

How to Study the Bible – Week 2 – A Command to Study – Bible Study Helps

Title: A Command to Study

Sermon Summary: In this introductory session of the Bible study series on how to study the Bible, the sermon establishes the urgent need for Christians to develop a personal, disciplined knowledge of Scripture rather than simply consuming Bible content through technology, social media, or other people's interpretations. Drawing from 2 Timothy 2:15 and the command to study and rightly divide the word of truth, the sermon emphasizes that the Bible is the living, powerful Word of God capable of creating, transforming, and saving lives. The sermon warns that the explosion of information in the digital age, including artificial intelligence, has created a generation that is ever learning but never arriving at the knowledge of the truth, echoing the prophecy of 2 Timothy 3:7. Four foundational principles are presented as the bedrock of Bible study: the Bible is not difficult to understand when believed, anyone can develop a working knowledge of the Bible, the Holy Spirit is the believer's ultimate teacher, and Bible study operates according to discoverable rules. The overarching call is for believers to take personal responsibility for studying the word of God, trusting the indwelling Holy Spirit over any technological substitute.

Key Points:

- The command in 2 Timothy 2:15 to study and rightly divide the word of God is a serious, active responsibility, not a passive one, and all modern Bible versions removing the word "study" from this verse dramatically weakens that command
- Failing to study the Bible and failing to teach the next generation how to study it produces catastrophic spiritual consequences, as illustrated by the generation described in Judges 2:10 that knew not the Lord
- The word of God possesses unique, living power: it created the universe, raised the dead, delivers salvation to souls, and will endure forever, making it worthy of devoted study and belief
- The current age fulfills the prophecies of 2 Timothy 3:1-7 and Daniel 12:4, with an unprecedented explosion of knowledge and information that has not produced greater understanding of truth but rather greater confusion
- The devil's strategy, first demonstrated in Genesis 3, is to question, contradict, and change the words of God, and this same strategy is at work through false teachers and misleading content today
- The Bible is not inherently difficult to understand; the difficulty arises when people refuse to believe every word as written
- Any believer, regardless of formal education, can develop a working knowledge of the Bible because God designed His Word for common people and the Holy Spirit serves as the personal teacher of every born-again believer

How to Study the Bible – Week 2 – A Command to Study – Bible Study Helps

- The Holy Spirit, not artificial intelligence or any other technology, is the irreplaceable guide into all truth for the Christian, and how much a believer learns depends solely on their responsiveness to the Spirit
- Bible study is governed by principles of proper interpretation, known academically as hermeneutics, and learning these principles protects believers from false doctrine rooted in Scripture taken out of context
- Technology can deliver information but cannot replace the Holy Spirit, produce obedience, or rightly divide the word of truth on a believer's behalf

Scripture Reference:

- 2 Timothy 2:15, the command to study and rightly divide the Word of truth, serves as the foundational text
- Judges 2:10-11, describing the generation that arose knowing not the Lord
- Psalm 33:6 and 9, declaring that God spoke creation into existence through His Word
- John 11:41-43, the raising of Lazarus by the spoken Word of Christ
- 1 Peter 1:22-23, describing the new birth as coming through the incorruptible Word of God
- Matthew 24:35, the promise that God's words will never pass away
- Amos 8:11, prophesying a famine of hearing the words of God
- 2 Timothy 3:1-7, describing the perilous last days and the condition of ever learning but never arriving at truth
- Daniel 12:1-4, prophesying the explosion of travel and knowledge at the time of the end
- 2 Corinthians 11:3 and 13-15, warning that Satan deceives through false ministers just as he deceived Eve
- Genesis 2:15-17, the command God gave Adam regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
- Genesis 3:1-5, Satan's questioning, contradicting, and changing of God's Word in the garden
- 1 Thessalonians 2:13, commending those who received the preached Word not as the word of men but as the Word of God
- Psalm 119:105 and 130, describing the Word as a lamp and light that gives understanding to the simple

How to Study the Bible – Week 2 – A Command to Study – Bible Study Helps

- John 14 and John 16, Jesus promising that the Holy Spirit would teach believers all things and guide them into all truth
- 1 Corinthians 2, describing the Holy Spirit's role in teaching and the believer's access to the mind of Christ
- 1 Corinthians 14:40, establishing that God is a God of order

Stories:

- The account of Satan tempting Eve in Genesis 3 is examined in detail as a case study in the devil's three-part strategy against the word of God: questioning it, contradicting it, and changing it, with the observation that Eve misquoted God's command when challenged, demonstrating the danger of not knowing Scripture precisely
- The raising of Lazarus in John 11 is referenced as a demonstration of the life-giving power of the spoken word of Christ
- The pastor shares a personal account of visiting a Christian bookstore shortly after his salvation in 1996 and standing before a wall of Bibles in different translations, recalling the lesson from Genesis 3 about Satan's subtle questioning of God's Word as a guide in that moment
- A story is told of a family leaving the church after the pastor taught through Jonah verse by verse, specifically over the conviction that Jonah died inside the whale, with the pastor defending the clear truth of the Bible by connecting it to Jesus Christ's own words about the sign of Jonah as a foreshadowing of His death, burial and resurrection
- A vacation Bible school incident is recounted in which a child insisted Jonah did not die because his picture Bible showed otherwise, illustrating how visual media shapes children's understanding of Scripture in ways that may actually contradict the word of God
- The pastor references a woman who visited the church on a recent Sunday and reported that her new pastor does not believe the Bible, leaving her without the word of God for seven months, used as an illustration of the importance of a pastor who believes and preaches the word of God
- A brief illustration is drawn from the men's breakfast and conversations with veterans to illustrate how a generation can take for granted what another generation sacrificed to secure, applied to the spiritual inheritance of biblical truth
- The pastor references the widespread rejection of Israel among professing Christians following recent Middle East conflict, attributing it to a lack of biblical knowledge about Romans 9 through 11 and the failure to rightly divide prophetic Scripture

How to Study the Bible – Week 2 – A Command to Study – Bible Study Helps

Discipleship Questions

In what ways have you personally experienced the Bible transforming your life, and how does that testimony strengthen your commitment to studying it more deeply?

The sermon warns that a generation can lose what another generation took for granted -- what specific biblical truths or convictions are you most concerned about passing on to the next generation, and what are you actively doing to ensure that transfer happens?

Considering that Satan's first recorded words in Genesis 3 were a question designed to make Eve doubt what God said, how do you guard yourself against subtle influences in your own life that cause you to question or reinterpret the clear meaning of Scripture?

The sermon draws a sharp distinction between consuming Bible content and actually studying the Bible -- in what ways might your current habits of listening to sermons, podcasts, or reading social media posts be substituting for personal Bible study rather than supplementing it?

Second Timothy 3 describes people who are ever learning but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth -- in what practical ways does this description apply to our current information-saturated culture, and how does it challenge you personally?

The sermon emphasizes that how much you learn from Scripture depends solely on your responsiveness to the Holy Spirit -- what does your current prayer life and approach to opening the Bible reveal about how much you are actually relying on the Holy Spirit as your teacher?

A significant percentage of false teaching stems from truth taken out of context -- can you think of a biblical passage that is commonly misused or taken out of context today, and what damage does that misinterpretation cause?

Judges 2:10 describes a generation that arose after Joshua who did not know the Lord -- what structural or intentional failures in families and churches allowed that to happen, and what parallels do you see in the church today?

The sermon presents the Holy Spirit as infinitely superior to artificial intelligence as a guide to biblical truth -- how should this conviction practically shape the way believers approach Bible study tools and technology rather than abandoning them altogether?

Given that the common people heard Jesus gladly according to Mark 12:37, and that God's design is for every believer to personally know and handle Scripture, what false assumptions or fears have kept you from pursuing a deeper, more independent knowledge of the Bible?

Small Group Guide

How to Study the Bible | 2 Timothy 2:15

Before You Begin

Encourage group members to bring their Bibles and any notes from the sermon. Open your time together in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to guide your discussion into all truth, as promised in John 16.

Key Takeaways

1. The Word of God has life-giving power. Scripture was the instrument through which God created all things, raised the dead, delivers souls from sin, and endures forever. Because this is true, we ought to read it, believe it, study it, memorize it, obey it, and love it.

2. We are living in a generation that is ever learning but never arriving at truth. Unprecedented access to Bible content does not automatically produce Bible knowledge. It is possible to consume more information than any previous generation and still know less of what the Bible actually says.

3. The Bible is not difficult to understand when we believe every word. The primary obstacle to understanding Scripture is not complexity but unbelief. We make the Bible difficult by approaching it as anything less than the very words of God.

4. Anyone can develop a working knowledge of the Bible. No advanced degree, special credential, or knowledge of original languages is required. God's design is that common people would have direct access to His words and grow through them.

5. The Holy Spirit is your teacher. You have the author of the Bible living inside of you. How much you learn depends solely on your responsiveness to Him. No technological tool, including artificial intelligence, can replace this relationship.

6. Bible study has rules. Rightly dividing the word of truth, as commanded in 2 Timothy 2:15, requires learning and applying proper principles of interpretation. Most false teaching is rooted in truth taken out of context.

Discussion Questions

How to Study the Bible – Week 2 – A Command to Study – Bible Study Helps

Opening

1. Before tonight, how would you have described your personal Bible study habits? Were you more of a consumer of Bible content or an actual student of the Bible? What is the difference?
2. The sermon raised two questions at the start of the message. Take a moment to answer them as a group: What happens if we do not study the Bible? What happens if we do not teach the next generation how to study the Bible?

The Word of God Gives Life

3. Read Psalm 33:6-9. What does it mean to you personally that the same Word which created everything out of nothing is the Word you hold in your hands?
4. The sermon referenced 1 Thessalonians 2:13, which describes receiving the word of God not as the words of men but as it truly is, the word of God. How does the way you receive Scripture affect the way it works in your life? Can you think of a time when receiving a passage as God's direct words to you made a significant difference?

The World We Live In

5. Second Timothy 3:7 describes people who are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. In what ways do you see this playing out in your own life, in your church, or in the broader culture?
6. Daniel 12:4 speaks of a time when many would run to and fro and knowledge would be increased. How has the explosion of information in our generation affected the way people relate to the Bible, both positively and negatively?
7. The sermon described watching people turn against Israel during recent Middle East conflicts, largely because they were following podcasts and social media personalities rather than studying the Bible for themselves. Have you ever held a belief about Scripture that later changed when you actually studied the passage in context? What happened?

Foundational Principles

8. We make the Bible difficult by not believing every word. Do you agree? Are there passages or doctrines where you find it harder to simply take God at His word? How do you work through that?
9. Genesis 3 shows the devil's strategy: question the word of God, contradict the word of God, and change the word of God. Where do you see these same tactics being used today, whether in culture, in churches, or in your own thought life?
10. The sermon stated that how much you learn from the Bible depends solely on your responsiveness to the Holy Spirit. What does that mean practically for how you approach your personal Bible time? What might need to change?
11. The sermon drew a contrast between artificial intelligence and the Holy Spirit. What are the dangers of relying on technology to do your Bible study for you? What can technology never provide that the Holy Spirit can?

How to Study the Bible – Week 2 – A Command to Study – Bible Study Helps

Personal Reflection

12. The sermon mentioned that the greatest growth in your life comes when you are teaching others what you are learning. Who in your life could you begin sharing these things with? What is one step you could take this week toward that?
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Practical Applications

This Week

- Get a notebook dedicated to this study series. Begin compiling your notes from each session in one place so you have a growing reference to return to and share with others.
- Before you open your Bible each day this week, pause and pray specifically that the Holy Spirit would be your teacher and guide you into truth. Do this before turning to any commentary, podcast, or other resource.
- Read Genesis 2:15-17 and Genesis 3:1-6 side by side. Write down every difference between what God actually said and what Eve repeated back to the serpent. Reflect on what this reveals about the importance of knowing exactly what the Bible says.
- Identify one person in your life who might benefit from this study series. Pray for them by name this week and consider inviting them to join you next session.

Going Deeper

- Memorize 2 Timothy 2:15. Meditate on what it means to be a workman who rightly divides the Word of truth.
 - Spend time this week reading 2 Timothy 3:1-7 in full. Write down every characteristic listed and reflect honestly on how many of them describe the world around you. Let that motivate a deeper commitment to knowing the Bible.
 - Reflect on the questions the sermon raised about the next generation. Write out your answers and consider what role you personally play in ensuring the next generation knows not just that the Bible exists, but how to study it for themselves.
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Closing Prayer Points

- Ask God to give your group a genuine hunger for His Word, not just information about it.
- Pray for the next generation, that they would be taught how to study and rightly divide the Bible.
- Thank God that He has given every believer the Holy Spirit as a personal teacher and guide.
- Ask for the discipline and faithfulness to devote consistent time to Bible study in the weeks ahead.

Looking Ahead

Next session the group will begin studying the 15 factors of Bible study, starting with context. Come prepared to discuss why context matters and how false teaching almost always involves truth taken out of context.

5-Day Bible Reading and Devotional Guide

Based on the Theme: Knowing and Living the Word of God

Day 1: The Word That Creates and Sustains

Reading: Psalm 33:6-9; John 1:1-5; 2 Timothy 2:15

Devotional: The same word of God that spoke galaxies into existence and called a dead man out of a tomb is the word of God you hold in your hands. This is not merely a religious text. It is the living voice of the Creator. When you open the Bible, you are not consulting a library book. You are receiving the words of the One who commanded light and it appeared. Study with that weight in mind. Ask yourself today: do I treat Scripture as the word of men, or as it is in truth, the word of God? Your answer will determine how much it changes you.

Reflection Question: In what ways have you been treating the Bible as ordinary rather than as the living and powerful word of God?

Practical Application: Before reading Scripture today, pause and pray specifically that the Holy Spirit would open your understanding. Then read slowly, believing every word of God.

Day 2: The Danger of Ever Learning and Never Knowing

Reading: 2 Timothy 3:1-7; Amos 8:11-12; Daniel 12:1-4

Devotional: Paul warned that a defining mark of the last days would be people who are constantly consuming information yet never arriving at the knowledge of truth. This was written before the internet, before smartphones, before artificial intelligence. How much more urgent is this warning today. You can listen to a hundred sermons, scroll through Bible quotes, and follow Christian accounts without ever truly knowing what God has said. Information is not the same as understanding. The famine Amos described is not a shortage of Bibles. It is a shortage of people who will sit down, open the book, and believe it.

Reflection Question: Are you a student of the Bible, or primarily a consumer of Bible content? What is the difference in your own life?

Practical Application: Set aside all podcasts, videos, and social media Bible content for one day. Spend that time reading the Bible itself, asking God to teach you directly through His Word.

How to Study the Bible – Week 2 – A Command to Study – Bible Study Helps

Day 3: What the Enemy Does With the Word

Reading: Genesis 2:15-17; Genesis 3:1-6; 2 Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15

Devotional: The very first strategy Satan employed against humanity was not violence or temptation toward obvious sin. It was a question about the word of God. Did God really say that? He questioned it, contradicted it, and then changed it. Eve did not know the word of God well enough to defend against the subtle shift. The same strategy is alive and active today. False teachers do not always deny the Bible outright. They quote it selectively, reframe it carefully, and present a version of truth that sounds reasonable. Your only reliable defense is to know what God actually said, word by word, in context. Amen.

Reflection Question: Have you ever accepted a teaching simply because it sounded biblical, without verifying it against the whole counsel of the word of God?

Practical Application: Take one doctrine you hold and trace it through at least three different passages of Scripture. Confirm that what you believe is what the Bible actually teaches in context.

Day 4: The Holy Spirit Is Your Teacher

Reading: John 14:26; John 16:13; 1 Corinthians 2:9-16; 1 Thessalonians 2:13

Devotional: God did not leave you to figure out His Book alone, nor did He leave you entirely dependent on scholars, commentaries, or technology. He placed His own Holy Spirit inside every believer, and that Holy Spirit is the author of the very book you are reading. No artificial intelligence, no seminary degree, and no celebrity preacher can replicate what the Holy Spirit does when a surrendered believer opens the Bible in faith. The Thessalonians received Paul's words not as the words of men but as the words of God, and it worked powerfully in them. That same power is available to you today, right now, in your own home.

Reflection Question: How consistently do you pray and ask the Holy Spirit to teach you before you read Scripture? How might that discipline change your study?

Practical Application: Begin every Bible reading session this week with a written or spoken prayer asking the Holy Spirit specifically to guide your understanding. Note what stands out to you that you had not previously noticed.

Day 5: One Generation Away

Reading: Judges 2:10-13; Psalm 119:105, 130; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 2 Timothy 2:2

How to Study the Bible – Week 2 – A Command to Study – Bible Study Helps

Devotional: Israel's tragic cycle in the book of Judges did not begin with rebellion. It began with a generation that did not know the Lord or the works He had done. They had the heritage, the history, and the testimony of God's faithfulness surrounding them, yet it was not passed on. Every generation must receive the word of God for themselves, and every believer carries a responsibility to pass it on. The greatest gift you can give the people around you is not your opinion about the Bible but your demonstrated love for it and your commitment to teach them how to find truth in it for themselves. One generation of neglect changes everything.

Reflection Question: Who in your life, whether a child, a friend, or a newer believer, needs you to invest in teaching them how to study the Bible?

Practical Application: Identify one person this week with whom you will begin sharing what you are learning. Invite them to read through these same passages with you and discuss what God is showing each of you.