

MORE IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES IN THE STUDY OF YOUR BIBLE:

I. THE PROGRESSIVE MENTION PRINCIPLE:

- A. **Definition:** The principle by which God makes the revelation of any given truth increasingly clear as the Word proceeds to its consummation. – IBID.
- B. Bible doctrines are introduced and as the revelation of God continues details are added.

1. There are two ways of studying Scripture:

- a. **Canonically:** in the order in which the books appear – man's order.
- b. **Chronologically:** in the order in which they were written, and the events occur – the order of revelation. (recommended: The Chronological Bible)

- 1) There is a teaching in the Word of God in the very arrangement of the books. Romans is the foundation on which all the epistles rest. (Thessalonians was the first epistle written.) The Holy Spirit put Romans in its place in the Bible because of its teachings.
- 2) The concept of progress in Scripture gives us one right method of Bible study. The Bible was written by books, and was built up by books, so it ought to be studied by books. It is a Book of books. Following subjects through Scripture sheds light upon that subject as the revelation unfolds. (recommended: The Scofield Reference Bible)

NOTE: When sin entered the world, immediately God gave the promise of the Seed of the woman Who would bruise the serpent. You can follow that revelation by pursuing the people and prophecies throughout the O.T. until Christ arrives in the N.T. (Abraham, Jacob, Isaac, Judah, David, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, virgin birth, suffering, death, resurrection, Second Coming, Millennium, eternity)

Every doctrine has its seed planted in one place; we watch it grow in another and then see it come to fruition later. (The Trinity, Holy Spirit, Law, Grace, Rewards, Faith, God's dwelling places [*creation, tabernacle, Temple, Christ's body, in the believer's body*], Satan, the Lamb in Scripture, Animal sacrifice, Atonement, God [*His work, His Word, His Son, His Spirit*], etc.

II. THE FULL MENTION PRINCIPLE:

- A. **Definition:** that principle by which God declares His full mind upon any subject vital to our spiritual life. It is where God gathers together fragments that have to do with a particular truth and puts them into one exhaustive statement. That is His full mind concerning that truth. – IBID.
- B. **Examples:** Resurrection (1 Cor. 15); the tongue (James 3); Restoration of Israel (Romans 11); Chastening (Hebrews 12); Law (Exodus 20); Final Judgment – Great White Throne (Rev. 20); Love (1 Cor. 13); etc.

III. THE CONTEXT PRINCIPLE:

- A. **Definition:** That principle by which God gives light upon a subject through either near or remote passages bearing on the same theme. Every sentence in the Bible has something that precedes it and something that follows it – except Gen. 1:1 and Rev. 22:21. – IBID.
- B. **Rule:** Every verse must be studied in the light of its context. No other rule is violated more than this one, nor has created more confusion. To ignore this rule is dangerous and produces false doctrine and false prophets.
 1. To remove a text from its context is a pretext.
 2. By taking a verse or a subject from its context people twist the truth of Scripture to suit their own agenda.
 3. There is only one way to study the Bible and that is with the Bible, comparing Scripture with Scripture, spiritual things with spiritual things.

4. This principle avoids "grasshopper exegesis" i.e., jumping around the Bible without regard to its context, like the Jehovah's Witnesses practice.
5. It is making the Bible say something it wasn't intended to teach.
6. We are to take care lest we wrest the Scriptures to our own destruction. 2 Pet. 3:16
7. This is Bible study "on the cheap!" It is when there is no serious attempt at understanding what the Bible really teaches and reading into Scripture what we want it to say or what someone has taught us it says. But every individual Christian is commanded to "Study to show (themselves) approved unto God..."

IV. THE AGREEMENT PRINCIPLE:

- A. Definition: That principle under which the truthfulness and faithfulness of God become the guarantee that He will not set forth any passage in His Word which contradicts any other passage. – IBID.
- B. Statement: There are no contradictions in Scripture; there is organic unity. Although there are 66 books in the Bible there is nevertheless perfect unity in its structure, history, purpose, doctrine and theme, which is salvation through Jesus Christ.
 1. If as many say, the Bible is full of errors or contradictions, then it cannot be God's Book, for God is faithful and cannot lie.
 2. Scripture always agrees with itself, whereas men may disagree with each other about the Scripture because they do not follow sound principles of Bible interpretation.
 3. A few examples:
 - a. The regathering of the Jews and the future of Israel. "Replacement theology" is rampant today, which denies that Israel has a future and that the Church can lay claim to promises made to the nation. But the Bible is consistent. Throughout the Bible, Israel's dispersion, regathering, and Kingdom are prophesied.
 - b. Some contend that the world is getting better (social evolution), in spite of the evidences of decay and corruption. Others say it is getting worse. The Bible settles the argument. In the days before Christ's return Scripture compares the world to the days of Noah and Lot – hardly a pretty picture! It speaks of perilous times, things waxing worse and worse, etc. Some teach that Jesus will come back because the world is getting so good, but the truth is that the world is so corrupt that He *must* come back!
 - c. Some confusion exists because men refuse to understand that just because a person may have the same name in the Bible, that they may not be the same person. Saul of Tarsus was not the King of Israel! How could Jehoram be king in Israel, and king in Judah? He was not. There were two kings with the same names. There are three men with the name James in the N.T. There are four Johns. There are ten Simons. There are many Herods in the N.T. There were six Marys. Also some people have more than one name: Jacob is also Israel; Timotheus is also Timothy; Peter is also Cephas and Simon; Saul is Paul; Joseph is Zaphnath-paaneah!
 - d. Places may also have the same names: Antioch of Syria and Antioch in Pisidia, Bethel is also Luz; Jerusalem is also Zion and Ariel; Sinai is also Horeb; the Dead Sea is also the Salt Sea, etc.

V. THE DIRECT STATEMENT PRINCIPLE:

- A. Definition: That principle under which God says what He means and means what He says. – IBID.
- B. Statement: A tooth is a tooth, an eye is an eye, a bear is a bear and a bird is a bird – unless the context says otherwise or it is impossible to take the subject literally. This principle demands

that we simply believe what God says. It is designed to keep our imagination in check and to interpret the Bible as it was meant to be interpreted.

1. There are some rather obvious considerations, e.g., word meanings may change over the years, so you need to be alert and have an old dictionary handy. "Leasing" in a KJB means "lying." "Let" means "hinder" in a KJB. (Recommended: The Defined Bible)
2. The Bible is not a kind of "spiritual museum" where curious things are presented; it is a living Book where God speaks to us in language which can be understood.

VI. THE CHRISTO-CENTRIC PRINCIPLE:

- A. Definition: The principle that all things are centered in Christ. This includes the mind of God, angelic thought and actions, Satanic hatred, human hopes, the material universe, and the Word of God. – IBID.
- B. Our Savior expressed this principle on the road to Emmaus with Cleopas and his partner (his wife?), when He taught them the first Sunday School lesson from God's Word and revealed Himself in all three divisions of the O.T.: the Law, Psalms & Prophets. Lk. 24

VII. THE NUMERICAL PRINCIPLE:

- A. Definition: The principle by which God gives special significance to numbers in His Word.
- B. Some examples:
 1. One: this is the primary number and is God's number. He is the beginning.
 2. Two: this number implies a difference. Humanity is divided into two classes: saved & lost. Exodus 8:23
 3. Three: this is the number of the trinity; three persons in One God.
 4. Four: this is the number of creation and the earth; "the four corners of the earth," four directions, four seasons, on the fourth day material creation was completed.
 5. Five: seems to be the number of death; five wounds in Christ's body, a number of men are killed by being stabbed under the 5th rib, Gen. 5 is the death chapter ("and he died..."). Some see this number as the number of God's grace(?).
 6. Six is definitely man's number. Man was created on day 6. Goliath, a picture of the antichrist (whose number is 666) was 6 cubits tall, wore 6 pieces of armor, and his spear head weighed 600 shekels of iron. Nebuchadnezzar's image was 60 cubits high, 6 cubits in breadth and 6 kinds of instruments were played to signal time to worship it. 6 people gave testimony in behalf of our Savior as to His innocence.
 7. Seven is God's number and signifies spiritual perfection, completion and fullness. It was on day 7 that God rested from His creation. Revelation is the last book in the Bible and can have nothing added to it and is loaded with the number 7.
 8. Eight is the number of new beginnings and resurrection. Eight people descended from the Ark of Noah after the flood to begin the human race anew. The first day of the week is the 8th day and speaks of new beginning.
 9. Ten is the number of the Gentiles. In Gen. 10 we have the divisions of the nations. In Acts 10 we have the vision of the sheet being let down from heaven with animals representing Gentiles and we have the first Gentiles added to the Church.
 10. Twelve is a frequent number in Scripture and is the number for God's people, Israel. There were 12 tribes in Israel, Jesus chose 12 men to be His apostles to preach to Israel, there were 12 Judges over Israel.
 11. Thirteen is the negative number in the Bible. It speaks of rebellion and apostasy. Ishmael, the wild man, was circumcised when he was 13 years old. Ishmael and his twelve sons constitute the Arab race. In Revelation Satan is called the great rebel 13 times. At the Lord's table there were 13 present and the 13th was Judas who was the traitor.
 12. Forty is the number of probation, testing and trial. Moses life is broken up into three periods of 40 years. It rained 40 days and 40 nights in Noah's day. Moses was on the Mt. for 40 days receiving the Law of God. Jonah's message was "40 days and Nineveh will be

overthrown." Our Savior was tested 40 days in the wilderness. 40 years after the crucifixion came the destruction of Jerusalem.

13. Fifty is the number of salvation and is used approximately 300 times in the Bible. In Gen. 18 Abraham asked the Lord to spare Sodom if 50 righteous men could be found there. Pentecost was 50 days after the Passover and when it was fully come 3000 people were saved. The 50th year was the Year of Jubilee in Israel; the year of liberation and restoration. Haman was hanged on a gallows 50 cubits high and his death saved the nation of Israel from extermination.

CONCLUSION: We have attempted to arm you, as a serious Bible student, with principles of Bible interpretation to enable you to fulfill God's command to study the Scriptures. These principles are time honored, and traditional. They are by no means original with this author. We hope you will use them as you "*search the Scriptures*" to enable you to have a correct understanding of God's Word so you "*may grow thereby*" and that you may be more ready and able to "*give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is within you with meekness and fear.*" 1 Peter 3:15

The object of all Bible study is not just so the student can have more knowledge about the Scriptures, but to put the principles in the Bible to use to discover God's will and enable him to better serve the Lord. It is also so that he will be able to be a better witness. It is to these ends that I have attempted to teach this course. My reward will be if *you* apply these principles of Bible study.

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