



First and foremost, **all Bible study should be prefaced by prayer:**

Prayer is the **breath of the soul**. It is the **secret of spiritual power**. No other means of grace can be substituted, and the **health of the soul** be preserved. Prayer brings the heart into immediate contact with the Well-spring of life, and **strengthens the sinew and muscle** of the religious experience. Neglect **the exercise of prayer**, or engage in prayer spasmodically, now and then, as seems convenient, and you lose your hold on God. The spiritual faculties lose their vitality, the religious experience lacks health and vigor. – {GW 254.4}

The darkness of the evil one encloses those who neglect to pray. The whispered temptations of the enemy entice them to sin; and it is all because they do not make use of the privileges that God has given them in the divine appointment of prayer. Why should the sons and daughters of God be reluctant to pray, when prayer is the key in the hand of faith to unlock heaven's storehouse, where are treasured the boundless resources of Omnipotence? Without unceasing prayer and diligent watching we are in danger of growing careless and of deviating from the right path. The adversary seeks continually to obstruct the way to the mercy seat, that we may not by earnest supplication and faith obtain grace and power to resist temptation. – {SC 94.2}

### **Who were the Bereans?**

Acts 17:10-11

10 And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto **Berea**: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11 **These were more noble** than those in Thessalonica, in that **they received the word** with all readiness of mind, and **searched the scriptures daily**, whether those things were so.

### **Why were they searching the scriptures daily?**

“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: **the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life**” (John 6:57, 63). Christ is not here referring to His doctrine, but to His person, the divinity of His character. - 1SM 249.3

John 6:57-58

57 Just as the living Father sent Me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on Me will live because of Me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven; it is not like the manna your fathers ate — and they died. **The one who eats this bread will live forever.**

Philippians 2:12

12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, **work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.**

### **Berean Study Technique**

An *Inductive Bible Study Format*

**Inductive:** means evidence collected from what was within the given text, a close investigation of scripture.

It is **not** the same as a **deductive study**, which is where presuppositions are made, which are assumptions made before the investigation of the scripture begins, leading to intuition bias.

## 1. Observation of the Scripture/Text

### A. *What does it say?*

- a. Terms: specific definition of each word used in original language
- b. Structure/Preposition: relationship of sentence parts
- c. Type/Genre: Gospel, Sermon, Biography, Law, Prophecy, Parable
- d. Context/Atmosphere: Perspective, mind of the writer, what was going on in that time, what is being said between the lines?

## 2. Interpretation

### A. *What does it mean?*

- a. Asking questions (Luke 2:46, Matt 13:10-13) leads to discovery (John 5:39, COL 113.3, Ed 189.3-189.4)
- b. We must transition from reading the Bible for Information to reading the Bible for Understanding, this causes a shift from knowing statements of fact to understanding important biblical insights, which causes a transition from knowing the what to understanding the why.
- c. This allows us to then form a hypothesis about the text, in other words, you have to propose answers based on your observations to go any deeper.
- d. Then you can test your hypothesis (Isaiah 28:10,13) - it must hold up to the evidence!
- e. Finally you draw conclusions based on the gathered evidence from observation and testing of your hypothesis through the use of hermeneutics.
  1. Hermeneutics: having a knowledge of how to rightly interpret the Bible
    - A. Miller's Rules of Interpretation
      - a. Isaiah 28:9-10: 9 Who is he trying to teach? Who is he trying to instruct? Infants just weaned from milk? Babies removed from the breast? 10 For he says: "Law after law, law after law, line after line, line after line, a little here, a little there."

## 3. Application

### A. *What must I do?*

#### a. **Conviction/Surrender**

1. Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wants to come with Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me.
2. Acts 2:37 When they heard this, they came under deep conviction and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles: "Brothers, what must we do?"

#### b. **Maturity**

1. Jeremiah 12:5 If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?
2. 1 Corinthians 3:2 I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.
3. Hebrews 5:12-14, 12 Although by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the basic principles of God's revelation again. You need milk, not solid food. 13 Now everyone who lives on milk is inexperienced with the message about righteousness, because he is an infant. 14 But solid food is for the mature — for those whose senses have been trained to distinguish between good and evil.

#### c. **Discernment**

1. Isaiah 5:20 Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness, who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.
  - A. The track of truth lies close beside the track of error, and both tracks may seem to be one to minds which are not worked by the Holy Spirit, and which, therefore, are not quick to discern the difference between truth and error. — {1SM 202.2}

2. Revelation 3:18 I advise you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire so that you may be rich, white clothes so that you may be dressed and your shameful nakedness not be exposed, and ointment to spread on your eyes so that you may see.
  - A. Eye-salve bought and applied... "they (Laodicea) are fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives" (Pk 588)
  - B. Gold tried in the fire bought and applied... "Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them, but Jesus will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire." (Pk 589)
  - C. White raiment bought and applied... "As the people plead for purity of heart, the command is given, take away their filthy garments and give them a change of raiment. . ." (Pk 591)

### **Dealing with different kinds of Assumptions**

- Matthew 15:9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

Satan has wrought with deceiving power, bringing in a multiplicity of errors that obscure the truth. Error cannot stand alone, and would soon become extinct if it did not fasten itself like a parasite upon the tree of truth. Error draws its life from the truth of God. The traditions of men, like floating germs, attach themselves to the truth of God, and men regard them as a part of the truth. Through false doctrines, Satan gains a foothold, and captivates the minds of men, causing them to hold theories that have no foundation in truth. Men boldly teach for doctrines the commandments of men; and as traditions pass on from age to age, they acquire a power over the human mind. But age does not make error truth, neither does its burdensome weight cause the plant of truth to become a parasite. The tree of truth bears its own genuine fruit, showing its true origin and nature. The parasite of error also bears its own fruit, and makes manifest that its character is diverse from the plant of heavenly origin. – {RH October 22, 1895 Par. 3}

- Mark 7:6-7, 6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. 7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

### **Commonly encountered unaccounted biases:**

#### *1. Holding to prior teachings*

- Matthew 16:6 Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.
- Galatians 5:7-9, 7 You were running well. Who prevented you from obeying the truth? 8 This persuasion did not come from the One who called you. 9 A little yeast leavens the whole lump of dough.

#### *2. Prevailing Opinion*

- 1 Timothy 4:1-2, 1 Now the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will depart from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and the teachings of demons, 2 through the hypocrisy of liars whose consciences are seared.
- 1 Thessalonians 3:2-3, 2 And we sent Timothy, our brother and God's coworker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you concerning your faith, 3 so that no one will be shaken by these persecutions. For you yourselves know that we are appointed to this.
- 2 Timothy 3:7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

- Every human being, created in the image of God, is endowed with a power akin to that of the Creator—individuality, power to think and to do. The men in whom this power is developed are the men who bear responsibilities, who are leaders in enterprise, and who influence character. It is the work of true education to develop this power, to train the youth to be thinkers, and not mere reflectors of other men's thought. Instead of confining their study to that which men have said or written, let students be directed to the sources of truth, to the vast fields opened for research in nature and revelation. Let them contemplate the great facts of duty and destiny, and the mind will expand and strengthen. Instead of educated weaklings, institutions of learning may send forth men strong to think and to act, men who are masters and not slaves of circumstances, men who possess breadth of mind, clearness of thought, and the courage of their convictions. – {Ed 17.2}
- Such an education provides more than mental discipline; it provides more than physical training. It strengthens the character, so that truth and uprightness are not sacrificed to selfish desire or worldly ambition. It fortifies the mind against evil. Instead of some master passion becoming a power to destroy, every motive and desire are brought into conformity to the great principles of right. As the perfection of His character is dwelt upon, the mind is renewed, and the soul is re-created in the image of God. – {Ed 18.1}

### 3. *Uninformed Opinions*

- Romans 1:22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,
- Proverbs 14:3 In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.

### 4. *Pride*

- Psalms 10:4 The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.
- Proverbs 16:18 Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.
- 1 John 2:15-16, 15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.
- Obadiah 1:3 The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?

### 5. *Presumption*

- 2 Peter 2:10-12, 10 But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities. 11 Whereas angels, which are greater in power and might, bring not railing accusation against them before the Lord. 12 But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption;
- Deuteronomy 18:20 But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.
- Numbers 15:30-31, 30 But the soul that doeth ought presumptuously, whether he be born in the

land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. 31 Because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall utterly be cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him.

## 6. *Traditions and Customs*

- Matthew 15:3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?
- Ezekiel 33:31 And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.
- Jeremiah 10:2-3, 2 Thus saith the Lord, Learn not the way of the heathen, and be not dismayed at the signs of heaven; for the heathen are dismayed at them. 3 For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe.

## 7. *Be Not Deceived*

- 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 9 Don't you know that the unrighteous will not inherit God's kingdom? Do not be deceived: No sexually immoral people, idolaters, adulterers, or anyone practicing homosexuality, 10 no thieves, greedy people, drunkards, verbally abusive people, or swindlers will inherit God's kingdom. 11 And some of you used to be like this. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.
- 1 Corinthians 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals."
- Galatians 6:7 Don't be deceived: God is not mocked. For whatever a man sows he will also reap,
- Luke 21:8 And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.
- 2 Timothy 3:13 Evil people and impostors will become worse, deceiving and being deceived

### **Why do these things happen?**

- Matthew 15:8 "...because their heart is far from me."
- John 6:64-67, 64 But there are some among you who don't believe." (For Jesus knew from the beginning those who would not believe and the one who would betray Him.) 65 He said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to Me unless it is granted to him by the Father." 66 From that moment many of His disciples turned back and no longer accompanied Him. 67 Therefore Jesus said to the Twelve, "You don't want to go away too, do you?"



