

## **Faulty Approaches To Bible Study**

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July / August 2018

Many people read the Bible to no profit. Some read Scripture without expecting to understand it. They labor under the impression that the Bible is great mystery that cannot be understood. All their reading is from a sense of duty but produces nothing of value.

Some approach the Bible as a mystical document, filled with secrets and hidden meanings. If it is to be understood at all, one must have illumination from the Holy Spirit. Such students either wait until the Spirit reveals something to them, or else they read without expecting to fathom it unless God should choose to lay it on their heart. They tend to confuse their dreams, their wants, or their ideas with the voice of God. We see this demonstrated in the wild speculations of the many teachers who claim they have discovered hidden prophecies in the Bible.

Some mistakenly think that the correct meaning of any particular scripture is the impression they have at the moment they are reading God's Word. We call this the subjective approach. The problem is, every subjective reader will arrive at different conclusions with each thinking his is the correct understanding. They fail to understand that the Bible is an objective standard with one meaning for all who properly read and understand it.

Some read the Bible looking for verses that seem to verify the beliefs and convictions they already hold. To them, the Bible is used to validate and prove what they assume to be true. It is not to learn God's Word or His will, but to back up their own word that they study. Others read the Bible hoping to discover some fact or scrap of information that no one else has found or known. They have no real desire to understand the particular book, the chapter, nor the verse. They just want to find the oddity which they can then use to impress others.

Some read the Bible through lenses tinted by their race, culture, their political views, their religion, or their philosophy. One or more of these things taint their understanding and leaves them with a faulty view of God's Word and His will. Some attempt to understand a book, a chapter, or a verse without consideration of the context. The context involves such things as the general theme of the book or chapter and the specific purpose of the writer in the surrounding verses. There is the cultural context which involves such things as the period of time, nationality, the environment, the geographical setting, and the problems being discussed. Out of its proper context, a verse can easily be made to mean something other than what its author had in mind.

Some read the Bible to find some flaw or error by which the discredit it. Other read the Bible hoping to justify themselves or to find an excuse for their sins. Some fail to see the true meaning of a particular verse, because they are seeking to please men (Galatians 1:10). This is especially true of those verses that have to do with sin. Some misinterpret God's Word as they

seek to make a name for themselves. They thirst for recognition as the first or the only person to discover the hidden meaning of some verse.

Not every misunderstood verse poses a spiritual danger, but when we wrest vital truths and make them teach error rather than what God intended, we do so to our own destruction. Now that we have multiple citations to review of faulty or wrong approaches to bible study, how will you change your study habits?