

2-C Bible Study FAQ's

This document is designed to answer some of the Frequently Asked Questions that people ask concerning Bible Study methods and tools. Please distribute this FAQ as widely as possible. The official web site for obtaining the latest version of this FAQ is: <http://www.storm.ca/~sabigail>

Most of the principles, tools, etc. that are presented in this FAQ will be acceptable to most Christian denominations and groups. However, readers should be aware that the author is from a conservative, evangelical, Protestant and non-charismatic background. Most (if not all) of the books, etc. recommended in this FAQ are presented from an evangelical position which accepts the inerrancy of the Bible. As such, some of the books, etc., might be unacceptable to those holding liberal theological views, or those considering the Bible solely from a comparative religions viewpoint.

1) What Bible study tools are essential?

If you really want to study your Bible, you don't need several thousand dollars worth of books. The following tools are the basic essentials:

Several Bible translations (e.g. KJV, NIV, NASB, NKJV)

An Exhaustive concordance for the translation you read the most.

A good set of cross references

The following tools are also useful.

A Bible Dictionary (e.g. The New Ungers)

A Topical Bible (e.g. Naves)

The Expanded Vines Expository Dictionary

A Bible Atlas

An expenditure of \$100 will get you the most essential tools if you shop around and get paperback editions. Another \$100 will get you all the other tools that will be most helpful.

2) What translation should I study from?

There is a lot of debate in Christian circles about what translation is "the best". Indeed, there is even debate as to what "the best" means. Regardless of what translation you prefer to read, you should use several translations in your studying. Many people feel the NASB is a good translation for word studies because it is very literal to the original languages (although "Young's Literal Translation" is even more literal). Many study tools are keyed to the KJV, and so it is useful to have. The NIV often captures the thought of a passage.

Again, let me stress, regardless of what translation you prefer to read, you should use several translations in your studying. Some of the worst mistakes I have seen have come people who have obviously only studied one translation.

3) What translations should I own?

The bare minimum, in my opinion, are the New American Standard Bible (NASB), the King James Version (KJV), the New International Version (NIV), and the New King James Version (NKJV). Buy one good quality Bible for reading, and then get inexpensive paperback editions of the rest. Your local Bible Society will likely carry inexpensive copies of a number of translations.

Other translations that I like to consult are Young's Literal Translation (YLT) and the Darby Translation (JND). I also like to have a look at what some paraphrase translations have to say (e.g. Good News Bible or the Living Bible). Some people like to consult the Amplified Bible. Those from a different theological background may wish to use some other translations, but the translations I have recommended should be acceptable to most Christians.

4) What about a Study Bible?

A study Bible is useful because it puts a number of tools all in one place. This is very handy if you are travelling! Most Study Bibles will have introductions and outlines to each of the books, discussions of themes, a brief set of cross references, a concise concordance, some maps and notes at the bottom of the page.

5) What Study Bibles are available?

The choice of a Study Bible will probably depend on your theological leanings. You can consult an older Christian whose judgement you trust. Here are some Study Bibles that I would recommend.

The Ryrie Study Bible - my personal favorite. It has all the features I want in a Study Bible, I like the notes, and it has an excellent summary of theology at the back. Also, I find the print easy to read. Available in KJV, NKJV, NASB and NIV. I believe a Ryrie Study Bible is one of the first things a new Christian should purchase (but of course, this is just my opinion). An Expanded Ryrie Study Bible has now been published. It is available in KJV, NIV and NASB and should prove very popular. Note that the revised NASB is now available.

The New Scofield Reference Bible - for many people, this is THE Study Bible (mostly because it was one of the first). Available in KJV, NKJV, NASB and NIV.

The Thompson Chain Reference Bible - the strength of this Study Bible is its special set of chain references, which lead you through references to various topics. Available in KJV, NASB and NIV. A NKJV Thompson Chain Reference Bible will soon be published. *The NIV Study Bible* - a large number of notes, many of which were written by translators of the NIV. Where differing opinions exist on the meaning of a verse, this Study Bible attempts to present all views. Available in NIV only.

The Newberry Reference Bible - the strength of the Newberry Bible is the fact that it has special symbols beside the verbs to tell you what tense they represent in the original language. This Bible is available in KJV only. Note that a variety of editions are available. Some have clearer type than others.

6) What is a Concordance?

A concordance is one of the most valuable Bible study tools available. It lists the words in the Bible alphabetically, and then lists verses that use that word. For example, the first word in most concordances will be "Aaron", and the following will be listed:

Is not A the Levite thy brother.....Ex 4:14
And the LORD said to A, Go into.....Ex 4:27
Moses told A all the words of the....Ex 4:28 etc.

So, the first reference in the Bible to "Aaron" is Exodus 4:14. The second is Exodus 4:27, and so on.

7) How can I use a Concordance?

There are several ways you can use a concordance. First, if you remember part of a verse in the Bible, but don't know where it can be found, you can look it up under one of the words. Secondly, a concordance is useful if you want to look up every reference to a particular word. This is the start of a word study, which is one of the most common types of Bible studies. Thirdly, many concordances have a numbering system to tell you what this word is in the original language. For example, several different Greek words are translated "love" in our English Bibles. The most common numbering system are the "Strong's Numbers".

8) What are Strong's Numbers?

Mr. Strong spent many years working on his concordance, and he assigned each word in the original Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic a number. If you know the number, you can turn to the dictionary at the back of his concordance and find out more information about the original word. Most Bible study tools today are keyed to the Strong's Numbers. Even those books that don't use Strong's Numbers (e.g. NIV Exhaustive Concordance) will have a key to allow you to look up the Strong's Number.

9) Are there different types of concordances?

Yes. An "Exhaustive" concordance lists every reference to every word in the Bible. A "Complete" concordance doesn't list every word in the Bible, but those words it does list, it gives every reference found in the Bible. A "concise" or "compact" concordance simply lists some of the references to some of the words in the Bible. Also, because concordances are keyed to words in English Bibles, each translation requires a separate concordance. Exhaustive concordances exist for the following translations: KJV, NIV, NASB, NKJV and NRSV

10) Are there disadvantages to using a concordance?

Yes. If you are trying to find a verse and the only words in the verse you can remember are "in", "with" and "by", you will have a hard time finding the verse because all of these words are very common, and you will have to search through a large number of entries. A concordance will only help you find those verses where an exact word is used. It will not help you find places in the Bible where similar themes are mentioned. For this, you need a topical Bible.

Another problem is the fact that a concordance lists entries by English word, and not the original languages. If you want to find every reference to the English word "church", you can use a concordance. With many concordances you can also find out that the English word "church" is a translation of the Greek word "ekklesia". But "ekklesia" could be translated a number of different ways. An English concordance will not help you find all references to "ekklesia".

Fortunately, there are concordances of the original languages. Since each Bible translation may use a slightly different Greek text for its New Testament (due to slight variations in manuscripts), there are different Greek concordances for different manuscripts. Probably the best known Greek concordance for the TR (the Greek text behind the KJV) is Wigram's concordance. A concordance of the text behind many modern translations (UBS 4) is also available. Wigram also produced a concordance of the Hebrew Old Testament.

11) What is Vine's Expository Dictionary?

In addition to his other writings, W.E. Vine created a dictionary of words found in the New Testament in the original Greek. For example, the English word "love" in our Bibles will be a translation of the Greek word "agape" or the Greek word "philo". To find out the differences between these two original words, you would use Vines. Many editions of Vines Expository dictionary exist. I recommend you get one with Strong's Numbers. I personally use "The Expanded Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words."

Going a step beyond Vines Dictionary are the "Theological Dictionary of the New Testament" (the 1 volume edition is known as the "Little Kittel") and the "Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament".

12) What about Topical Bibles?

Whereas a concordance lists references to words, a topical Bible lists references to ideas and themes, regardless of whether the actual words are mentioned. A topical Bible can be used with any translation, although some topical Bibles will not just list references to verses, but will actually write out the whole verse in a particular translation. The best known topical Bible is "Naves".

13) How valuable are cross references?

Very. In fact, you can do an entire Bible study just by reading a passage and looking up all the cross references to that passage. The essential set of cross references is "The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge".

14) Where can I get more information on using these tools?

Loizeaux Brothers publishers produces a book called, "How to Use New Testament Greek Study Aids" by Walter Jerry Clark.

15) What other books exist on Bible Study?

Here are a few books that might help you, in order from least complicated to most complicated:

- "*How to Study the Bible*" (R.A. Torrey) - a 95 page booklet that has become a classic. Torrey was a great evangelist and later, the president of Moody Bible Institute.
- "*How to Study the Bible for Yourself*" (Tim LaHaye) - more detailed than Torrey's book, this book covers most aspects of Bible study.
- "*Dynamic Bible Study Methods*" (Rick Warren) - this book lists 12 different types of Bible studies you can do.
- "*How to Read the Bible for all its Worth*" (Gordon Fee & Douglas Stuart) - a much more detailed book, with an emphasis on how to read various types of Biblical literature.
- "*How to Study Your Bible*" (Kay Arthur) - uses the same techniques as the International Inductive Study Bible.

16) Should I use a Bible commentary?

A Bible commentary is a book about the Bible. It tells us what the Bible means. Of course, since commentaries are written by men, they will have their biases. Commentaries are useful to make sure you haven't severely misunderstood a passage, and they are also useful to make sure you haven't missed an important point, but you should only read a commentary after you have studied a passage for yourself.

17) What commentaries should I consider buying?

Like the choice of a study Bible, this will depend on your own theological views. I recommend the following as useful and reliable.

- *The Believers Bible Commentary* (William MacDonald) - one volume for the New Testament and one for the Old Testament, I feel that this is the first commentary a new believer should buy.
- *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* - like the Believers Bible Commentary, this series has one volume for each Testament. The commentary was written by faculty at Dallas Theological Seminary, and has been very popular.
- *The Tyndale New Testament Commentary* - this would probably be the first set of commentaries that a new believer would purchase. This set is one of the most inexpensive you will find.
- *The Expositors Bible Commentary* - 12 hardcover volumes covering the whole Bible. This set is a major investment, but I believe worth the money. This series is based on the NIV.
- *What the Bible Teaches* - published by John Ritchie publishers in Scotland, this series will eventually comprise 11 volumes covering the New Testament and is based on the KJV. Loizeaux Brothers publishers distribute this series in North America.
- *Matthew Henry's Commentary* - 300 years of popularity should say something about this book. It is more devotional than doctrinal.

- *H.A. Ironside's Bible Commentaries* - Ironside was a Christian worker for many years, and for 18 years was the pastor of Moody Church. His commentaries are collections of expository sermons he gave over the years. He wrote commentaries on all the books in the New Testament, and a number of the books in the Old Testament.
- *New Testament Commentary* - 2 volumes remain to be published in this series. It was started by William Hendricksen and is being completed by Simon Kistemaker. A good all-round set, although you might find the hardcover volumes somewhat expensive.

18) Why should I read the Bible?

Because the first step in studying is reading. To give yourself a good overall knowledge of the Bible, you should try to read the Bible through cover to cover once each year. This involves reading 3.5 chapters per day. Reading guides and calendars exist to help you with your readings.

19) How can I read the Bible?

Start by reading quickly to get a feel for a passage. Then go back and read it slowly. Understand what it is saying. Read from the start of the book to the end so that you get the entire idea the author is expressing. Make notes for yourself. Read the same passage over and over. For a short book in the Bible, you might even want to read it through once each day for a whole month. Understand why the author is writing this book. Also, understand what type of literature it is (history, poetry, doctrine, prophecy, etc.). Many people find it is helpful to read at the same time each day. Regardless of when you read, you should read a portion of the Bible every day.

20) What principles will help me interpret the Bible?

- *Context* - the most important rule of Bible study is "consider the context!" This cannot be emphasized enough. Look at each verse in the context of the verses that surround it. Consider the context of the book (why was this book in the Bible written and who was it written to?). Also, consider the context of the whole Bible (i.e. what does the whole Bible say about this subject).
- *Literal Interpretation* - interpret the Bible literally unless the Bible itself gives you reason to adopt a figurative interpretation. When two Christians come to a different interpretation of what a verse in the Bible means, it is usually because one (or both) of them has started to interpret the Bible figuratively. Of course, the principle of literal interpretation does allow for figures of speech.
- *Plain Sense Meaning* - consider the plain sense meaning of a passage. Yes, there are deep matters discussed in the Bible, but the conclusions we reach from doing an intensive Bible study should not be different than what the Bible plainly says.
- *Interpret from what you Understand* - if you have 2 passages and the meaning of one is quite clear, and the meaning of the second is unclear, don't adopt a fanciful interpretation of the doubtful passage and then try to force the clear passage into a different meaning.
- *Compare and Contrast* - compare things that are alike and contrast things that are different.

21) What other principles of interpretation exist?

- consider the verb tenses. Is this an event that has happened, happening or will happen?
- the Bible can use figures of speech. Figures of speech are usually identifiable immediately. For example, when the Israelite spies reported that the people in the land had cities with walls up to the sky, the spies were using a figure of speech.
- good people sometimes do bad things
- don't build principles on practice. Build practice on principles
- don't build doctrines on types
- parables illustrate principles, but they are not allegories. It is a mistake to look at every aspect and item in a parable and try to assign a meaning.

22) Do special principles exist for interpreting prophecy?

- *The Importance of Context* - more than any other type of study, prophecy requires us to consider context and look up other references to the same topic. Prophecy requires us to have a good knowledge of the whole Bible including the Old Testament.
- *Israel and the Church* - there is a clear distinction between Israel and the church (1 Cor 10:32). God is not finished with Israel and still has great plans for them. However, some people take the view that the church has replaced Israel in God's program. I, and many other Christians, believe that God still has plans for Israel. We believe the Bible makes the most sense if we consistently interpret "Israel" as meaning "Israel". Distinguishing between Israel and the Church, in my opinion, allows for more consistent literal interpretation of the Scriptures.

- *Prophetic Past Tense* - sometimes, God makes reference to an event in the future, and to indicate how certain it is, He talks about it as if it has already happened (e.g. we are said to currently be glorified in Romans 8:30)
- *Double Fulfilment* - sometimes a prophecy will have an immediate partial fulfilment with a full and complete fulfilment yet to come.

In his book, "Things to Come", J. Dwight Pentecost devotes the first 65 pages to the interpretation of Bible prophecy.

23) What books exist on Bible Interpretation?

This field is known as hermeneutics. There are a number of good books on this topic:

- *Biblical Hermeneutics* (Milton Terry) - this book was first published over 110 years ago, but is still a classic. The modern reader might find this book a little tough to get through, and I don't agree with his view on prophecy, but this is probably the most comprehensive work available.
- *Protestant Biblical Interpretation* (Bernard Ramm) - this book was first published in 1950 and is still a standard textbook in many Bible colleges. A weakness (in my opinion) is the fact that Ramm has an Amillennial view of Bible prophecy.
- *Basic Bible Interpretation* (Roy Zuck) - although not yet a classic, I think this book will be adopted as a textbook by many Bible schools. Although I don't personally agree with all of Dr Zuck's interpretations, I do recommend this book as a starting point.
- *The Interpretation of Prophecy* (Paul Lee Tan) BMH Books, Inc. Distributors. King's Highway Winona Lake, Indiana 46590, 1974. The publisher is included because it is from a small publisher.
- *The Hermeneutical Spiral* (Grant Osbourne) - this IVP book is becoming very popular, and includes a section on preaching.
- *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (W. Klein, C. Blomberg, and R Hubbard Jr.) - up-to-date but rather technical.

24) What types of Bible studies exist?

- *Expository Study* - this type of study involves taking a passage in the Bible and finding out exactly what it means. You will go through a passage sentence by sentence and word by word. Start by reading and re-reading the passage. Note differences in different translations. Use Strong's Numbers and Vines Dictionary to look up each word. Look at the passages around the passage you are studying in order to understand the context. Look up parallel passages that deal with the same material.
- *Topical Study* - this study seeks to study a topic by looking at all the passages that deal with a particular topic. A topical Bible and a set of cross-references will help you in this type of study. The Thompson Chain-Reference Bible would be a huge help with this type of study.
- *Word Study* - this type of study looks at all the references to a particular word in the Bible. An exhaustive concordance is required for this type of study. Decide which word you wish to study (e.g. "church" or "worship") and look this word up in your concordance. Then look up each reference to this word and ask yourself what each reference teaches you. A more serious word study will use a concordance of the original languages.
- *Thematic Study* - this is similar to a topical study, but a little more abstract. For example, you might want to study the testimony given by Christ's enemies, spiritual revivals, or men of God who met lions. A concordance and a topical Bible will help you with this type of study, but of course, a good working knowledge of the Bible gained through daily reading will also be an immense help.
- *Doctrinal Study* - we can also do studies on the various doctrines in the Bible. For example, we can study the Trinity, or ask ourselves what is involved in a person becoming a Christian. A topical Bible would be helpful, as well as a book on theology. The Synopsis of Doctrine at the back of the Ryrie Study Bible would be a big help.
- *Biographical Study* - an examination of the life of a particular person in the Bible. Here, we seek to see what we can learn from the life of a man or woman in the Bible. What mistakes did he make and how did it affect him? A concordance should be sufficient to do a biographical study.
- *Character Trait Study* - instead of looking at a person, we could look at a character trait such as pride, humility or faithfulness. A concordance will be useful in this type of study.
- *Geographical Study* - in this study, you pick a place (city, mountain, river or country) and look up all the references to that place in a concordance.

25) How do I handle Bible contradictions?

Most of the contradictions are not contradictions at all. They seem to be contradiction because we don't understand enough of our Bibles, or because we don't know enough about ancient cultures. Here are a few principles to help you understand so-called contradictions:

- *The Authors Were Not Idiots* - we have to give the ancient writers (and the Holy Spirit) a bit of credit. If the writer writes something, and a couple of verses later seems to contradict himself, it's probably not because he forgot what he had written 2 minutes ago.
- *Specific Exceptions to General Rules* - just because a general rule is given doesn't mean specific exceptions do not exist. For example, Romans 3:23 tells us that "all have sinned". 1 Peter 2:22, speaking of the Lord Jesus, tells us, "He committed no sin". Is there a contradiction? Of course not! This is a rather obvious example, but it does illustrate a point.
- *Calendars Differ* - differences in dates can be reconciled in a number of ways. First, some places in the Bible use the Jewish dating system, and some use the dating systems of the nations around them. Second, a king's reign counted his first year as being from when he took the throne to the start of the new year. For example, if I became king on Dec 17th, my first year on the throne would run from Dec 17 to Dec 31. January 1 would begin my second year of reigning. We should also be aware that some of the reigns of Jewish kings overlapped.
- *Repeated Presentation* - often, similar events would occur. For example, there were 2 feedings of the multitudes recorded in the Gospels. Each time, the disciples seemed very surprised. If one of the Gospels had not presented both feedings in it, people would line up to say this is a contradiction in the Bible!
- *Names* - some people have several names (and so do most people today). Sometimes, what seems to be a name is actually a title. Also, different people in history can have the same name.
- *Fragmentary Presentation* - sometimes, parallel accounts will each give part of the story. Also, some parts of the Gospels are not written in chronological order.

26) Where can I learn more about resolving contradictions?

A good book to start with is Gleason Archer's "Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties." Archer is a well regarded scholar and discusses a number of difficult passages. Another excellent book is the paperback by Sir Robert Anderson, "Misunderstood Texts of the New Testament".

27) What about the Holy Spirit and Bible Study?

Without the Holy Spirit, Bible study can become mechanical and dry. Never underestimate the value of praying over the Bible. However, praying over the Bible is not the only study you should do. Most language study tools simply seek to give us the subtleties of the language that would have been apparent to anyone who actually knew those languages. Other tools help us because we don't have the understanding and knowledge of the Bible that we should have (and that is gained through years of reading). These tools do not seek to cut the Holy Spirit out! Pray before you study, pray while you study and pray after you study.

28) How do I apply my Bible study?

Right understanding is the first step to right practice. As you read a passage, ask yourself what principles would apply to me in my situation. Please remember that while the Bible is the infallible Word of God, our applications are not. Ask yourself:

- what changes does this call for me to make?
- what would my life be like if I followed this verse?
- does this general principle have a specific application in my life?
- what are the costs of obedience?
- is there a sin to forsake or a promise to claim
- what action does this passage call me to make (For more information on application, see sections 34 and 35.)

29) Can computers help me study the Bible?

Many Bible programs exist for the computer. The big advantage of computer Bible study software is that it does a lot of the work of flipping pages for you. It also allows you to do some searches that would be impossible with a normal concordance. A Bible Software FAQ can be found at this web site. I would remind readers that the excellent "Online Bible" is available free of charge (unless you order it from Mr Pierce or one of the distributors) and contains a great deal of study material. It is available for Microsoft Windows, MS-DOS and MacOS only. See the Bible Software FAQ for more information.

30) What videotapes can teach me about Bible study?

- *Bible Study Basics* - a 40 minute tape featuring Howard Hendricks. This tape is released by New Liberty Films. I purchased my copy through the Canadian Tract Society.

- *The Study Partner* - a 2 hour videotape divided into 6 lessons. This tape can be ordered through "Scripture Student Seminars", 79 Pinemeadow Cres, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, N2T 1A6. The suggested donation is \$30.

31) What about Christian correspondence courses?

The following schools have correspondence courses at various levels of difficulty:

- *Emmaus Correspondence School* - offers over 75 popular level courses. Regional offices in 105 countries with courses translated into 110 languages. The address of the head office is: "Emmaus Correspondence Ministries", 2570 Asbury Road, Dubuque, IA, USA, 52001-3099
- *Scofield Plus 3 Program* - offered through Moody Bible Institute. The course includes an Introduction, Old Testament section, New Testament section, Bible Study Methods, and Bible doctrine. Moody's "Plus 3" add "successful Soul Winning", "Missions Today" and "Teaching With Results". For more information, write: "Moody Correspondence School", 820 North Lasalle Drive, Chicago, Illinois, USA, 60610
- *Moody's Centre for External Studies* - offers a variety of courses for college credit and also adult level courses. Write the "Center for External Studies" at the same address as the "Moody Correspondence School".
- *Toronto Baptist Seminary* - offers 9 courses for college credit, including New Testament Greek. Write the seminary at 130 Gerrard Street East, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5A 3T4
- *Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary* - offers 25 courses at the graduate level. Requires an undergraduate degree. Courses may be audited. Write: "Ockenga Institute", Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 130 Essex Street, #251, South Hamilton, MA, USA, 01982-2359
- *Summit Christian College* - offers a wide variety of courses for college credit. Write: "Institute of Correspondence Studies", 1025 West Rudisill Boulevard, Fort Wayne, Indiana, USA, 46807.
- *Berean College* - 1445 Booneville Ave, Springfield, MO 65802 (800) 443-1083. Berean College of the Assemblies of God, which has both college-level and non-college level courses
- *RHEMA Correspondence Bible School, Kenneth Hagin Ministries*, P.O. Box 50220, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74150. 1-918-258-1588. Three year course. Very Good.

32) Do I need to learn all of the big words in the Bible?

The Bible is filled with large words like "atonement" and "sanctification". The field of theology is also filled with large words like "impeccability" and "eternal security". We don't need to know all of the big words before we start studying the Bible, but as we study the Bible it is important for us to learn the precise meanings of these words. Like every field of study, the Bible has a specialized terminology. An astronomer doesn't talk about "that bright thing up in the sky at night, which isn't as bright as the bright thing we see in the day"! Instead, he uses a specialized word, "moon". Likewise, the doctor doesn't talk about "that muscle at the front of the upper part of the arm". Instead, he speaks about the "bicep muscle". These specialized words exist for a very important reason. They carry a great deal of meaning, and allow us to describe very complex concepts very quickly.

33) What is the best way to learn about the big words?

One of the best ways is to use a concordance and look up every reference to a word to see how it is used in the Bible. By seeing the word in its context, we can often determine the meaning of a word. This is also where a Bible dictionary can be useful. The Bible dictionary will tell us the meaning of words, theological concepts and places. However, many preachers often rely on a regular dictionary to get their definitions. This is a dangerous practice because (1) a regular dictionary is not designed to define the specialized terminology of Christianity, and (2) the entries are not necessarily prepared by Christians who understand the deeper implications of these definitions. The wise student of the Bible will get his or her definitions from the Bible or a Bible dictionary rather than a regular dictionary.

34) What rules allow me to apply the Bible to my life?

I would like to suggest several rules to help us apply the Bible to our lives:

- *Our Applications are not Inspired* - we must understand that while the Bible itself is the inspired and infallible Word of God, our applications may not be.
- *Specific Events can give us General Principles* - when we look at a specific event or statement, we can often discover general principles. However, we cannot authoritatively apply these principles in ever situation. For example, the Bible says " Let all things be done decently and in order." (1 Corinthians 14:40). The immediate context is concerned with speaking in tongues. It is valid for us to develop the general principle that God is concerned about all things being done in a decent and orderly manner. It is

an incorrect application to say, "God wants us to be orderly, and that means the men should wear ties, we should have pews instead of chairs and all the hymn books should be black!"

- *Apply Passages Within Their Contexts* - considering 1 Cor 14:40 again, we can make a valid application that churches that believe the gift of tongues is still around today must seek to follow the same guidelines as applied to the 1st century church.
- *Consider Who This Passage Applies To* - again, while a passage can help us to develop general principles, we must be careful to see who a passage is applying to. For example, in Exodus 23:26, God told the Israelites that if they were faithful to Him, He would prevent miscarriages among their women. A valid application is that God will reward faithfulness among His people in all generations. However, it was specifically the Israelites that were promised the protection from miscarriage as a reward for faithfulness. God promised His earthly people earthly blessings and Christians today must be careful to not claim all the specific physical blessings God promised to Israel.

35) What books exist on Bible application?

Disclaimer: I cannot at this point recommend these books, because I have not yet read them. I include them for information only!

- *Applying the Bible* - J. Kuhatschek, IVP
- *Understanding and Applying the Bible* - Robertson McQuilken, Moody Press
- *The Joy of Discovery in Bible Study* - Oletta Wald, Augsburg Press, 1975

36) What is a Bible Handbook?

A Bible Handbook provides a short Bible commentary, maps, historical backgrounds, archaeological background, tables of weights and measures, lists of kings and geneologies and much more information. Much of the information found in Bible Handbooks can now be found in modern study Bibles. Handbooks are particularly good for those with limited budgets, or those who travel and do not want to bring a more comprehensive library with them. Without a doubt, the classic Bible Handbook is "Halley's Bible Handbook". As of 1986, over 4.6 million copies of "Halley's Bible Handbook" have been sold. It has also been published in a number of other languages. Please note that Halley's takes a very anti-Catholic position in it's discussion of Church history. Other handbooks include "Holman Bible Handbook", "Eerdmans Handbook to the Bible" and "New Unger's Bible Handbook" (although I have not personally seen any of these books yet).

37) How many different types of study Bibles are there?

There are study Bibles targeted to every possible group under the sun. In section 5, I listed some of the more popular. Here is a more complete listing:

1. Full-Life Study Bible (Zondervan) - NIV (for charismatics)
2. International Inductive Study Bible (Harvest) - NASB, NIV
3. Life Application Study Bible (Tyndale) - KJV, LB, NIV, NKJV, NRSV
4. Harper-Collins Study Bible - NRSV with Apocrypha
5. New Geneva Study Bible (Nelson) - NKJV
6. New Student Bible (Zondervan) - NIV
7. NIV Study Bible (Zondervan) - NIV
8. Parenting Bible (Zondervan) - NIV
9. Quest Study Bible (Zondervan) - NIV
10. Ryrie Study Bible (Moody Press) - KJV, NASB, NIV
11. Scofield Study Bible (Oxford) - KJV, NIV
12. Serendipity Bible (Zondervan) - NIV
13. Small Group Study Bible (Harvest) - LB
14. Spirit Filled Life Study Bible (Nelson) - NKJV (for charismatics)
15. Word Life Study Bible NT (Nelson) - NKJV
16. Orthodox Study Bible NT (Nelson) - NKJV
17. Oxford Study Bible

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