



NAME





Copyright © 2019, 2025 by Narciso P. Cabuhat and distributed by As Of First Importance Ministries. All rights reserved. To download and print free digital copies of this resource and more, visit www.aofim.org/resources or contact us at info@aofim.org

All Scripture references are quoted from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. All rights reserved.

The Lockman v2025.01.01

OVERVIEW

The Theology of Bible Interpretation

John 5:39-40

"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life."

• Testify: To bear or give witness

1 John 5:13-15

"These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life. This is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him."

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly meaning/reason: The Bible is the Word of God, the embodiment of His being.

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly meaning/reason: the Bible was written to testify of Jesus Christ.

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly means/enabling: the Holy Spirit enables us to understand the Bible in order for us to honor and glorify Jesus Christ.

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly motivation/passion: God causes us to grow in the knowledge of His Word when our motivation is to glory in Jesus Christ.

The study of God's Word can only be accomplished through God's POWER by praying according to God's WILL.

19

THE THEOLOGY

of Bible Interpretation

The Godly Means
The Godly Meaning
The Godly Motivation

THE GODLY MEANING

Why do we study the Bible?

John 1:1-18 & 1 Timothy 6:13-16

"In the beginning was the **Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God... And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth... For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him."

• Word: living word/embodiment.

1 Timothy 6:13-16

"I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which He will bring about at the proper time—He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen."

Colossians 1:15 & Romans 1:20 & Deuteronomy 29:29

"He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation."

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly MEANING/REASON. Before learning *how* to interpret the Bible, we must first know *why* we study the Bible.

The Bible is the Word of God, the EMBODIMENT of His being.

The Bible is God revealing His reality in a way that people can perceive. God's revelation determines people's reception and responsibility.

How do we approach the study of the Bible?

John 5:39-40

"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life."

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly motivation/passion. After knowing the *why*, we know *how* to approach the study of the Bible.

- (1) GOD CAUSES US TO GROW IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WORD WHEN OUR MOTIVATION IS TO GLORY IN JESUS CHRIST.
- (2) GOD KEEPS US FROM BEING LED ASTRAY IN OUR STUDY OF HIS WORD WHEN OUR MOTIVATION IS TO GROW IN DEVOTION TO JESUS CHRIST.
- (3) GOD GRANTS US THE HONOR OF BEING PREACHERS/TEACHERS OF HIS WORD WHEN OUR MOTIVATION IS OUR FIRST LOVE, JESUS CHRIST.

How do we approach the study of the Bible?

Revelation 2:1-7

"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this: 'I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them to be false; and you have perseverance and have endured for My name's sake, and have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have left your **first** love. Therefore remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first; or else I am coming to you and will remove your lampstand out of its place—unless you repent. Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God."

Colossians 1:13-18 & 2 Timothy 2:19-21

"For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have **first** place in everything."

• First: First in time, place, honor, authority, importance, and influence

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly motivation/passion. After knowing the *why*, we know *how* to approach the study of the Bible.

God grants us the honor of being preachers/teachers of His Word when our motivation is our FIRST LOVE, Jesus Christ. Our devotion to Jesus Christ will result in Him being first in everything every time.

Why do we study the Bible?

2 Timothy 3:14-17

"You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is **inspired** by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."

• Inspired: God-breathed

Psalm 19:1-2

"The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, And night to night reveals knowledge."

John 14:7-11

"If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him." Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us." Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves."

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly meaning/reason. Before learning *how* to interpret the Bible, we must first know *why* we study the Bible.

The Bible is the Word of God, the ESSENCE of His revealing.

God's Word directly and intimately reveals who He is. The Bible reveals more than His works; It reveals Himself to people.

Why do we study the Bible?

2 Peter 1:20-21

"But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men **moved** by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."

• Moved: To be carried

Acts 3:18

"But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled."

Acts 1:8

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

1 Corinthians 12:1-6

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware. You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the mute idols, however you were led. Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons."

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly meaning/reason. Before learning *how* to interpret the Bible, we must first know *why* we study the Bible.

The Bible is the Word of God, ENTIRELY by His doing.

God's Word is by His sovereign will.

God's sovereignty determines the inerrancy and infallibility of His Word.

How do we approach the study of the Bible?

2 Corinthians 11:2-4

"For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be **led astray** from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully."

2 Timothy 2:15-19

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene. Among them are Hymenaeus and Philetus, men who have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they upset the faith of some. Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness."

• Led astray: To corrupt in the slightest degree

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly motivation/passion. After knowing the *why*, we know *how* to approach the study of the Bible.

God keeps us from being led astray in our study of His Word when our motivation is to grow in DEVOTION to Jesus Christ.

Glorifying Jesus Christ must be rooted in our devotion to Him.

THE GODLY MOTIVATION

How do we approach the study of the Bible?

John 5:39-40

"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life."

2 Peter 1:1-3

"Simon Peter, a bond-servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have received a faith of the same kind as ours, by the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence."

2 Peter 3:17-18

"You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness, but **grow** in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."

• Grow: To give increase or to cause to grow

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly MOTIVATION/PASSION.

After knowing the why, we know how to approach the study of the Bible.

God causes us to grow in the knowledge of His Word when our motivation is to GLORY in Jesus Christ.

We must first glory in Jesus Christ before we glorify Him.

Why do we study the Bible?

Romans 3:1-4

"Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the **oracles** of God. What then? If some did not believe, their unbelief will not nullify the faithfulness of God, will it? May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written, "That You may be justified in Your words, And prevail when You are judged."

• Oracle: Utterance/spoken words

Hebrews 1:1-3

"God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

John 17:20-21

"I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me."

John 19:30

"Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit."

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly meaning/reason. Before learning *how* to interpret the Bible, we must first know *why* we study the Bible.

The Bible is the Word of God, EXPRESSED by Him speaking.

The Bible is God's spoken words to and through people. God revealed Himself through His Work, His Son, and His Word.

Why do we study the Bible?

John 1:1-18

"In the beginning was the **Word**, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God... And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth... For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him."

• Word: living word/embodiment.

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly MEANING/REASON. Before learning *how* to interpret the Bible, we must first know *why* we study the Bible.

- (1) THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD, THE EMBODIMENT OF HIS BEING.
- (2) THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD, THE ESSENCE OF HIS REVEALING.
- (3) THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD, ENTIRELY BY HIS DOING.
- (4) THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD, EXPRESSED BY HIM SPEAKING.

Why does God enable us to understand the Bible?

John 5:39-40

"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life."

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly means/enabling. Before learning how to interpret the Bible, we must first know why God enables us to understand the Bible.

- (1) THE HOLY SPIRIT ENABLES US TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE IN ORDER FOR US TO HONOR AND GLORIFY JESUS CHRIST.
- (2) THE HOLY SPIRIT ENABLES US TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE IN ORDER FOR US TO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST.
- (3) THE HOLY SPIRIT ENABLES US TO UNDERSTAND THE BIBLE IN ORDER FOR PEOPLE TO BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST.

6

Why does God enable us to understand the Bible?

1 Corinthians 1:21-24

"For since in the **wisdom** of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

1 Corinthians 2:1-5 & Romans 1:14-17 & Romans 10:14-17

"And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of God. For I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the **power** of God."

- **Wisdom:** Intelligence & prudence
- **Power**: Inherent power & dynamic power
- Righteousness: Acceptable to God & approved by God

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly means/enabling. Before learning how to interpret the Bible, we must first know why God enables us to understand the Bible.

The Holy Spirit enables us to understand the Bible in order for people to BELIEVE in Jesus Christ.

Believing in the glory and honor of Jesus Christ is the gospel.



THE GODLY MEANING

Why did God give us the Bible?

John 5:39-40

"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that **testify** about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life."

• Testify: To bear or give witness.

John 15:26-27

"When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me, and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning."

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly MEANING/REASON. Before learning *how* to interpret the Bible, we must first know *why* God gave us the Bible.

The Bible was written to TESTIFY of Jesus Christ.

Our study of God's Word must be according to God's will.

Why does God enable us to understand the Bible?

Ephesians 6:18-20

"With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with **boldness** the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."

Colossians 4:2-4

"Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving; praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; that I may make it clear in the way I **ought** to speak."

2 Corinthians 4:1-6

"And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

- Boldness: Free & fearless
- Ought: Necessity & correctly
- **Glory:** Estimation of excellence & honor

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly means/enabling. Before learning how to interpret the Bible, we must first know why God enables us to understand the Bible.

The Holy Spirit enables us to understand the Bible in order for us to PROCLAIM the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The gospel of Jesus Christ reveals His glory and honor.

THE GODLY MEANS

Why does God enable us to understand the Bible?

John 5:39-40

"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life."

John 5:22-23

"For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, so that all will **honor** the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him."

John 16:5-15

"...if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you... But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will **glorify** Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you."

- Honor: To estimate & to value
- **Glorify**: To estimate & to praise

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly MEANS/ENABLING.

Before learning *how* to interpret the Bible, we must first know *why* God enables us to understand the Bible.

The Holy Spirit enables us to understand the Bible in order for us to HONOR AND GLORIFY Jesus Christ.

God's Word reveals the glory and honor of Jesus Christ.

Why did God give us the Bible?

Luke 24:44-49 & John 5:39-40

"Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled." Then He opened their minds to **understand** the Scriptures, and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

- **Testify:** To bear or give witness.
- Understand: To bring together or to perceive

Acts 1:4-8

"Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly meaning/reason. Before learning how to interpret the Bible, we must first know why God gave us the Bible.

The Bible was written so that we may KNOW/UNDERSTAND Jesus Christ. Our understanding of God's Word must be according to God's will.

Why did God give us the Bible?

John 17:20-21 & John 5:39-40

"I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may **believe** that You sent Me."

- **Testify:** To bear or give witness.
- Believe: Convinced, and confident, and entrust

John 20:30-31

"Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name."

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly meaning/reason. Before learning *how* to interpret the Bible, we must first know *why* we study the Bible.

The Bible was written so that we may BELIEVE in Jesus Christ.

Our faith in God's Word must be according to God's Will.

Why did God give us the Bible?

John 5:39-40

"You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me; and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life."

• **Testify:** To bear or give witness.

Interpreting the Scriptures requires a godly meaning/reason. Before learning how to interpret the Bible, we must first know why we study the Bible.

- (1) THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN TO TESTIFY OF JESUS CHRIST.
- (2) THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN SO THAT WE MAY KNOW/UNDERSTAND JESUS CHRIST.
- (3) THE BIBLE WAS WRITTEN SO THAT WE MAY BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST.