



THEOLOGY ESSENTIALS

“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers, but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither.”

~ Psalm 1:1-3 ~



KNOWING

SCRIPTURE



THEOLOGY ESSENTIALS



Recap - Why Study the Bible?

- The Church has a problem... negligence in studying the Bible
- We lack motivation
- We need the Bible! It is food for the soul!
- “continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed”
2 Timothy 3:14-17



Chapter 1 - Why Study the Bible?

- Some say:
 - Doctrines are not necessary... Well, doctrines are the way to grow in the faith, and they come from Scripture. “Can’t do what you don’t know. Can’t live out the faith if you don’t know how to live out the faith.”
 - Theology does not matter... Well, if you don’t know God you can’t know how to love him (as he defines how to love him) and obey him. Both are told in the Scriptures.
 - Just learn to love everybody... Well, only way to truly love anyone is to love them with the truth, which is only found in the Scriptures.
 - Know Jesus and know peace... Well, only way to know Jesus to know him through the Word (He is the Word), and in that you will know peace.



Chapter 1 - Why Study the Bible?

- The Sensuous Christian
 - Lives by their senses (feelings), rather than by their understanding.
 - It feels right, not it IS right.
 - Don't need to study the Bible. They experience God. They equate childlike-faith to ignorance. Well, Romans 11:25; 1:13; 1 Thess 4:13... and others (Apostle Paul says, "I don't want you ignorant, unaware, uniformed")
 - Our feelings should not dictate what we do. What we do should dictate our feelings.
 - Quote p31-33



Chapter 1 - Why Study the Bible?

- The Mature Christian
 - “Inner feelings” are not the test of truth, Scripture is... **ALWAYS**
 - John 16:33
 - Happiness = obedience to God (which is found in His Word)
 - “Cannot love what you do not know.”
 - Your head feeds your heart. Your heart directs what you do.



Chapter 1 - Why Study the Bible?

**True happiness comes
from knowledge of God
in His Word.**



Chapter 2 - Personal Bible Study and Private Interpretation

- Martin Luther
 - Principle of private interpretation
 - Bible translation into common, local language
- An absolute truth: The Scriptures never err
- Who interprets, expounds, and declares the meaning of Scripture?
- Unbridled interpretation? No



Chapter 2 - Personal Bible Study and Private Interpretation

- May a person interpret Scripture in a whimsical, capricious manner with no restraint?... No
- Must have sound principles for bible interpretation!
- A lot of well meaning persecution against those who translated the Bible
- Distorting the Scriptures is a big deal!
- Luther convinced of the clarity of Scripture



Chapter 2 - Personal Bible Study and Private Interpretation

- Modern evangelism ignores proper interpretation principles
 - “God has a wonderful plan for your life...”
 - “God can change your life... He can make it better...”
- Results are radical subjectivism
- Second Helvetic Confession, 1566:
“We do not despise the interpretations of the holy Greek and Latin fathers, nor reject their disputations and treatises as far as they agree with the Scriptures; but we do modestly dissent from them when they are found to set down thing differing from, or altogether contrary to, the Scriptures.”



Chapter 2 - Personal Bible Study and Private Interpretation

**Private interpretation comes
with sober responsibility of
accurate interpretation.**



Chapter 2 - Personal Bible Study and Private Interpretation

- Subjectivism is a great evil in bible interpretation!
 - No one has the right to insert their own meaning into Scripture
 - What we want to read in a passage is not ok for us or anybody
 - “What’s good for you is good for you... what’s good for me is good for me...”
- We need objectivity



Chapter 2 - Personal Bible Study and Private Interpretation

- Objective: based on facts rather than feelings or opinions: not influenced by feelings
- Subjective: Based on feelings or opinions rather than facts
- “I think that we should be open and honest about how we approach the New Testament. In the final analysis we all read what we want to read in it, and that’s all right.” (Unnamed New Testament scholar)
- Exegesis or Eisegesis?
 - Exegesis: objective analysis of Scripture (follow the text, respects grammar, context and author’s intent; “What is there”)
 - Eisegesis: subjective reading (insert own ideas into the text, wrong emphasis of text text, “What I think might be there”)



Chapter 2 - Personal Bible Study and Private Interpretation

- Scripture has one correct meaning, may have numerous personal applications
- We ask, “What does the text mean?” NOT “What does the text mean to me?”
- Goals of Bible Interpretation:
 - Find the object meaning of the passage
 - Avoid distortions and subjective eisegesis
 - Humble, objective study where I am teachable and corrected by Scripture
 - Not private view but God’s view!



Chapter 2 - Personal Bible Study and Private Interpretation

- Applying these principles to:
 - Personal study
 - Home study
 - Small group study
- Under the authority of the elders, to be in line with Scripture and order and unity in the church
- Teachers must have sound knowledge and hearts for the Word of God, James 3:1



Chapter 2 - Personal Bible Study and Private Interpretation

Questions ???