Ephesians 3.1-6**

1. There is too much talk about the Bible without actually studying it.

2. Bible Classes not centered on the Bible.

3. Preaching not Bible based.

**B) Approach with the right attitude, not like those in Jeremiah 36.**

1. Make Bible study important to you, **John 12.48**

a. The Bible contains the complete will of God

b. Respect the Bible as God’s Book to mankind, **Revelation 22.18-19**

c. Know the difference between the text and added subtitles, articles and study aids in some Bibles. Ex. The “Woman’s Bible” or Teenage Bible may have charts and articles for those groups. Some are good and some are not.

2. Have an open mind (Those at Berea were noble minded because they searched the scriptures daily to see whether those things were so.”.

a. It does not take a very strong argument to convince me of what I already believe.

b. We ask our neighbors to be unbiased in their studies and so should we.

**C) Love the truth**

1. A lack of love for the truth allows us to be deluded**, 2 Thess. 2. 10-12.**

2. Make the application

a. Just knowing the truth does not make one a Christian.

b. Doing is putting the truth in action and requires love, commitment, effort.

**D) Be a good listener (audience)**

1. We spend 90 minutes a week in our Bible classes, 60 minutes a week listening to the preacher preach a sermon. For a total of 150 minutes.

2. Most of the value of Bible Classes is our ability to listen to other Bible students.

3. We need to have the proper attitude in our hearing. Not like some in the Bible:

a. **Acts 7.57** at the preaching of Stephen they “stopped their ears”.

b. Jesus said their “ears are hard of hearing” **Matthew 13.15.**

c. Paul said “they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables” **2 Timothy 4.4.**

4. We need to listen and give careful consideration. Not get angry, or just stop listening.

5. We need to apply the golden rule when studying with others. “Listen to them as we would want them to listen to us.”

**E) Study and do not just read**

1. Read and re-read passages.

2. Have a few different translations available for comparison.

3. Have a Bible dictionary available. Some words in our modern dictionaries have definitions different from the original word. Ex. Baptism and church.

**F) Consider the context of the passage**

1. General and Specific context.

a. Specific context is what the surrounding verses are saying.

b. General context is what the rest of the Bible is saying.

2. Important questions

a. Who is speaking and to whom?

b. What dispensation is this passage under?

c. What is the subject under consideration?

**G) Study everything on a given subject, Psalm 119.160**

1. What is the complete teaching on being added to Christ, to be saved, etc.

2. Have to consider the pattern, **Hebrews 8.5**. See the conversions in the Book of Acts.

**H) Let the plain explain the difficult passages**

1. In other words, let the Bible be its own commentary.

2. While doing that, seek to harmonize and not cause contradictions, **1 Corinthians 14.33.**

3. Do not take a passage that is figurative and make it literal, **Revelation 20; and 1 Corinthians 15.24-28** both deal with the same subject.

**I) Walk by faith and not by sight, 2 Corinthians 5.7.**

1. This encompasses what we have been saying.

2. To misunderstand the Bible is be wrong. Our soul is worth too much to take chances with it. We want to be right with God.

Conclusion: Sincerity is not enough**, Matthew 7.21ff.** We must truthfully discern the will of God and then do it. **Isaiah 40.8**