

The Rules of Effective Bible Study

How can the Bible be the world's all-time best seller, yet remain the most misunderstood book ever? Because people refuse to believe that it means what it says, it is misrepresented, twisted, and maligned. If your mind is opened to the truth, apply these simple, basic rules to understand God's Word!

MOST WHO STUDY the Bible benefit little—or not at all. Often, they become confused, discouraged and give up, saying, “I just can't understand.”

If this is you, it need not continue.

Did you know there are fundamental—basic—rules that govern proper Bible study?

There are! And most ignore, misunderstand or know nothing of them. Yet, when properly applied, these rules unlock the treasures of doctrine, instruction, knowledge, prophecy—and more—contained in God's Word.

Here they are!

Many Are Ignorant

Thirty years ago, a newspaper reporter exposed Christians' ignorance of the Bible. Since then, such ignorance has worsened. It now includes many of the scattered brethren of the Church of God who once diligently studied their Bibles.

The account begins, “Some months ago, a Protestant pastor administered a Bible quiz to the members of his congregation. The questions were very simple. Anyone with a general knowledge of the Bible should have been able to answer all of them easily.

“The results staggered the pastor.

“Only five percent of his flock made a commendable grade on the test. Fifteen percent failed to give a single correct answer. Sixty percent were unable to name the four Gospels. Seventy-five percent could not identify Calvary (Golgotha) as the place where Jesus was crucified.

“Some congregations might do better than that,” continued the reporter, “but not many. The vast majority of Americans today are Bible illiterates. They simply have never read the book which they profess to regard as the ‘Word of God.’”

The reporter concluded, “A great many people have turned away from the Bible because when they do try to read it, they find they cannot understand it... To the modern reader, it has a remote and antiquarian flavor. It is likely to leave him with the impression the Bible is an ancient history book that has no real relevance to his life here and now” (Louis Cassels, UPI Special Correspondent on religious affairs).

Another quote sheds light on how society considers Biblical knowledge irrelevant. J.B. Phillips, author of the Phillips translation (*The New Testament in Modern English*), reported in his booklet, *The Young Church in Action*, “It is one of the curious phenomena of modern times that it is considered perfectly respectable to be abysmally ignorant of the Christian faith. Men and women who would be deeply ashamed of having their ignorance exposed in matters of poetry, music, or painting, for example, are not in the least perturbed to be found ignorant of the New Testament” (p. 6).

A Christian should solidify his basic understanding of the Bible. Rather than smugly comparing himself with people of the world, he should consider his own need to “...strengthen the things which remain” (Rev. 3:2).

No one should feel secure at their level of understanding—neither could anyone justify such a position in this struggle to grow and overcome.

All in God's Church need to examine themselves and make their Bible study more productive—more edifying. With this in mind, let's review the basic rules of Bible study.

Rule #1: Ask God for Guidance

Before beginning your Bible study, ask God to open your mind to better understand the Bible's spiritual principles.

Also pray for guidance and wisdom as to *what* to study. Then focus on a particular topic, book or chapter. As God opens your understanding, what is confusing to the world becomes interesting and exciting to you.

Review what King David recorded in Psalms 119:33-40. Carefully digest each verse and each word of this passage. We must all come to view God's Word in this light.

Asking for and receiving understanding from God is no small thing. Many scholars and men of great intelligence have mastered the Hebrew and Greek languages, and spent their lives translating and analyzing each verse of the Bible—yet they do not get its message.

One such individual was James Moffatt. He translated a commendable version of the Bible. Yet the message went completely over his head. He made the truth of God much more clear, but he—along with the whole world—remained blinded to its meaning.

Even in the preface to the revised and final edition of Moffatt's *The Bible, A New Translation*, he made the following comments: "This is great literature and great religious literature, this collection of ancient writings which we call the Bible, and any translator has a deep sense of responsibility as he undertakes to transmit it to modern readers." Here was an individual of great intelligence. Yet without God's Spirit and guidance, he considered the Bible mere literature.

Adam Clarke, writer of the famous six-volume commentary of the entire Bible, also did not get the message. Some of the Pharisees were individuals of great intellect who studied Scripture for endless hours—yet all in vain. If these and other such men of great intellect failed to get the message, we should never assume that we could study the Bible and, on our own, automatically understand it.

Only by asking God to open our minds can we understand the Bible—receive the message within. If we think we no longer need to *ask* for His guidance, then our understanding will diminish—unless we wake up and realize that true understanding comes from God.

Rule #2: Study the Bible for Correction

The second rule is closely related to the first. It should also be part of the prayer for guidance and understanding. Sincerely petition God to correct you through your Bible study.

The Bible shows us when and where we err and what to do about it—the diagnosis along with the prescription—free of charge.

Notice II Timothy 3:16-17: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for *doctrine*, for *reproof*, for *CORRECTION*, for *instruction in righteousness*: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

A key scripture on the subject of correction that we should read often is Jeremiah 10:23-24: "O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walks to direct his steps. O LORD, CORRECT ME, but with judgment; not in your anger, lest you bring me to nothing."

Of course, this article, along with other articles and sermons, admonishes us to seek correction from God's Word. But that desire must ultimately come from within.

You must earnestly seek and desire for God to straighten your path. Once again, this request for correction should be part of the prayer before Bible study.

Read Isaiah 66:1-2: "Thus says the LORD, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool: where is the house that you build unto Me? And where is the place of My rest? For all those things has Mine hand made, and all those things have been, says the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembles at My word."

Humility and trembling at God's Word go hand-in-hand with the attitude of seeking correction from His Word. Remember: We should concentrate on correcting ourselves, not others (Matt. 7:3-5).

Rule #3: "Prove All Things"

The word *prove* means to "put to the test." Scientists and design engineers prove their finished products by testing them. Read I Thessalonians 5:21: "*Prove* all things; hold fast that which is good."

The first thing that should be proven is the existence of the Creator God. The fallacy of evolution, which attempts to explain away the existence of an all-powerful Creator, has made it difficult for some to completely dismiss lingering doubts. There exists an abundance of well-written literature proving that creation is the only explanation for the existence of life and the universe. One example is our own booklet *Does God Exist?*

Creation must be proven by everyone in the Church of God. Through the careful reading of that literature, one will see it proven—and effectively will have proven it to himself—by weighing the overwhelming evidence now available.

God commands us to prove Him and His tithing laws: "Bring you all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, says the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing,

that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Mal. 3:10).

This is an excellent example of putting something to the test. Many have done this and have discovered that God definitely keeps His part of the bargain.

Finally, consider the example of the Bereans in Acts 17:11: "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."

The Bereans were searching to prove that Paul was right. Their attitude was not one of anger and bitterness, but one of proving the truth. This is consistent with I Corinthians 13:6-7, which shows that love "rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the TRUTH; bears all things, believes all things [in God's Word], hopes all things, endures all things."

To prove all things means to get to the truth of the matter—and to accept that truth with positive assurance. This is the foundation of hope and endurance.

Rule #4: God's Word Never Contradicts Itself

Most theologians and Bible critics believe that the Bible started from "primitive and child-like origins." They say that it "contradicts itself." There are others who say that the Bible is not to be taken literally.

Ironically, these observations are made by professing Christians. Such statements expose the ignorance of the Bible found in minds lacking God's Holy Spirit.

What does the Bible reveal about God's consistency and rationality? "For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed" (Mal. 3:6). Also see Hebrews 13:8: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." We can trust in these sound statements. The proofs of archeology and fulfilled prophecy merely add to the already overwhelming evidence of the Bible's consistency.

One such "contradiction" is Proverbs 26:4-5: "*Answer not a fool* according to his folly, lest you also be like unto him. *Answer a fool* according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit."

These verses are often cited to prove that the Bible contradicts itself. But after

examining them, we will see that this is not true. These verses contain great wisdom.

The two principles stated above are complementary, not contradictory. The principle to use in any given situation would depend upon the circumstances.

Verse 4 states, “Answer NOT a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like unto him.”

This verse explains that we are not to degrade ourselves by petty bickering and arguing. We are not to debate with someone who is obviously trying to stir up contention.

The example cited for this reaction was Luke 20:1-8. As Christ was teaching in the temple, the chief priest, elders and scribes came to Him, “And spoke unto Him, saying, Tell us, by what authority do You these things? Or who is He that gave You this authority?”

The temple authorities were not seeking advice or understanding from Christ. They sought a response that could amount to Christ condemning Himself.

Verses 3 through 8 show the dilemma that Christ presented to them by answering their question with a question: “And He answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer Me: The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; He will say, Why then believed you him not? But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet. And they answered, that they could not tell whence it was. And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.”

Had Christ answered them in any other way, a “war of words” would have taken place. But Christ saw their motive and did not stoop to their level. His question stopped them cold—as He knew it would. Thus, He avoided needless strife by not answering the foolish authorities according to their folly.

Now notice Proverbs 26:5: “Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.” In this case, one should answer according to the folly in which the question was presented. Not to answer the challenge will cause the questioner to feel he has prevailed.

A good example of this was Paul’s reaction to the Corinthians, who were being led astray by false apostles.

This was *not* a time for silence. Notice Paul’s answer in II Corinthians 11:23-27: “Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.”

Paul made his point. These false teachers were inclined to boast. But Paul’s credentials and sacrifices overwhelmed their puny claims.

Proverbs 26:4 and 5 do not contradict each other. Rather, there is much wisdom contained in these verses—wisdom we should employ in our daily lives.

Rule #5: Find Out What the Bible Really Says

Applying this rule of Bible study often resolves misunderstandings. Many misconceptions result because the world is blind to the plain truth of God’s Word. For example, professing Christianity universally teaches that Christ used parables to make His meaning clearer for the “simple minds” of the first century. Not so! “Simplemindedness” was not limited to the first century—there is an abundance of it today.

Why *did* Christ speak in parables? The Bible says, “And the disciples came, and said unto Him, Why speak You unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given” (Matt. 13:10-11). Why can’t the world understand this?

Spiritual blindness!

Christ continues, “For whosoever has, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever

has not, from him shall be taken away even that he has. Therefore speak I to them in parables: *because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not*, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, By hearing you shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing you shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them” (vs. 12-15).

Verses 16-17 refer only to Christ’s disciples and His Church—not to the world or churchianity: “But blessed are *your* eyes, for they see: and *your* ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which *you* see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which *you* hear, and have not heard them.”

Most of the world cannot be faulted for their blindness. Their opportunity for salvation will come when God calls them at a later time. The fact that blindness has been lifted from our eyes should humble us. It is the only reason that we can now understand the Bible.

Notice Luke 17:20-21: “...The kingdom of God comes not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! For, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.” To say that God’s kingdom is within people goes against many detailed prophecies in the Bible. Why this *apparent* contradiction?

First of all, the word “within” occurs only in the King James Version. The next rule helps solve this dilemma.

Rule #6: Examine the Context

Context simply means “with text.” Checking the context involves reading the text before and after the issue in question. In order to answer the questions pertaining to Luke 17:21, we need to determine to whom Christ was speaking.

Verse 20: “And when He was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, He answered them and said, The kingdom of God comes not with observation.”

Christ was speaking to the Pharisees. Obviously, the kingdom of God did not reside within these carnal, hostile Pharisees. This, together with the fact that only the KJV used the word “within” in this verse, tells us that “within” is not the correct translation. Most translations use the term “among.” Christ was telling the Pharisees that He was the Representative of the kingdom of God that was temporarily “among” them.

Understanding the *context* is vital to understanding the *meaning* of scriptures. Context points to the intent of the scripture in question. It answers what, who, when, where, why and how.

It is careless to read scriptures out of context, because there are statements in the Bible such as “You shall not surely die” (Gen. 3:4). In order to determine whether this is true, the context must be read. In this case, Satan the devil is deceiving Eve. Checking the entire context of this verse takes us back to Genesis 2:17, where God told Adam, “But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it: for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die.”

False teachers deceive people who do not investigate such deceptive practices, like taking verses out of context and misapplying their meaning. One of the many benefits of taking verses in proper context is building up resistance against deception.

Rule #7: “Here a little, there a little”

No single scripture can be used to establish doctrine. We must take all the scriptures on a given subject and weigh them in order to grasp the overall doctrine. There is great value in gathering all the scriptures on a single subject, as we are instructed to do in Isaiah 28.

We previously mentioned that renowned scholars such as James Moffatt and Adam Clark could study the Bible for a lifetime and still not understand the truth. Those called to the truth realize that, without God’s Spirit leading them, the door to scriptural understanding is shut.

We also covered how Christ used parables to hide the real meaning from the world. This principle applies to understanding of the entire Bible.

The Bible is written in a way that defies understanding on the physical level. With this in mind, read Isaiah 28:9-10: “Whom shall He teach knowledge? And whom shall He make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; *line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.*”

We must diligently examine verses throughout the Bible to gain knowledge and understand doctrine. This requires being led by God’s Spirit.

Continue in Isaiah 28: “For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. To whom He said, This is the rest wherewith you may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear” (vs. 11-12). These verses show an intentional hiding of the meaning (as if it were a foreign language). But they also show a *willful rejection* of the truth: “they would not hear.”

Verse 13 continues, “But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; *that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.*”

Again, we see the unmistakable *hiding* of the meaning.

The next example shows the need to draw from precept upon precept and line upon line. It shows that verses people call contradictory actually supplement each other. This is the case with what was written on the stake where Christ was crucified.

Let’s read four different verses that critics say are contradictions. We will find them to be otherwise.

Matthew 27:37: “And set up over His head His accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.”

Mark 15:26: “And the superscription of His accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.”

Luke 23:38: “And a superscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.”

John 19:19: “And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.”

Together, these verses show that Pilate did the writing, and that three versions were written in three different languages.

These four contributions from four different authors give us a complete account of what was written. Rather than these four scriptures contradicting each other, as we assemble the “precept upon precept and line upon line,” we can see the full picture.

By comparing the four gospels, one can see how these accounts work in harmony to present a complete understanding.

Rule #8: The Bible Interprets Itself

During Herbert W. Armstrong’s ministry, many people said they admired his interpretation of the Bible or of prophecy. But he would adamantly respond that he had no private interpretation, but always let the Bible interpret itself.

Consider one example where men have blatantly misinterpreted the plain meaning of the Bible—the title of the book of Revelation.

Worldly Christians believe that the book of Revelation was “The Revelation of Saint John the Divine.” However, the *real* title is found in the first verse of the text.

Revelation 1:1 states, “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John.”

So, the real title is “The Revelation of Jesus Christ.” It originated from God the Father and was given to Jesus Christ. Then Christ signified it by His angel, who revealed it to John. Men credit John, ignoring God and Christ—typical of interpretations by false Christians.

Note two types of symbols used in the first chapter of Revelation. One is mentioned in verse 12, where John saw seven golden candlesticks. In verse 16, he saw seven stars in the hand of the Son of Man.

How can we understand their meaning? By continuing to read within the context. Notice the explanation found in verse 20: “The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven

churches: and the seven candlesticks which you saw are the seven churches.” The Bible has interpreted itself!

Another good example of letting the Bible interpret itself is found in Revelation 17. Verse 1 states, “And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come here; I will show unto you the judgment of the great whore that sits upon *many waters*.”

What does the Bible mean by the term “many waters”? Is this talking about some woman “sailing the seven seas”? Is it the *Queen Mary* on a round-the-world voyage? Or is it, as many conclude, “something you just can’t know”?

However if we read on, fourteen verses later, the term “many waters” is explained: “And he said unto me, The waters which you saw, where the whore sits, are *peoples*, and *multitudes*, and *nations*, and *tongues*” (vs. 15).

In this case, the term is not *immediately* explained. But it is explained later in the chapter.

Again, the Bible interpreted itself!

Rule #9: Start with Clear Scriptures

The ninth rule of Bible study is: Never attempt to establish doctrine by unclear scriptures.

An example of a vague scripture is found in Acts 10, where the Apostle Peter was being taught a principle from God. It is incredible how the world has twisted and perverted this scripture. At first, the meaning is ambiguous, but later becomes unmistakably clear: “And the voice spoke unto him again the second time, What God has cleansed, that call not you common” (vs. 15).

Many “Christians” presume that this verse permits them to eat unclean animals that are supposedly, now and forever, “cleansed.” Some people specialize in quoting and creatively interpreting vague scriptures. They do this because it gives them room to speculate and invent new doctrines.

Peter did not understand the meaning of this vision until later. Acts 10:28 states, “And he said unto them, You know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation; *but*

God has shown me that I should not call any MAN common or unclean.”

Of and by itself, this vision would not be of value in establishing sound doctrine. Only after reading the full account does its real meaning become apparent—that Peter was speaking of men, not unclean animals.

Rule #10: Use More Than One Translation

There are advantages to using two or more Bible translations. Although the King James Version is a reliable translation, a few things are difficult to understand, because the translation is almost 400 years old.

These can be clarified by using a more modern translation, such as the New King James Version. The original KJV does offer a particular advantage—words supplied by the translators are italicized. This helps the reader to discern between translated words and implied words. Because some italicized words can be in error, caution is needed.

The Moffatt is a good study translation, because it is directly translated from the original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts—not Latin transcriptions. Some modern translations are so watered down by liberal interpretations that it is best to avoid them except for a rare comparison. The New International Version is one of the most notorious liberal versions, which accommodate liberal modern theology.

One particular verse found only in the KJV is I John 5:7. It is not found in any older Greek manuscripts. It was most likely added by a monk scribe who injected the theology of the counterfeit church during the middle Ages.

It states, “For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.” This heretical verse was injected to promote the false doctrine of the trinity—in spite of the fact that Revelation 22:18-19 gives a dire warning to any who would add to or take away from that book or Scripture in general.

Anytime you come to a questionable or vague scripture, cross-referencing other translations usually clears up questions.

Deletions of scriptures by scribes and monks also occurred during the Middle

Ages. Those individuals are subject to the punishment recorded in Revelation 22:18-19.

An example of this would be Matthew 27:49. Part of the verse was deleted in order to promote the false idea that Christ “died of a broken heart.” In the KJV, Matthew 27:49 states, “The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elijah will come to save Him.” Yet, in the Moffatt, this same verse states, “But the others said, ‘Stop, let us see if Elijah does come to save Him!’ (Seizing a lance, another pricked His side, and out came water and blood.)”

The parenthetical expression in verse 49 was left out of the KJV, but appears in the Moffatt and all other translations that reference the older Greek manuscripts. This shows exactly how Christ died. Again, consulting two or more translations usually solves such problems. Referencing multiple translations is an effective way to get to the truth of the matter. Remaining questions can usually be answered by referencing Bible helps.

Bible dictionaries and *Strong’s Concordance* are among the best tools available to find the original meaning of words.

One must carefully distinguish words whose meanings have changed over the years. One example would be the word translated as “conversation.” It means “conduct” in modern usage. Bible dictionaries help with these kinds of issues.

Rule #11: Do Not Use Bible Helps to Establish Doctrine

Some of the more well-known and helpful reference works include *Clarke’s Commentary*, *Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary* and *Halley’s Bible Handbook*. These and other Bible helps can be of value in increasing one’s understanding.

Other useful helps are the margin references in some bibles and helps at the end of certain other bibles. Be cautious in using these helps, because much of the information is misleading. The scholars who wrote them lacked God’s Spirit. Therefore, error is inevitable.

These works can help to supplement our understanding of historical and

grammatical details. But they should *never* be relied upon to establish doctrine. We are not to lean upon *their* interpretation of the Bible.

Most of these scholars echo the doctrines of false Christianity. An example is their distorted interpretation of the meaning of the Lord's day, referenced in Revelation 1:10: "I was in the Spirit on the *Lord's day*, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet."

These scholars almost unanimously believe that the Lord's day means Sunday. Those with any knowledge of the truth recognize that this could only mean the coming prophesied Day of God's wrath, the Day of the Lord, covered in detail in Revelation. Other references to this unmistakable term are found in Joel 2:31, Amos 5:18 and Zephaniah 1:14-16.

Remember, reference works are ideal for filling in technical details of Scripture, but never for interpreting the meaning or to establish doctrine.

Rule #12: Make Notes in Your Bible

Many believe that the Bible is to be treated with reverence and should never be marked in. Only the message con-

tained within should be revered. The paper, ink, and leather that make up the physical Bible are not holy. What *is* holy about the Bible is the truth it contains—the words of spiritual instruction.

Making notations in your Bible helps amplify and reinforce God's message, and is acceptable to Him.

The information contained in the Bible is priceless. How we react to those words is God's primary focus—not how reverently we treat the paper and ink.

Wide-margin bibles are ideal for inserting valuable notes. These notes can come from sermons, Church Bible studies, technical details from reference works and many other sources.

It is satisfying to open the Bible to a difficult scripture and understand it by looking at your notes.

If you have neglected this, now is a good time to get back into it. Some who have been in the Church for awhile mistakenly assume that they have already heard it all. The turbulence of these last days makes it necessary to understand prophecy as it is being fulfilled.

Excitement about the truth should become more contagious as the sense

of urgency keeps pace with accelerating events.

Remember that our understanding is never complete. The "old" established truths are still being taught by The Restored Church of God. Certain prophetic understandings that were not as apparent before the prophesied apostasy are now significantly more obvious.

Marking the Bible helps us internalize the precious truth that so many have taken for granted.

It may also be helpful to set aside special Bible studies to review your personal margin notes. You may find that many notes were incomplete and find others that need expanding. Besides providing an excellent review, this exercise should help you make more effective margin notes in the future.

Bible Study is Rewarding

By diligently applying these basic rules, you will find that personal Bible study is far more interesting and challenging. When you find it more difficult to break off rather than to get started, you can safely say that your Bible study has become exciting and rewarding—as God would have it! □

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